Healthy snacks are important!

- Snacks, like meals, contribute to a child’s growth and development.
- Kids who eat healthier snacks are more likely to have healthier eating habits later in life.
- More than a quarter of the kids’ daily calories can come from snacks.

Keys for Beverages

- Keep it simple: Stick with water or milk.
- Juices, even 100% juice, are often sugar-rich and do not contain the healthy fiber found in fruit that is needed for healthy bodies.
- Avoid sodas/pop and other energy drinks; they usually have 5 or more teaspoons of sugar per serving!

Tips for Caregivers

- “Would you like a pear or an apple?” Offer choices.
- Create a positive snack environment. Include children in snack preparation when possible to help them get excited about what they eat!
- Serve snacks in small portions and when possible at least 1-2 hours prior to a meal so it does not ruin the child’s appetite.
- Encourage sitting at a table and not wandering around with food.
- Remember, healthy eating occurs over time, and is not necessarily limited at one meal.
- Pick foods with different textures.

Low-Budget Options

- Buy fruits or vegetables that are on sale. Dried or frozen fruits/vegetables (without added sugars) are also good alternatives (and often cheaper).

Tips for the Picky Snackers

- Remember that picky eating is typical for many preschoolers as they become independent.
- Try serving a new food alongside a familiar food.
- Offer different foods from day to day.
- Be patient. It may take up to 20 tries for a child to accept a new food.

Other Resources:

1. From the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA):
   - Preschool Nutrition | Food and Nutrition Information Center | NAL | USDA
   - Preschoolers | MyPlate

2. From the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP):
   - Nutrition & Fitness - HealthyChildren.org

3. Other references:
   - Snacks for Preschoolers (for Parents) - Nemours KidsHealth
   - Sports Drinks and Energy Drinks (for Parents) - Nemours KidsHealth
   - My Toddler Hates Vegetables. What Can I Do? (for Parents) - Nemours KidsHealth
   - healthysnacksen060604 adr.indd (amerimedcpr.com)
   - Healthy Snacks for Preschoolers .pub (shasta.ca.us)
FOR CHILDREN

Snacks and Beverages in Preschool and Kindergarten

Try These Healthy Snack Ideas!

• Homemade trail mix
• Ants on a log (peanut butter on celery with raisins on top)
• A vegetable (carrots, celery or peppers) with Ranch dressing (1 tablespoon)
• A vegetable paired with hummus
• Cheese stick + raisins
• Clementine or Mandarin oranges
• Cottage cheese

Pick two foods, each from a different food group, and pair to make a healthy snack.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FRUITS</th>
<th>VEGETABLES</th>
<th>GRAINS</th>
<th>PROTEIN</th>
<th>DAIRY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Half an apple, sliced</td>
<td>Baby carrots</td>
<td>Bread, 100% whole grain</td>
<td>Hummus</td>
<td>Milk, low-fat or fat free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half a banana</td>
<td>Bell pepper, sliced</td>
<td>Crackers, 100% whole grain</td>
<td>Sliced, lunchmeat</td>
<td>String cheese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grapes, cut in half</td>
<td>Cherry tomatoes</td>
<td>Low-fat popcorn</td>
<td>Eggs</td>
<td>Plain yogurt, low fat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strawberries, cut</td>
<td>Snap peas</td>
<td></td>
<td>Peanut butter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oranges, slices or clementine</td>
<td>Fresh or frozen options</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bean dips</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raspberries or blackberries</td>
<td>Canned veggies (low or no added salt)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nuts (age appropriate or cut)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresh, frozen, or canned fruits (water or 100% juice)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ohio AAP PMP Mobile App

Search Parenting at Meal and Playtime on Apple Store or Google Play

App Highlights...

• Physician-endorsed materials for parents to access on-demand
• Resources for parents organized by age
• Text reminders sent monthly and/or for age milestones
• Easy sign-up
• Videos on feeding, play, nutrition and more

Create edible art with your healthy snacks!

These handouts are the property of the Ohio Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics and the Ohio Department of Health and may not be altered without express permission.

http://ohioaap.org/projects/PMP

12/2021