



PLANNING HEALTHY SNACKS

Snacking sometimes gets a bad rap, but with smart planning, it can be a valuable part of a healthful eating plan. Snacks can boost nutrition by filling in food group gaps in your meals and give you more energy between meals. Learn to plan healthy snacks below.

WHAT SIZE SNACK?

As a general guideline, snacks containing 200 calories or fewer are about right for less active people. Snacks containing 200 to 300 calories are about right for active teens and adults.

Snacks with 200 Calories or Fewer

- ▶ 1 tablespoon peanut butter spread on slices of a small apple
- ▶ 3 cups air-popped popcorn sprinkled with 3 tablespoons grated parmesan cheese
- ▶ Small baked potato topped with salsa and 1 ounce shredded low-fat cheese
- ▶ Whole-grain toaster waffle topped with ½ cup blueberries and 2 tablespoons low-fat yogurt
- ▶ Fruit smoothie made by blending ¾ cup fat-free yogurt, ¼ cup milk, ½ cup frozen berries, and

continued

Strategic Shopping

- ▶ At the supermarket, shop for healthful snacks and snack ingredients based on foods from the 5 food groups: fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and low-fat or fat-free dairy foods. A few examples are apples, baby carrots, whole-wheat crackers, deli turkey breast, and low-fat yogurt.
- ▶ Go easy on snacks that are high in calories, solid fats, sodium, and added sugars, such as chips, snack cakes, cookies, candy, and regular soft drinks.
- ▶ Get the Nutrition Facts. Some healthy-sounding snacks (such as granola bars, microwave popcorn, and trail mix) might have more calories, saturated fat, sodium, or added sugars than you think. When you shop for snacks, compare food labels and check the serving sizes and nutrients, too.

In the Kitchen

- ▶ Make nutritious snacks easy to see and grab. For instance, keep a bowl of washed whole fruit on the counter, and stock the fridge with snacks like washed, cut-up veggies, cheese sticks, and yogurt cups.
- ▶ Size snacks right. Choose a single-serve container, or portion out snacks into a bowl rather than eating directly from the package.
- ▶ Take snacks to go. Keep hunger at bay by preparing small bags of nuts, whole-grain cereal, or dried fruit to stash in your bag or in your desk. Tote perishable snacks

from previous

½ banana

- ▶ 6 whole-wheat crackers and 1 slice of cheddar or colby cheese

Snacks with 200 to 300 Calories

- ▶ ½ medium avocado on 1 slice whole-wheat toast with a cup of grapes
- ▶ Whole-wheat pita wedges with 2 tablespoons hummus
- ▶ 2 whole-wheat English muffin halves with 2 tablespoons low-fat cream cheese, 2 ounces deli turkey breast, and ½ cup sliced tomato
- ▶ Hot chocolate (made with low-fat or fat-free milk) and a small oatmeal cookie
- ▶ A sliced banana topped with ½ cup frozen yogurt and 1 tablespoon chopped nuts
- ▶ Trail mix made with 20 almonds, ¼ cup of raisins, and ¼ cup whole-grain cereal.



(such as yogurt, cheese, and hard-cooked eggs) in an insulated bag with ice packs to help reduce the risk of food poisoning.

- ▶ For good nutrition, follow the “2 food group” guideline. Enjoy snacks that include choices from at least 2 food group like these:
 - ▶ Cottage cheese and diced pineapple
 - ▶ Canned tuna or salmon on whole-grain crackers
 - ▶ Whole-grain cereal and milk
 - ▶ Avocado on whole-wheat toast
 - ▶ Yogurt and fresh fruit
 - ▶ Cheese stick and an apple
 - ▶ Raw veggies with hummus
 - ▶ Quesadilla (soft tortilla and cheese, folded and heated)
 - ▶ Instant oatmeal with dried cranberries

Beverages and Snacks

Calories can add up quickly with beverages that contain added sugar, such as sweetened fruit drinks, energy drinks, and soft drinks.

- ▶ Plan to drink water or other unsweetened drinks to help meet your daily fluid needs.
- ▶ To quench your thirst along with snacks, try mixing equal parts 100% fruit juice and sparkling water, or try flavored waters without any added sugars.
- ▶ Check the ingredient list on beverages to see if sugar has been added. The Nutrition Facts for Added Sugars also provides information on how much sugar is added (4 grams = 1 teaspoon of added sugar).