



10 Tips for Smart Snacking

Whether you are a child or an adult, most of us enjoy snacks. Well-chosen snacks can boost your nutrition and keep you energetic at home, work or school. Many nutrition experts recommend three meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner) and two small snacks during the day. Visit www.choosemyplate.gov for more tips.

1. Save time by slicing veggies.

Store sliced vegetables in the refrigerator and serve with dips such as hummus or low-calorie dressing. Top half of a whole-wheat English muffin with spaghetti sauce, chopped vegetables and low-fat shredded mozzarella, and melt in the microwave.

2. Mix it up.

For older school-age kids, mix dried fruit, unsalted nuts and popcorn in a snack-size bag for a quick trail mix. Blend plain fat-free or low-fat yogurt with 100 percent fruit juice and frozen peaches for a tasty smoothie.

3. Grab a glass of milk.

A cup of low-fat or fat-free milk or milk alternative (soy milk) is an easy way to drink a healthy snack.

4. Go for great whole grains.

Enjoy whole-wheat breads, popcorn and whole-grain cereals that are high in fiber and low in added sugars, saturated fat and sodium. Limit refined-grain products such as snack bars, cakes and sweetened cereals.

5. Nibble on lean protein.

Choose lean protein foods such as low-sodium deli meats or unsalted nuts. Wrap sliced, low-sodium deli turkey around an apple wedge. Store hard-cooked (boiled) eggs in the refrigerator for kids to enjoy any time.

6. Keep an eye on the size.

Snacks shouldn't replace a meal, so look for ways to help your kids understand how much is enough. Store snack-size bags in the cupboard and use them to control serving sizes.

7. Grab and go with whole fruit.

Fresh, frozen, dried or canned fruits are options that need little preparation. Offer whole fruit and limit the amount of 100 percent juice (because it is higher in calories).

8. Consider convenience.

A single-serving container of low-fat or fat-free yogurt or individually wrapped string cheese can be just enough for a quick snack.

9. Swap out the sugar.

Keep healthier foods handy. Avoid cookies, pastries or candies between meals. Have cut-up fruits and veggies ready to grab from the refrigerator.

10. Prepare homemade goodies.

For homemade sweets, add dried fruits such as apricots or raisins and reduce the amount of sugar in the recipe. Adjust recipes that include fats such as butter or shortening by using unsweetened applesauce or prune puree for half the amount of fat.



We have so many different snack bars to choose from. How do I pick one that is a healthful choice for a snack?

Sometimes snack bars are more like “candy bars.” Be a label reader to get the most nutrition for your money. Remember the ingredients are listed from “most” to “least” on the ingredient statement. Look for whole grains, dried fruit and nuts (unless you have a nut allergy) as the first ingredients. Compare products and choose snack bars with less added sugar, less saturated fat and more fiber. Most nutrition experts recommend a bar with less than 200 calories, 6 (or more) grams of protein and at least 2 grams of fiber.



FoodWi\$e Tip of the Month

Dried fruit and fruit leather are tasty snacks that you can make at home at a much lower cost. Although using a home food dehydrator is the easiest way to do this, you also can try using your oven to dry fruit.

The NDSU Extension Service website has free directions. See www.ag.ndsu.edu/food/food-preservation/dry for details about drying fruits and vegetables, and making fruit leathers.



Just for Fun

Why do bananas wear sunscreen?

Because they peel!

P.S. Don't forget to wear SPF 30 sunscreen and try a banana for a snack!



Here's a delicious dip recipe that's perfect with whole-grain crackers or chips as a snack.

Mexican Corn Salsa

- 1½ c. corn*
- 1 jalapeno, seeded and diced
- ½ tsp. chili powder
- ½ tsp. salt
- Juice of ½ lime
- 2 Tbsp. cilantro, chopped
- ¼ c. feta cheese crumbles

Snack idea:

Mexican Corn Salsa, whole-grain crackers or chips, ice water flavored with lemon slices

* Use fresh corn (boiled and sliced from the cob), frozen corn (thawed) or canned corn (drained and rinsed).

Add all ingredients to a bowl and mix until combined. Refrigerate until chilled, approximately 30 minutes.

Makes four servings.

Each ½-cup serving has 80 calories, 2.5 grams (g) fat, 3 g protein, 13 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber and 390 milligrams sodium.

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Contact the local office of the NDSU Extension Service for more information on food and nutrition or managing your food dollar.

