

Snacks

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What's your snack plan?

With just a little planning, you can have snacks that are healthy, quick and tasty.

- When you shop for groceries, don't forget snacks. Buy individual containers of low-fat yogurt, canned fruit, tuna packed in water, low-fat pudding, low-fat milk, 100 percent fruit juice and water.
- When you're putting groceries away, take time to wash fresh fruits and vegetables. Store them by low-fat yogurt and dips in the refrigerator so they will be ready to grab for snacks.
- Put snacks on lower shelves so children can serve themselves.
- Hang a snack list on the refrigerator so everyone can see what is available.

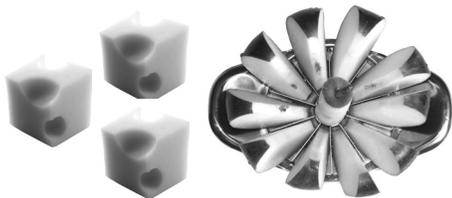
Pack a snack box

- Avoid the temptation of high-fat, salty foods by packing a box of tasty, healthy snacks to keep at home, work, in the car and in your child's backpack.
- Stock the box with foods that don't need refrigeration, like raisins, nuts, peanut butter, whole-grain crackers, pretzels, whole-grain cereal, bottled water, 100 percent fruit juice, trail mix and small cans of tuna packed in water. If you have cooking facilities at work, add hot cocoa mix, instant soup and oatmeal to the box.
- Figure out how many snacks are needed for the week and add snack box foods to your grocery list. Make a list of foods to include in the snack box and include a variety of foods that are crunchy, chewy, creamy and juicy.
- Each week, add snack foods to the box. Family members can choose a snack from the snack box after school, after work or in the evening.
- Check before sending snacks to school with your child — many schools have guidelines about what kinds of foods your child can bring from home.



5-minute snacks

- Baby carrots⁺, broccoli⁺ or cauliflower⁺ and low-fat dip^{*}
- Whole-grain crackers and peanut butter⁺
- String cheese and an apple^{*}
- Grapes⁺ and a bagel with peanut butter⁺
- Pretzels⁺ and raisins⁺
- Nuts⁺ and orange slices
- Whole-grain cereal and a banana
- Banana and a fig bar
- Cheese cubes and apple or pear slices^{*}
- Grape tomatoes⁺ and whole-grain crackers
- Applesauce and graham crackers
- Flavored yogurt and roasted soy nuts^{**}
- Baked corn chips⁺ and bean dip^{*}
- Lean ham or turkey slices wrapped around a breadstick^{*}



10-minute snacks

- Low-fat microwave popcorn and 100 percent fruit juice
- Milk shakes: Pour milk, juice and ice in a covered container and shake^{*}
- Ants on a log: Fill celery sticks with peanut butter⁺ and sprinkle with raisins⁺
- Spread peanut butter on whole-wheat bread, top with fresh or dried fruit
- Yogurt sundae: Slice a banana, add vanilla yogurt and sprinkle with nuts^{*}
- Mini pizza: Top French bread, pita bread or a tortilla with tomato sauce, sprinkle with garlic powder and oregano, add a slice of cheese and broil for one to two minutes^{*}
- Microwave a potato and top with grated cheese and salsa^{*}
- Mexican tortilla: Top a tortilla with refried beans and cheese. Warm in a toaster oven or microwave. Add lettuce and salsa^{*}
- Stuff whole-wheat pita bread with tuna and lettuce^{*}

15-minute snacks

When you have extra time on the weekends, prepare some snacks for the week ahead. Cook up some family fun by having your kids pitch in and help.

- Nutty bananas: Wash and peel bananas. Roll them in peanut butter⁺ and chopped nuts⁺. Freeze on a tray, then store the bananas in a freezer bag in the freezer.^{*}
- Designer trail mix: In a large bowl, mix 1 cup nuts⁺, 1 cup whole-wheat squares and 1 cup dried fruit⁺. Stir well and divide mix into individual plastic snack bags.
- Bunny dip: Mix together 1 cup plain low-fat yogurt, 1 cup light sour cream and 1 package dry ranch dressing mix. Store in a covered container in the refrigerator. Wash and prepare vegetables like carrots⁺, green peppers⁺ and cauliflower⁺, and store by the dip.^{*}
- Chewy peanut butter logs: In a large bowl, mix ½ cup peanut butter, 2 cups dry milk powder and ¼ cup honey. Stir and knead until smooth. Chill until firm. Shape into logs or balls. Pack each log in a plastic snack bag and store in the refrigerator.^{*}

*Store these foods in the refrigerator: meat, poultry, fish, eggs and dairy foods like milk, cheese, yogurt and sour cream dips. Canned foods and salad dressings need to be refrigerated after they have been opened. Fruits and vegetables stay fresh longer when refrigerated.

+ Do not give these foods to toddlers and young children due to the risk of choking.

Adapted from Snacks, University of Missouri Extension publication N 900, by Kasey Forrest, MDHSS Dietetic Intern, 2009.

To keep foods cold when you're away from home, add an ice pack or frozen container of juice, yogurt or water. Ice packs or frozen containers thaw slowly and keep foods cold for several hours.