

Fun Snack Ideas

Kids like to snack. Most children do best when they eat 4-6 times a day. Snacks timed about 2 hours before a meal can help curb the craving for non-nutritious foods. Here are some fun, easy-to-fix, nutritious snack ideas to try with your kids:

- ★ Milkshakes and fruit smoothies - Blend milk, juice, and crushed ice; or, blend low-fat milk or yogurt with fresh or frozen fruit(s). Try different varieties, such as strawberries, bananas, peaches, or other fruits.
- ★ Fruit juice popsicles - Freeze 100% fruit juices in ice cube trays or paper cups. Use popsicle sticks or rounded toothpicks* inserted in the juice for handles.
- ★ Peanut butter logs - Fill celery with peanut butter - add raisins* to the top of the peanut butter for "ants" on the log.
- ★ Frozen fruit - For a fun summer-time snack, peel and freeze bananas or freeze whole or sliced grapes*.
- ★ Crunchy bananas - Peel bananas. Roll them in peanut butter or yogurt and crushed, non-sugar-coated, ready-to-eat cereal. Freeze.
- ★ Cracker and/or fruit stacks - Stack whole grain crackers or apple rings with lowfat cheese and/or peanut butter.
- ★ Trail mix - Mix non-sugar-coated, ready-to-eat cereal with raisins* or other dried fruit; add a few nuts*.
- ★ Cinnamon toast - Toast whole wheat bread. Add a small amount of butter or margerine on top and sprinkle with cinnamon sugar. (Note: cinnamon sugar can be made with 2 tablespoons sugar and 2 teaspoons cinnamon - keep in a sugar shaker for easy use.)
- ★ Popcorn* - Choose low-fat varieties.
- ★ Cheese - Choose low-fat varieties of string cheese or individually wrapped packages for fun.
- ★ Hard-cooked eggs - Cut eggs in wedges or slices.



- ★ Dip, dip, dips - Kids love dipping sauces. Choose low-fat varieties of salad dressing, bean dip, yogurt, or pudding. Dip vegetable sticks (carrots*, celery*, cucumber, broccoli, cauliflower, bell pepper, squash), fruit slices (apple, pear, peach, orange, nectarine, papaya, mango) or berries.

*Some foods and serving items such as raisins, nuts, popcorn, grapes, carrots, celery, and toothpicks can pose a choking hazard for young children. Make wise choices. Cut foods into small, manageable pieces or avoid these items all together for young children.

Adapted from United States Department of Agriculture (2003). Fabulous fruits...versatile vegetables [on-line]. Available: <http://www.usda.gov/cnpp/Pubs/Brochures>; United States Department of Agriculture (2003). Nibbles for health: why snacks? [on-line]. Available: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/nibbles.html>; United States Department of Agriculture (1999). Tips for Using the Food Guide Pyramid for Young Children 2 to 6 years old [on-line]. Available: <http://www.usda.gov/cnpp/KidsPyra/Q&A.html>.