



Fact Sheet



Snacking the Healthy Way

To snack wisely choose foods from the Food Guide Pyramid as a guide. The Food Guide Pyramid has five food groups: bread and cereal, fruits, vegetables, meats, and milk. Choose the core of your diet from these food groups. A varied diet is important to acquire the over 40 different vitamins and minerals the body needs.

Keep your favorite snacks on hand. Stock your shelves with favorite breads, pretzels, graham crackers, raw vegetables (broccoli, cauliflower, carrots), low fat cheeses, yogurt, fruit, fruit juices, and vegetable juices, muffins and more. If you have children, it may be a good idea to have a snack drawer in the refrigerator. Have juice, pudding, low-fat cheeses, fruits, cut-up raw vegetables, and chunks of low-fat meats that the child can get for himself.

Ease up on foods with high calories. Some popular snacks are fried. That means fat and calories. Watch out for these. Pay attention to portion size. Many people eat enough for several servings. Limit your snacks to appropriate portion size such as 4 to 6 crackers, a piece of fruit, and a muffin.

Read labels on snack foods. Some foods contain hydrogenated fats such as palm, palm kernel, coconut, and cottonseed. These fats are sometimes found in cookies and bakery products. The word hydrogenated is the process of adding more hydrogen to vegetable oils. This makes them saturated and not very good for us. Always read the Nutrition Facts Food Label which will help you determine the fat, cholesterol, vitamin, mineral, and fiber content of foods.

HEALTHY SNACKING TIPS

- Spread your snacks throughout the day; try not to do all your snacking in the evening.
- Use snacks to fill the nutritional gaps in your diet.
- Be aware that adding snacks on top of your usual diet may lead to weight gain.
- Surround yourself with healthy snacks – stash them in your refrigerator, desk drawer, briefcase, backpack, gym bag, and car.
- Watch your portion sizes – many snacks are easy to overeat. Single-serve containers can help you keep portions in check.

HEALTHY SNACK IDEAS

- Apple or banana with peanut butter
- Cheese sandwich
- Carrot sticks or other veggies with low fat dressing
- Cereal with milk
- Fruit and yogurt smoothie
- Fortified cereal bar
- Fruit flavored yogurt
- Peanut butter and pretzels
- ¼ cup nuts
- Glass of plain or chocolate milk
- ¼ cup sunflower seeds

