

Eat Right

Food, Nutrition and Health Tips from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

Smart Snacking Tips for Kids

Snacks can play an important role in meeting kids' nutrient needs. Choosing a variety of foods from all of the food groups will give them the energy they need between meals.

It helps to plan and portion out snacks in advance. Kids will usually only need 2 or 3 snacks daily, and these should be provided at least one to two hours before meals.

It is recommended that snacks (and meals) be eaten in an area without distractions. So avoid snacking while watching TV or when using other electronic devices.

Better yet, let the kids help prepare the healthy snacks.



Here are a few easy, tasty (and healthy) snacks to help you get started.

Adults may need to help with some of these.

1. **Parfait:** Layer vanilla or plain low-fat yogurt with fruit and dried cereal.
2. **Toast a whole grain waffle** and top with low-fat yogurt and sliced fruit or smooth nut butter.
3. **Blend low-fat milk,** frozen strawberries and a banana for thirty seconds for a delicious smoothie.
4. **Sandwich cut-outs:** Make a sandwich on whole grain bread. Cut out your favorite shape using a big cookie cutter. Eat the fun shape and the edges, too!
5. **Mini-pizza:** Toast a whole wheat English muffin, drizzle with pizza sauce and sprinkle with low-fat mozzarella cheese.
6. **Frozen treats:** Mix equal amounts of fat-free plain or flavored yogurt with 100% fruit juice, then pour into paper cups and freeze for a tasty treat.
7. **Quesadilla:** Sprinkle shredded cheese over a corn or whole wheat tortilla; fold in half and microwave for twenty seconds. Top with salsa.
8. **Spread hummus** on a tortilla. Top with a slice of turkey or ham, low-fat cheese and lettuce. Then roll it up.
9. **Stuff a whole-grain pita pocket** with ricotta cheese and Granny Smith apple slices. Add a dash of cinnamon.

10. **Microwave a cup** of tomato or vegetable soup and enjoy with whole grain crackers.
11. **Make a mini-sandwich** with tuna or egg salad on a dinner roll.
12. **Microwave a small baked potato.** Top with reduced-fat cheddar cheese and salsa.
13. **Spread celery sticks** with smooth nut butter or low-fat cream cheese. Top with raisins. Enjoy your “ants on a log.”
14. **Dip slices of fruit** or whole-grain graham crackers into low-fat vanilla pudding or yogurt.
15. **Inside-out sandwich:** Spread mustard on a slice of deli turkey. Wrap around a sesame breadstick.
16. **Rocky road:** Smear low-fat chocolate pudding on a whole grain graham cracker, then top with a marshmallow.
17. **Sprinkle cinnamon** on unsweetened applesauce and enjoy with a whole grain graham cracker for a taste similar to apple pie.
18. **Make your own fruit roll-up** by pureeing fruit and either baking it in the oven or by using a dehydrator.
19. **Bake homemade chewy granola bars** using whole-grain oats and dried fruit.
20. **Whip up mini-muffins** using healthy ingredients, like whole grain flours and pureed fruit.

Portion sizes for kids are smaller than adults. However, certain foods due to their size pose a choking risk, especially for young children.

See below for a list of foods that may cause choking:

- Hot dogs and sausage links
- Meat chunks, unless finely chopped and combined
- Nuts, seeds and peanut butter
- Raw apple and pear slices
- Whole grapes
- Dried fruit
- Raw vegetables
- Whole kernels of corn
- Popcorn and chips
- Small candies and chewing gum

Find more healthy eating tips at:

eatright.org

kidseatright.org

For a referral to a registered dietitian nutritionist and for additional food and nutrition information, visit eatright.org.

 **Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics**

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