

Snack Attack

Snack Attack Q&A

Why snack?

Healthy snacks provide growing kids an energy boost and important nutrients outside of meal times. The key is not to cut out snacks but to limit high fat, salt and sugar foods, replacing them with healthy snacks like fruits, veggies, whole-grains and lean protein.

When are healthy snacks needed?

Young children (preschool and early elementary) usually need a **snack mid-morning**. They typically eat small meals and need refueling before lunch time to be active and bright! As kids get into upper elementary, middle and high school years, mid-morning snacks usually aren't as necessary IF they are eating a healthy breakfast.

Why do almost all kids need a mid-or late afternoon snack?

- To maintain their energy level until the evening meal.
- To give an added energy boost for after school physical activity and extracurricular activities.

Do kids need a healthy snack after the evening meal?

Kids who eat an early dinner, or small amounts of food at dinner, or who are very physically active probably do need a healthy snack after dinner. Try to avoid eating too close to bedtime.

What are some tasty healthy snacks for kids?

Consider foods that may have been missed at meals and make choices from MyPlate (www.choosemyplate.gov) food groups: **Grains, Vegetables, Fruits, Dairy and Protein**

- Low sugar, whole-grain cereal squares with fresh fruit.
- Whole-grain tortilla wrap with chopped apples, raisins, low-fat cream cheese and cinnamon as a filling.
- Raw veggies (sliced peppers, cucumbers, zucchini; broccoli and cauliflower florets, cherry tomatoes, baby carrots) with low-fat cottage cheese dip. (Blenderize cottage cheese to a smooth consistency. Serve plain or add favorite herbs/spices.)
- Sliced bananas in a bowl with low-fat milk and a sprinkle of sugar.

Are planning and offering healthy snacks really something a busy parent, school, or after school program can achieve?

Yes! Plan ahead, ask the kids their ideas, keep it simple, and include at least 2 different food groups with each snack. Enjoy!

