

## 3 Great Reasons to Snack!

It used to be that three square meals were all you needed. Now, health experts recommend eating three small meals plus a couple of nutritious snacks throughout the day.

Here are a few great reasons to snack:

1

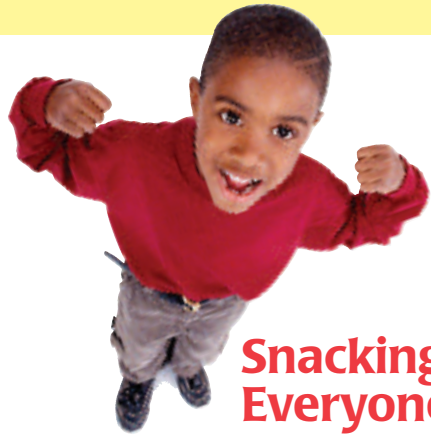
Healthy snacking keeps you feeling energized during your busy day and helps you beat afternoon fatigue.

2

Healthy snacking helps you get all of the nutrients your body needs to stay healthy and protect you from heart disease, stroke and other chronic diseases such as cancer and diabetes.

3

Healthy snacking is a good way to manage your hunger. It prevents you from overeating at the next meal and can help you control your weight.



## Snacking is for Everyone!

Children can't eat a lot of food at once because they have small stomachs. But, they still need energy and calories. Small meals and frequent snacks are important to keep kids active, alert and growing. Less active adults and seniors may also feel more comfortable eating smaller, more frequent meals.



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## What Makes a Healthy Snack?

Pick snacks that have lots of nutrients and fibre. The fibre will make you feel full, helping you to resist higher fat and higher calorie temptations.

As a general rule of thumb, try to choose a snack that contains foods from at least two of the four food groups in *Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating*. A few whole grain crackers (Grain Products) with lower-fat cheese (Milk Products) is a good example of a healthy snack. The carbohydrate in the crackers gives you immediate energy. By adding some lean protein and fat from the cheese, the snack takes longer to digest and gives you more sustained energy.

And, as always, watch the portion size. A snack is meant to be a mini-meal to tide you over until the next time you eat.



## The Four Food Groups in Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating are:

- Grain Products (5-12 servings/day)
- Vegetables and Fruit (5-10 servings/day)
- Milk Products (2-4 servings/day)
- Meat and Alternatives (2-3 servings/day)

**TIP:** Since we need to eat more whole grain products, vegetables and fruit, try to include these foods regularly in your snacks.

## Snacking Savvy

Don't feel guilty about snacking between meals but do try to make healthy choices. In many snack foods, such as cookies, potato chips and baked goods, the fat is invisible and the calories can quickly add up. Some processed snacks, like potato chips, salted pretzels and doughnuts can also contain quite a bit of sodium. To cut back on sodium, choose the unsalted versions of pretzels, nuts and crackers.

### Choose these healthier foods more often as part of your snacks

Whole grain crackers, muffins and breads

Fresh or dried fruit

Unsweetened fruit or vegetable juice or lower-fat milk

Plain, low-fat popcorn

Baked tortilla chips

Angel food cake

Whole grain or oatmeal granola bars

Lower-salt pretzels

Frozen yogurt or low-fat fruit yogurt

Arrowroot, melba toast, digestive or other plain cookies, gingersnaps, fig bars

Trail mix with whole grain cereal, nuts and seeds

## The Scoop on Sodium

Salt is made up of about 40% sodium and 60% chloride. When we talk about salt, we usually mean sodium. Processed foods make up about half of the sodium in our diets. Since the average North American diet contains too much sodium, it's wise to cut back on the amount of salt you eat. Choose processed or fast foods less often and add less salt when cooking. Limit your daily intake of sodium to 2400 mg. When you see "sodium-free" on a food label, it means that the food has less than 5 mg of sodium in the serving.

### Instead of...

Doughnuts or danishes

Fruit leathers

Fruit drinks or soda pop

Buttered or sugar-coated popcorn

Potato chips or cheesies

Cheesecake

Chocolate bar

Regular pretzels

Ice cream

Chocolate or cream-filled cookies

Candy

## Trans Fat

Trans fat is an unhealthy type of fat made from a chemical process called "partial hydrogenation". This process changes liquid oils into a hard, semi-solid form. Trans fat is found in many processed snack foods such as crackers, cookies and other baked foods. When it comes to your health, trans fat lowers the "good" HDL (High Density Lipoprotein) cholesterol and raises the "bad" LDL (Low Density Lipoprotein) cholesterol in your blood. Take a close look at food package labels. You can control how much trans fat you eat by choosing a snack that has low amounts of total fat and trans fat.



## Plan to Snack Every Day

How to **do it...**

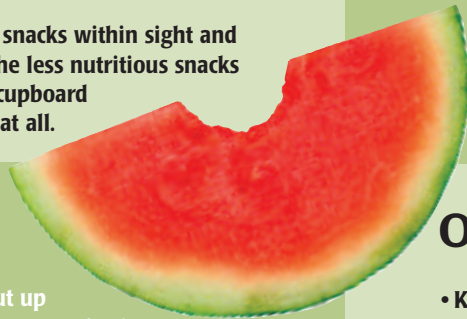


### At Home

- Fill your fridge with vegetables and fruit – almost all are low in fat and packed with important nutrients. From apples and baby carrots to peppers and watermelon, produce is always a refreshing and nutritious snack.
- Stock your pantry with quick and easy snacks: whole grain crackers and cereals, oatmeal, baked tortillas, brown rice cakes, fig bars, air-popped or low-fat microwavable popcorn, plain nuts, homemade cookies, applesauce, fruit cups, lower-fat puddings, dried fruit and trail mix.
- Keep your healthy snacks within sight and easy reach. Store the less nutritious snacks at the back of the cupboard or don't buy them at all.

### At Work

- Store fresh fruit, cut up veggies and low-fat yogurt in the refrigerator at work.
- Keep a snacking survival kit at your desk. Fill it with canned fruit, juice boxes, whole grain cereal and crackers, peanut butter, dried fruit, nuts and seeds.
- Serve whole grain muffins and breads along with a fresh fruit and veggie platter as refreshments at business meetings.



## Drink your Snack

Who says you have to eat your snack?

- Try a fruit smoothie made with lower-fat milk, yogurt or fortified soy beverage and a blend of your favourite fruits. Or choose a drinkable low-fat yogurt.
- Pick unsweetened fruit juice instead of fruit flavoured drinks.
- Avoid soft drinks which have little nutritional value and a lot of calories.

### At the Grocery Store

- Spend more time in the produce section and steer clear of the aisles that are filled with fatty, salty snacks.
- Look for foods with the Heart and Stroke Foundation's Health Check™ logo. These foods are healthy choices. For more information visit [www.healthcheck.org](http://www.healthcheck.org)
- Get used to the new nutrition labels on food packages. Read the label and choose foods with the following health claim:



***"A healthy diet low in saturated and trans fats may reduce the risk of heart disease. "Name of food" is low in saturated and trans fats."***

### On the Go

- Keep healthy snacks in your purse or briefcase to save you time and money. Juice boxes, lower-salt pretzels, raisins and single serving milk puddings are just a few ideas.
- Look for fruit juice, low-fat yogurt or flavoured rice cakes in vending machines.
- Order whole grain bagels, grilled chicken sandwiches, chili, baked potatoes, low-fat milkshakes and fruit juice at fast food outlets.

For easy, delicious, heart healthy recipes visit [www.heartandstroke.ca](http://www.heartandstroke.ca)

## Snack Ideas for the Whole Family



**Celery sticks dipped in peanut butter. A slice of leftover veggie pizza. A cold glass of orange juice with a small low-fat oatmeal muffin. Use your imagination when making healthy snacks for you and your family! Here are more ideas to keep you snacking.**

- Half a toasted whole grain bagel topped with lower-fat cottage cheese and sliced apples
- Grapes and a cheese stick
- Lean deli meats like roast turkey or ham on a whole grain bun with a glass of vegetable juice
- Cereal parfait: low-fat frozen yogurt, diced fruit and whole grain cereal in a cup
- Baked tortilla chips with lots of salsa
- A cup of orange juice with a handful of unsalted nuts
- Raw veggies with a low-fat yogurt or hummus dip
- Bean dip or lower-fat cheese and whole grain crackers
- Fresh fruit with a vanilla yogurt dip
- Peanut butter and banana wrap in a whole wheat tortilla
- Raisin toast with apple butter and a glass of milk
- A hard boiled egg and glass of tomato juice
- Low-fat cottage cheese with pineapple or peach slices
- A bowl of hot oatmeal cereal made with low-fat milk and topped with a sliced banana
- A whole wheat pita pocket stuffed with cold leftover chicken and grated carrots
- Canned tuna or salmon with light mayonnaise on high-fibre crispbreads

Try recipes from Anne Lindsay's **"The New Lighthearted Cookbook"**.

Visit our web site at [www.heartandstroke.ca](http://www.heartandstroke.ca) or call 1-888-HSF-INFO (473-4636).

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## Healthy Snacks

Simple steps to making healthy choices



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