



YOUNG FAMILY PROGRAMS

# family focus

## NUTRITIOUS SNACKS FOR CHILDREN

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By design or default, the snacking habit is now a very real part of the American pattern of life. The socialability and satisfaction derived from coffee breaks, TV nibbles, party refreshments or preschool snacks all point to the fact that, for most of us, a multi-meal eating plan is desired and here to stay.

### Kids Often Need Snacks

A child's desire for a snack is both socially and physiologically based. It may be associated with a time to sit and talk to mom after school...or to rest during hard play...or as "something to do" with playmates. Young children in particular may honestly feel hunger between meals. Often it is difficult for a small child to eat one-third of the daily food needs at one time, making it desirable to eat smaller quantities of food at more frequent intervals.

### Ideally: SNACKS + MEALS = BALANCED DIET

Snacks offered to children must not be thought of as extras or additions, but as integrated parts of a total daily meal plan. They should complement, not substitute for regular meals however. Appropriate selections from the Basic Four food groups (see chart on back) for both regular meals and between meal snacks will insure that a growing child receives essential nutrients needed for growth. Additional calories to provide optimum energy can be provided by extra servings from these food groups or by fats or sweets. A child's appetite may vary widely making him uninterested in snacks one day and a heavy snacker the next. Keep in mind that on days when larger snacks are consumed, his appetite may be smaller at regular meal time.

### Make New Snack "Trials" Fun

Reserve a moment or two to help your child learn how to select and enjoy nutritious snacks.

- -When possible, allow children to help prepare the snack.
- -Serve foods in small pieces that can be eaten easily. Many children enjoy finger foods.
- -Be enthusiastic about what you are serving. Parental attitudes can greatly influence a child's willingness to try new things.
- -Introduce new foods when children are not overly tired or excited.
- -Try just one new food at a time - in small quantities. Try it again a few days later.

### Sweets are Best Served with Regular Meals

Dental research has shown that in the interest of lowering the incidence of dental caries, sweets are best eaten at regular meal times when the action of accompanying foods partially removes the sweet substances from the teeth. Studies also indicate that the frequency of eating sugar rich foods and their physical form are important in the control of tooth decay. Sticky, sweet foods eaten between meals are frequent offenders. Since they are likely to adhere to the teeth for a considerable length of time, the chance of increased acid production-- one of the early reactions in the tooth decay process-- is likely to occur.

The snack you choose for your child will depend upon the occasion, the weather, the cost, food on hand, preparation time, your child's likes and dislikes and... should help fulfill these daily nutritional requirements.

#### Basic Four Daily Recommendations for Children

Food Group	1-2 Years	2-4 Years	4-6 Years	7-10 Years
I. Milk	2-3 cups	3 cups	3 cups	3 cups
II. Meats, Eggs, Etc.	2 servings	2 servings, 2 oz. each	3 servings, 2 oz. each	2 servings, 4 oz. each or 3 servings, 3 oz. each
III. Vegetables and Fruits	3 servings, 1-2 Tablespoons each	3 servings, 1/4 cup each	4-5 servings 1/4 cup each	4 servings, 1/2 cup each
IV. Cereals and Breads	2 servings	3 servings, 1 oz. each	3 servings	4 servings
Fats and sweets (as desired in addition to other foods).				

#### SUGGESTED SNACKS

##### Milk Group

Glass of milk, flavored milk, hot cocoa  
 Cheese cubes-plain, on picks or pretzels  
 Cheese dips-cream cheese or cheese spread thinned with milk; cottage cheese seasoned with chili sauce, salt, Tabasco  
 Yogurt - plain or with fresh or canned fruit  
 Custard  
 Ice Cream  
 Fruit milkshakes - banana, berry, peach  
 Milk puddings - cooked or instant  
 Cream soups  
 Cottage cheese - plain or in ice cream cone sprinkled with cinnamon or sugar

##### Meat Group

Cold meat cubes, rolls, sticks or slices  
 Nuts (not for children under two)  
 Deviled eggs or hard cooked egg wedges  
 Peanut butter - sandwiches, on crackers, as a dip for vegetables  
 Kabobs - frank and cheese cubes on pretzels or toothpicks  
 Treasure logs - thin slices of meat rolled around cheese  
 Tuna salad on crackers

##### Fruit and Vegetable Group

Fresh fruit (selected according to season)  
 Raw vegetables - celery sticks, carrot curls or sticks, cauliflowerettes, cherry tomatoes or tomato wedges served plain or with cheese dip  
 Fruit and vegetable juices  
 Merry-go-rounds (apple slices spread with peanut butter)  
 Kabobs - pineapple, bananas, and apples on picks  
 Ants on logs - celery filled with peanut butter and dotted with raisins  
 Fruit juice popsicles  
 Applesauce

##### Bread and Cereal Group

Nuts and bolts - unsugared cereal, peanuts, pretzel sticks heated together with butter, soy sauce and garlic salt  
 Ready-to-eat cereal mixed with small cheese cubes or raisins  
 "Fancy" sandwiches cut by children with cookie cutters and spread with soft cheese, meat spread, peanut butter etc.  
 Cones (flat bottomed) filled with cereal, nuts and bolts, fruit chunks or pudding  
 Enriched or whole grain crackers, cereal, bread, melba toast, muffins, biscuits