



snacks

for a healthy smile and child

Some nutritious foods, like raisins and dried fruit, are not tooth friendly. They stick to teeth and are hard to brush away. Therefore, it is best to limit these foods as a snack.



Pass the cheese, please!

Cheese is both nutritious and healthy for teeth. In fact, eating a piece of hard cheese, like cheddar, after a meal or snack prevents cavities. Cheese contains calcium and phosphorous which help to prevent tooth decay. Make cheese part of your child's snack and help protect their smile!

Milk and alternatives, and vegetables and fruit are the most under-consumed food groups. Plan to include choices from these two food groups at snack time.



Chocolate milk: healthy for bodies and for teeth!

Chocolate milk has the same 16 essential nutrients as white milk to help kids grow and build strong bones and teeth. It also has the same nutrients that promote dental health. Although it contains some added sugar, research shows that chocolate milk, when consumed in moderation, does not cause cavities.

Healthy Tip: Serve milk with meals and water with snacks.

Wait a minute!

Foods that are high in calories, fat, sugar or salt are not good snack choices. These foods have low nutritional value and are not part of the food groups. Serve them only once in a while.

Snacks to limit

- potato chips, nacho chips, cheese puffs
- high sugar cereals
- cakes, cookies
- granola bars with chocolate or icing
- sticky buns, donuts, pastries
- fruit flavoured roll ups and snacks
- ice cream, milkshakes
- candy bar flavoured milk
- frozen treats
- chocolate bars, candy, gum containing sugar, marshmallows
- soft drinks, fruit drinks, iced tea, slush drinks, sport drinks
- gelatin
- honey
- pepperoni sticks
- salami, pepperoni, bologna or sausage-type deli meat



Hints for a Healthy Smile

- Limit sugary treats that stay in the mouth for a long time, like hard candy or lollipops.
- Limit soft, sticky sweets that get stuck in your child's teeth.
- Encourage children to brush their teeth at least twice a day with a small amount of fluoride toothpaste and to floss daily. This is the best way to prevent tooth decay. Make sure they clean the surfaces of their teeth and along the gum line where plaque tends to collect.
- If teeth can't be brushed after a meal or snack, your child can eat a piece of hard cheese, like cheddar, or chew a piece of sugarless gum that contains xylitol to help prevent cavities.
- Arrange regular dental and dental hygiene check-ups for your child. Ask your dental professional how to protect teeth from cavities through the use of fluoride and sealants.



The Alberta Dental Association and College and The College of Registered Dental Hygienists of Alberta agree:

Healthy teeth and gums are very important to a person's overall health, regardless of age. Make caring for them a priority for you and your family . . . eat a balanced diet, brush and floss daily and visit your dental professional regularly.

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alberta dental
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SNACKS - For a healthy smile and child

Children need energy and nutrients for proper growth and development. They need to eat more often than adults – about every two or three hours. Snacks are like mini-meals that help them meet their nutritional needs and keep them energized throughout the day. Research shows that children who are well-nourished perform better in school.

Nutrition and dental health go hand in hand

Some snacks are better choices than others for children's teeth. Snacks that are high in sugar can cause cavities, especially if they stick to teeth or are eaten too often. Choosing nutritious snacks, limiting sweets and sugary foods and proper dental care will help to ensure a healthy smile and child!



Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide

Follow these three tips for choosing nutritious snacks every day:

1. Follow the rainbow of Canada's Food Guide.

Think nutrition first and choose foods from at least two food groups when planning snacks.

2. Plan for snack time.

Plan two to three snack times every day at the same times. This will prevent nibbling all day long and reduce the number of times teeth are exposed to sugar.

3. Offer variety.

A variety of foods means a variety of nutrients, so offer children different foods to snack on. If you plan your snack menu daily, you will serve sugary foods less often and also be able to serve your child a variety of healthy snacks.

For more information or a copy of Canada's Food Guide visit Health Canada's website at www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide.



Below is a guide to help you plan nutritious snacks.

Following Canada's Food Guide

Vegetables and Fruit

Healthy Snacks

- fresh vegetables
- fresh, frozen or canned fruit
- unsweetened applesauce
- 100% pure vegetable juice
- 100% pure fruit juice*



Healthy Tips and Tricks

- Limit juice to ½ cup (125 ml) per day
- Look for canned fruit with no added sugar
- Use fresh or frozen fruit to make smoothies

Grain Products

- bread, buns, mini bagels, pitas, tortillas, crackers
- whole grain cereal
- oatmeal
- whole grain muffin
- plain popcorn *
- rice cakes



- Offer a variety of whole grain products
- Enjoy making homemade muffins with your child
- Try oatmeal with berries for a filling snack

Milk and Alternatives

- milk/chocolate milk
- cheese/cheese strings
- cottage cheese
- yogurt (including drinks & tubes)
- pudding (made with milk)
- fortified soy beverage



- Select lower fat yogurts and cheeses
- Make homemade pudding (with milk), it's a fun activity for kids of all ages
- Freeze yogurt tubes for a cool treat

Meat and Alternatives

- peanut butter
- nuts or seeds *
- lean deli meat (e.g. ham, turkey, chicken, roast beef)
- eggs
- canned salmon or tuna
- hummus or cooked legumes



- Try unsweetened peanut butter – it's better for teeth
- Offer pumpkin or sunflower seeds for a change
- Serve hard boiled eggs, hot or cold, for a quick and easy snack

* these foods may cause choking in young children.

Two food group snack ideas

- whole wheat crackers and cheddar cheese
- raw veggies with hummus
- yogurt and fresh fruit
- pudding (made with milk) and a banana
- celery sticks with cheese
- dry non-sugary cereal and a yogurt tube
- chocolate milk and a small whole grain muffin
- baby carrots and cottage cheese
- sliced pear and Swiss cheese
- peanut butter on a mini bagel
- rice cake with melted cheese
- fresh fruit and a cheese string
- graham wafers and pear slices
- whole grain cereal with milk
- whole wheat pita with lean meat
- cottage cheese with pineapple or peach slices
- cherry tomatoes and gouda cheese
- scrambled egg in whole wheat tortilla
- tuna on melba toast
- Very Berry Smoothie (see recipe)



Very Berry Smoothie

- 1 cup (250 ml) milk
- 1 cup (250 ml) vanilla yogurt
- 1 cup (250 ml) frozen berries

In the blender, blend all ingredients until smooth. Makes 6 – ½ cup (125ml) servings.

