



Kinship Link

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Smart Snacking Tips for Adults and Teens

Pro Kinship for Kids

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Snacks can fit into a healthy eating plan and provide an energy boost between meals, if they're planned right. Choosing nutritious foods from the MyPlate food groups can help increase variety and reduce sources of empty calories and added sugars. You should find the right snack for your eating style and activity level. Keeping snacks to 200 calories or less can be a reasonable goal for most people. Adults and teens who are more active, or eat smaller meals throughout the day may want to aim for 200 to 300 calories per snack.

Make snacking a smart habit by:
Snacking only when you're hungry. Eating out of boredom or for emotional reasons can lead to weight gain. Rate your hunger before reaching for a snack and avoid mindless eating.

Having snacks planned and portioned out ahead of time saves you in the long haul. Fixing snacks in advance, like washing and cutting-up fruits and vegetables, air-popped popcorn made in advance with low-fat cheese, can save time later on.

Practicing food safety. Keep perishable foods refrigerated or in a cooler bag with ice packs to help reduce the risk of food poisoning.

Make snacking simple by choosing different fruits and vegetables, depending on what is in season or on sale. Fresh, frozen, canned, or dried are all good options. Compare labels to limit items high in sodium, saturated fat, and added sugars.

Keep your snacking lively by including snacks that contain grains, especially whole grains, lean protein, and healthy fats. Some examples include fat-free yogurt with fruit, whole-grain crackers with low-fat cheese, or raw veggies with hummus.

Eating different combinations of foods can be very satisfying and help to curb hunger. Snacks that include fruit can also satisfy a craving for something sweet.

Ways to make your own convenient and ready-to-eat snacks at home:

- ◆ Make your own trail mix by combining

whole grain cereals, unsalted nuts or seeds, and dried fruit. (Tip: Portion into 1/4 cup servings)

- ◆ Blend your own smoothie by adding 1 cup fat-free milk and frozen fruit to a blender.
- ◆ Mix 3 cups air-popped popcorn with grated cheese or dried spices.
- ◆ Bake vegetable chips, like kale or beets.
- ◆ Roast chickpeas or garbanzo beans and season with spices.
- ◆ Make a dip using low-fat cottage cheese or Greek yogurt for raw vegetables.
- ◆ Mash an avocado with salsa and eat with whole-grain tortilla chips, or spread on a whole wheat tortilla, sprinkle with low-fat cheese, then roll it up and enjoy.
- ◆ Cut up fruit to make kabobs and serve with low-fat yogurt dip.
- ◆ Slice a medium apple and eat with 1 tablespoon of peanut, almond, or sunflower seed butter.



Building Self-Esteem in Children continued

- ◆ 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.
- ◆ Top graham crackers with nut or seed butter or dunk them in low-fat vanilla yogurt.
- ◆ Cut a whole wheat pita into wedges and serve with 2 tablespoons of hummus or bean dip.
- ◆ Make a veggie pizza by topping a whole wheat English muffin or pita with 2 tablespoons tomato sauce, 1/2 cup diced fresh veggies, and 1 ounce low-fat mozzarella cheese.
- ◆ Create a scrumptious yogurt parfait by layering 6 ounces of fat-free yogurt with 1/2 cup fresh or frozen fruit, then sprinkle 1/4 cup (or less) low-fat granola on top.
- ◆ Prepare instant oatmeal using fat-free milk, 1 tablespoon maple syrup, a sprinkle of cinnamon, and 1/4 cup dried fruit.
- ◆ Dress up a salad with a hard cooked egg or edamame, tomato, and 2 tablespoons reduced-fat dressing.
- ◆ Whip up a quesadilla in the microwave using a whole wheat tortilla, 1/4 cup black beans, 1-2 tablespoons low-fat cheese, and 1 ounce of salsa.
- ◆ Build veggie skewers with cherry or grape tomatoes and cubes of low-fat cheese, or cooked tortellini and lean luncheon meat.
- ◆ Make a tuna apple sandwich by combining a 5-6 ounce can of tuna in water (drained), 1 small apple (peeled and sliced into chunks), 1 tablespoon light mayo, then spread it on 2 slices of whole wheat bread.

Eating Right with Less Added Sugars

Sugar is found naturally in some foods and drinks, like fruit or milk, but it is also added to many of them. Sugars added to foods and beverages give them a sweet taste, but offer no nutrition compared to foods and drinks that are naturally sweet. Most Americans get too many calories from added sugars and over time this may affect their weight and health. Many people think of desserts as the main source of added sugars, but numerous foods and drinks may contain added sugars. For example, sweetened drinks like regular soft drinks, some fruit drinks, and energy drinks are all sources of added sugars. Snack foods, like crackers, and even ready-to-eat foods, like pizza and pasta sauces, can be made with added sugars. Some people may also add sugar to what they eat and drink, like sprinkling sugar over cereal, or pouring flavored creamer in coffee.

How to Identify Sources of Added Sugars:

The new and improved Nutrition Facts Label can help you identify sources of added sugars. You can also review the ingredients list. The ingredients that appear first are in the largest amount. Be sure to look for foods and drinks that don't have sugar (or some other sweetener) listed as the first

ingredient. Other examples of sweeteners and sources of added sugars include: Brown sugar, corn syrup, dextrose, fructose, high-fructose corn syrup, honey, maple syrup, molasses, sucrose, white granulated sugar. Sources of added sugars often lack nutrients needed for good health, while foods and drinks that contain natural sources of sugar provide nutrients, vitamins, and minerals. For example, fruits like strawberries are a great source of vitamin C, and milk provides vitamins A and D, and calcium.

It's not necessary for individuals over the age of 2 to avoid all sources of added sugars. The problem is that many of us include too many sources of added sugars or eat and drink larger amounts than is recommended. When this happens there is less room for more nutritious foods and drinks. If you have a taste for something sweet, try eating some fruit first. When you're thirsty reach for milk or water. Other ways to reduce sources of added sugars include: making or buying healthier versions of baked goods, including foods and drinks with added sugars less often, and eating or drinking sweet treats in smaller portions.

Tips on how to decrease sources of added sugars:

- * Sweeten low-fat plain yogurt with fresh, frozen, or canned (in its own juice) fruit in place of fruit-flavored yogurt.
- * Add cinnamon and dried fruit to plain cooked oats instead of using instant flavored oatmeal.
- * Encourage healthier drinks like plain milk and water for young children.
- * Substitute 100% fruit juice for fruit punch and other fruit-flavored drinks for older children.
- * Switch from sweetened to unsweetened applesauce.
- * Drink plain low-fat milk instead of chocolate milk.
- * Use jams and jellies with no sugar added.
- * Enjoy a homemade smoothie with frozen fruit, low-fat milk, and yogurt in place of ice cream.
- * Quench your thirst with water or plain low-fat milk instead of sweetened beverages, like energy, soft, and sports drinks.

Include healthier choices from the MyPlate foods groups in place of foods and drinks with added sugars to better meet your nutrient needs and limit added sugars to less than 10% of calories per day starting at age 2.

