

Snacking Smart

Do you live in the fast lane? For healthful eating, let snacking work for you. Think of snacks as mini-meals that complement your other food choices for the day. In fact, snacks can fill in nutrition gaps when you eat meals on the run. So be prepared. Stock your kitchen with a variety of quick, food group snacks.

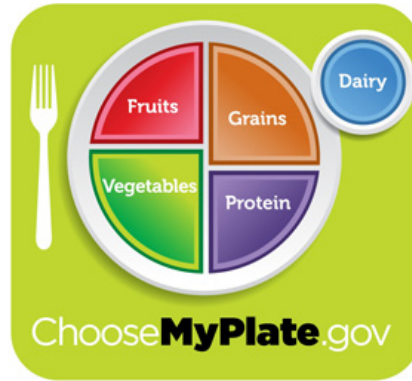
Snack with Variety and Balance in Mind.

You're sure to find snacks that will work for you in each of "MyPlate's" five food groups. In fact, all kinds of foods, including small amounts of treats, make snacking enjoyable. Each of the five food groups is important for certain nutrients. (Check the Nutrition Facts label for nutrition information.)

Plating Up Smart Snacks...

Choose snacks that include items from two or more food groups. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- A handful of PLANTERS Dry Roasted Peanuts and a glass of 100% fruit juice.
- Mixed salad greens, KRAFT Natural Shredded Cheese and your favorite variety of KRAFT Salad Dressing stuffed in a pita half.
- Prepared JELL-O Instant Pudding and HONEY MAID Honey Grahams.
- TRISCUIT Crackers with KRAFT 2% Milk Natural Reduced Fat Cheddar Cheese.



Source: US Department of Agriculture

Make Snacks Count...

...to fill in your nutrition gaps. Missed your breakfast juice? Snack on an orange. No milk at lunch? Enjoy a cup of yogurt. Short on fiber? Spread whole wheat crackers with hummus. Let snacks supply food group choices – and nutrients – you might otherwise miss.

- ✓ TIP: Read Nutrition Facts on labels to find snacks that fill in your nutrition gaps. For many people, vitamins A and C, calcium, iron and fiber come up short.

...with balance – and snack-size portions – in mind. Tune in to your body's signals. Eat

enough to satisfy hunger, without tipping the energy balance toward excess calories. Smart snacking is a matter of portion control.

- ✓ TIP: Buy single-portion snacks. Or put a serving in a bowl or on a plate and put the package away.

...to add fluid assets. Sometimes pair snack foods with water, milk, 100% juice or other thirst-quenching drinks. Or let one of these beverages be your snack.

- ✓ TIP: Your body needs to replace fluids each day. Water is always a good choice. For both children and adults, remember that the calories in beverages count toward daily calorie and food group totals.

...with food safety in mind. For "to go" snacking, choose non-perishable foods, or keep perishable foods chilled, with a freezer pack in a clean, insulated container.

GRAINS	VEGETABLES	FRUITS	DAIRY	PROTEIN FOODS
carbohydrate, some B vitamins – and fiber from whole grain foods.	beta carotene (which forms Vitamin A), vitamin C, folate and fiber.	vitamin C, beta carotene, folate and (with edible skins) fiber, too.	for protein and bone-building calcium – some choices also supply vitamin D.	for protein and iron.
Make half your grains "whole."	Vary your Veggies.	Focus on fruits.	Opt for some no- or low-fat choices.	Go lean for protein.
TRY: whole grain breakfast biscuits, cereal bars, bagels, crackers, bread sticks, tortillas, graham crackers.	TRY: raw veggies (carrots, broccoli, bell peppers, cherry tomatoes), 100% vegetable juice.	TRY: berries, apple or pear wedges, tangerine segments, banana, dried fruit (plums, apricots, raisins), 100% fruit juice.	TRY: cheese slices, sticks or cubes; yogurt, milk, pudding made with milk, frozen yogurt.	TRY: nuts, peanut butter, hard cooked egg, cooked chicken, lean cold cuts, tuna.

✓ TIP: Look for snacks, such as single-serve puddings, that come ready-to-eat in shelf stable packaging.

...**think safety.** Seat and supervise young children during snack time.

✓ TIP: Chop foods such as hot dogs, meat, grapes, raw vegetables or nuts into small pieces and encourage children to chew foods well. Avoid serving small, hard foods (that may cause choking if swallowed whole) to young children.

...**without spoiling your appetite for meals.** Smart snacking works with good timing. Eat snacks two to three hours before mealtime.

✓ TIP: To curb hunger pangs that may lead to overeating at dinnertime, plan for an afternoon snack.

...**be a role model for your kids.** Children follow adults' examples. If you snack wisely, chances are, your child will, too.

Great Snacks...Fun, Handy, Easy to Eat!

For kids – Make food group snacks fun.

- » Offer fun-shaped graham snacks with flavored yogurt for dipping.
- » Keep a “rainbow” of fruit and raw veggies on hand for kids’ snacks: washed, cut and ready to eat.
- » Turn a sandwich into a snack by cutting it into stars, crescents or other fun shapes with cookie cutters.

To pack –and-go – Tuck snacks in a backpack, tote or briefcase for after school, before a workout or wherever your busy life takes you.

- » Freeze juice or fruit drink cartons – great to carry with other chilled snacks (raw veggies, fruit, cheese or yogurt).
- » Check your supermarket shelves for single-serving snacks: pudding, cheese, crackers or yogurt.
- » Create a crunchy snack in a sealable plastic bag: mix nuts, cereal and dried fruit.

For Fun, Flavor, Fast

- » Make a quick tortilla roll: roll deli meat or reduced-fat cheese and salsa in a wheat tortilla.
- » Mix a quick dip to enjoy with raw veggies: blend low-fat cottage cheese with a bit of salad dressing.
- » Fill an ice cream cone with yogurt and cut-up fruit.
- » Spread peanut butter on a graham cracker square and top with banana slices.
- » A handful of crackers made with whole grain and a single-

serve cheese stick.

Conclusion – Snack Strategically...

With some planning, snacks can fit into your healthful eating plan. Just keep the following tips in mind:

- » Choose snacks to fill in your daily food group gaps;
- » Snack to satisfy hunger, not your emotions;
- » Control your snack portions;
- » Balance your snacking with active living!

Q: Is snacking okay for kids?

A: Yes! In fact, most young children need snacks because their stomachs are small and meals alone may not provide enough food, nutrients or calories. Snacks can help provide the food energy (calories) needed for growth and play. Your challenge as a parent? Helping youngsters learn smart snacking habits – and providing easy-to-eat food group snacks for kids to enjoy.