



Tips for Healthy Snacking

Keep junk food out of the house

Your child won't clamor for cookies, candy bars or chips if you don't keep them on hand. Set a good example by choosing healthy snacks yourself.

Go for the grain

Whole-grain foods — such as whole-grain pretzels or tortillas and high-fiber, whole-grain cereals — provide energy with some staying power.

Mix and match

Serve baby carrots or other raw veggies with fat-free ranch dressing or hummus. Dip graham cracker sticks or fresh fruit in fat-free yogurt. Spread peanut butter on celery, apples or bananas.

Broaden the menu

Offer out-of-the-usual fare, such as pineapple, cranberries, red or yellow peppers, mangoes, tangelos or roasted soy nuts.

Revisit breakfast

Serve breakfast foods — such as scrambled eggs and whole-grain toast — as healthy snacks for kids in the afternoon.

Sweeten it up

Healthy snacks for kids don't have to be bland. To satisfy your child's sweet tooth, offer fat-free pudding, frozen yogurt or frozen fruit bars. Make smoothies with skim milk, fat-free yogurt, and fresh or frozen fruit.

Have fun

Use a cookie cutter to make shapes out of low-fat cheese slices, whole-grain bread or whole-grain tortillas. Make fruit kebabs or show your child how to eat diced fruit with chopsticks. Make a tower out of whole-grain crackers, spell words with pretzel sticks, or make funny faces on a plate using different types of fruit.

Promote independence

Keep a selection of ready-to-eat veggies in the refrigerator. Leave fresh fruit in a bowl on the counter. Store low-sugar, whole-grain cereal and fruit canned or packaged in its own juice in an easily accessible cabinet.



**Don't be fooled by labeling gimmicks**

Foods marketed as low-fat or fat-free can still be high in calories and sodium. Likewise, foods touted as cholesterol-free can still be high in fat, saturated fat and sugar. Check nutrition labels to find out the whole story.

Designate a snacking zone

Restrict snacking to certain areas, such as the kitchen. You'll save your child countless calories from mindless munching in front of the TV. If your child needs to snack on the go, offer string cheese, yogurt sticks, cereal bars, a banana or other drip-free items.

Source: Mayo Clinic

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/childrenshealth/HQ00419/NSECTIONGROUP=2>

