

# Healthy Snacking

Healthy snacks can help you get the recommended number of servings from each of the 4 food groups on [Canada's Food Guide](#). See the ideas below to help you and your family choose healthy snacks.

## Eating healthy snacks can help you:

- meet your daily nutrition needs
- get enough energy
- satisfy your hunger

## Do I need snacks?

- Children may need 2–3 snacks a day.
- Adults may choose snacks if there's a long time between meals.

## Snacking tips

- Choose snack foods from the 4 food groups on *Canada's Food Guide*.
- The size of your snack may depend on your age, activity level, and how long it is until your next meal.

- A small snack can be something as simple as vegetables and dip or a piece of fruit.
- A larger snack may include 2 or more food groups from *Canada's Food Guide*.



- Limit foods such as candy, pop, fruit drinks, and chips. They are higher in fat, sugar, or salt, and are not part of *Canada's Food Guide*.

- When possible, make healthy snacks ahead of time. Cut up vegetables and fruit, and store them in plastic containers in the fridge for easy 'grab and go' snacking.



- Carry snacks, such as fresh fruit, cut up vegetables and fruit, nuts, cheese sticks, and whole grain muffins to eat when you get hungry away from home. Eat these after school, at work, or between activities.



- Choose water to drink with snacks.

## Healthy snack ideas

### Small snacks

- Raw vegetables like carrots, grape tomatoes, peppers, or zucchini, on their own or with dip
- An apple, banana, kiwi, or orange
- A handful of whole grain crackers
- A piece of cheese
- 1 small container of yogurt
- A small handful of almonds or walnuts
- Air-popped popcorn sprinkled with cinnamon, herbs, or parmesan cheese



### Larger snacks

These snacks contain 2 or more food groups from *Canada's Food Guide*.

- Fresh, frozen, or canned fruit with yogurt
- Small whole wheat tortilla wrap made with salmon or tuna, salad dressing, onions, celery, and green peppers
- Hummus or guacamole and whole grain pita wedges
- Whole wheat roti or chapati with cashews



## Larger snack ideas (continued)

- A small whole grain muffin and an orange

- A handful of nuts/seeds and dried fruit



- A smoothie made with frozen fruit, milk and yogurt or kefir

- A dark green leafy salad with orange sections and almonds

- Whole grain cereal and milk



- Roasted chickpeas and cucumber slices

- Cheese on whole grain crackers or rice cakes



- Half a sandwich made with whole grain bread or English muffin, leftover meat, chicken or fish, lettuce, and mustard

- Whole grain toast with nut or seed butter and a banana



- Soft tofu topped with peaches

- Celery sticks with peanut butter and raisins



- A mini pizza made with a whole grain English muffin or pita, topped with tomato sauce, mushrooms, and cheese

- Broccoli and cauliflower pieces with yogurt dip



- A whole grain pita stuffed with ricotta cheese, apple slices, and cinnamon

- Fresh fruit pieces with a dip made by blending peanut butter and plain yogurt

- Pancakes with applesauce and cinnamon.



- Pumpkin seeds or toasted almonds on yogurt

- Egg salad or labneh spread on whole grain crackers
- Celery stalks stuffed with cottage cheese and pineapple

- Tomato and avocado slices with whole grain crackers



- A hard-boiled egg and a pear

- A banana that's been dipped in yogurt, rolled in crushed whole grain cereal, and frozen

- Seaweed snacks and roasted soybeans



## Considerations for children

Snacks are important for children because their bodies may need the extra energy to grow and be active. Serve snacks at least 2 hours before meals so children will be hungry at mealtime.

**Food allergies:** Ask about food allergy guidelines at the school, childcare centre, or sports facility before you send snacks with your child.

**Healthy teeth:** To keep teeth healthy, limit snack foods that are high in sugar and/or stick to teeth. If you (or your child) eat sticky food, brush your teeth and/or rinse your mouth right after you eat.

### Caution for children under 4 years:

Some foods can cause choking. Foods like hard raw vegetables can be grated, cut into small pieces, or cooked to make them safe. Don't give foods like whole nuts, popcorn, or dried fruit to children under 4 years.

## For more information

To learn more about healthy eating, visit [www.healthyeatingstartshere.ca](http://www.healthyeatingstartshere.ca).

[Canada's Food Guide](http://www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide) can be found at [www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide](http://www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide).