

FACTSHEET



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Healthy Snack Choices

This information, with its food examples, is intended for educational purposes only and does not constitute SCHN/JHCH endorsement of any particular branded food product.

Snacks are an important part of food intake over the day, especially for children. Most children need 3 main meals and 1-3 snacks a day depending on how hungry and active they are. Snacks should be nutritious & tasty.

It is important to remember that a snack is not a meal. There are plenty of fresh foods that you might already have at home that make ideal snacks for children. Packaged snacks are often low nutritional quality, and can be marketed to children. Try not to rely on packaged snacks.

These ideas can be used for all children up to adolescence, and beyond.

Fruit:

- Fresh fruit pieces cut up (snap lock bag or container for school)
- Fruit salad in a container or canned fruit snack pack
- Small handful of dried fruit
- Fruit fingers dipped into low fat yoghurt
- Frozen banana (spear peeled banana with icy-pole stick and freeze) or other frozen fruit such as grapes, peeled orange or mandarin segments
- Fruit kebabs
- 1/2 cup canned unsweetened fruit with a scoop of yoghurt
- Unsweetened tinned fruit salad, frozen into ice blocks

Vegetables:

- Vegetable sticks (e.g. celery, carrot, capsicum, cucumber, snow peas) with dip e.g. salsa, hummus
- Celery sticks with a spread of peanut butter or cream cheese topped with sultanas
- Corn on the cob
- Small bowl of soup such as pumpkin, tomato or vegetable rich soup
- Cherry tomatoes, snow peas, green beans and pitted olives
- Top 1x piece of toast with cooked mushrooms, tomatoes, capsicum or leftover vegetables
- Homemade vegetable chips: cut vegetables into thin slices, spray with cooking oil and bake at 180°C until crisp

Dairy Products:

- Slice of cheese with veggie sticks e.g. carrot, capsicum or cucumber
- Cream cheese with veggie sticks
- Tub of yoghurt (freeze the night before in warmer months)
- A glass of milk/ calcium fortified plant milk with a spoonful of Milo™
- Cheese cubes with veggie sticks
- Fruit smoothie (blend reduced fat milk with ½ cup of banana and/or berries)
- Fruit yoghurt smoothie (blend 1/2 cup fruit yoghurt plus 1/2 cup reduced fat milk plus 1/2 cup canned unsweetened fruit, fresh fruit or berries)

Enjoy reduced fat varieties of milk once children are 2 years or older.

Drinks:

- Water and milk are the best drinks for children
- Encourage your child to have a milk based drink when at home, ideally using a reduced fat milk

Breads & Cereals:

- Grain or wholemeal bread or toast, spread with peanut butter, avocado or ricotta cheese
- Slice of fruit loaf or raisin bread with margarine or cream cheese
- Toasted English muffin, crumpet or bagel with vegemite, peanut butter, fruit spread, honey, cheese or tomato
- Pancake or pikelet (add mashed bananas or frozen berries to mixture for a change)
- Scones – try fruit, date or pumpkin for variety
- English muffin mini pizza - try with tomato pasta sauce, pineapple, tomato and cheese
- Toasted sandwich – such as baked beans with a slice of l cheese or lean ham and creamed corn
- Small pita bread (spread with cheese spread or peanut butter, grated carrot, sprouts, avocado and roll up to serve)
- Small wrap with tuna, grated carrot, tomato and lettuce
- Rice Cakes/Corn Thins or Whole meal crackers with topping such as cheese and tomato/peanut butter/ricotta/avocado/ cream cheese or Vegemite® and cheese
- Weet-bix® with topping – can be eaten dry or with reduced fat milk
- Homemade mini muffins (savoury or sweet)
- Cup of air popped popcorn
- Handful of homemade pita chips (cut pita bread into triangles and bake at 180°C for 15 - 20 minutes until crisp) with low fat dip or hummus
- Homemade trail mix: mix of cereal, dried fruits, nuts (whole nuts not recommended for children under 5 years due to choking risk)
- Small packet of popcorn, rice crackers or a muesli bar

Remember

- Offer water and milk to drink instead of juice and other sweetened drinks.
- Have plenty of fresh foods available – try not to rely on packaged snacks.
- Choose snack foods based on breads, fruit, vegetables and dairy foods that are filling and nutritious.
- Ensure snacks contain a source of protein to help keep your child feeling full.
- Use only small amounts of oil, margarine and butter.
- Involve your child in choosing their own lunch (or a part of) from a range of healthy options. Children who are involved in their own food choices may be more likely to change to good life-long eating habits.

Meat & alternatives:

- Small can baked beans
- Boiled egg with wholegrain toast fingers
- Small handful of nuts or roasted chickpeas (for over 5 year olds only due to choking risk)
- 2-3 Meatballs/ falafel
- Rice paper rolls with shredded chicken or beef strips and vegies
- Small tin of tuna with crackers
- Hardboiled eggs