

# snack smart advice for mums



## How To Handle Children's Snack Attacks

If you are the parent of a young child or teenager you'll know that they are always on the go and seem to have an endless supply of energy, which explains why they need to stop regularly to refuel with a snack.

During times of rapid growth children and teenagers have high nutritional needs and they may simply not be able to eat enough at mealtimes to meet their energy and nutrient needs. Offering a healthy snack between meals can supply valuable nutrients which will help them meet their requirements.

Teaching children about healthy snacking is important because healthy habits learnt when they are young are more likely to stick with them when they are grown up and looking after themselves.

## tips for healthy snacking

- Plan snacks at regular intervals throughout the day rather than constantly grazing throughout the day. Snacks should be served at least 1½ to 2 hours before meals, otherwise children won't be hungry for their meal.
- Plan ahead and make sure your fridge and cupboards are stocked with a range of healthy snacks. If you know you're going to be out and about pack a small wrapped snack such as a cereal bar, individual malt loaf pack or mini pack of ready-to-eat dried fruits in your bag.
- Try to vary the snacks you choose. Why not get your children to prepare a snack menu for when they get back from school so they have a different snack each day of the week.
- Encourage children to brush their teeth after snacking.
- Children are much more susceptible to dehydration, particularly on hot days, so don't forget to give them a drink with their snack. Offer fruit juice, water, milk, smoothies or dilute squash or cordial in favour of sugary fizzy drinks.
- Don't expect your child to tuck into carrots sticks and celery if they see you chomping on biscuits and crisps. Children learn by example so make sure your own snacking habits are healthy.
- When children are hungry they are more receptive to trying new foods so after school snacks provide the perfect opportunity to introduce new foods into your child's diet.
- Snacks like sweets, biscuits, cakes, crisps, chocolates and sweetened drinks are often high in sugar, saturated fat or salt and low in important nutrients essential for health. Snacks like chocolate and biscuits are fine occasionally, but give them as a treat rather than a everyday snack.

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## ideas for healthy snacks

- Toasted cinnamon bagels topped with peanut butter and mashed banana
- Chocolate and apple sandwiches. Toast 2 slices of white bread. Thinly spread each slice with chocolate and hazelnut spread, add a thinly sliced green apple and make into a sandwich
- Pizza crumpets. Lightly toast a crumpet. Spread 2 tbsp of tomato salsa over the crumpet, top with a handful of grated Cheddar or a cheese slice. Toast under the grill until the cheese melts
- Yogurt or fromage frais with fruit
- Smoothies
- Breakfast cereals with milk
- Pop corn
- Teacakes or scones
- Fruit or malt loaf
- Celery sticks filled with cream cheese or peanut butter
- Bread sticks with hummus, tzatiki or salsa
- Mini wholemeal pitta with hummus and carrot