

More ideas for parents

- ♦ The easiest way to avoid unhealthy snacks is simply not to buy them on a regular basis
- ♦ Children will tend to snack on what is readily available, so stock the fridge and cupboard with healthy snacks and let them make their own choice and develop healthier habits
- ♦ Set limits on snacks like cookies, chips and chocolate. They taste good but tend to be high in calories, fat, sugar and salt and provide few nutrients. Explain that these are treats for occasional use
- ♦ Limit soft drinks and other sugary beverages as they can interfere with the appetite at meal times. They are also high in calories and may contribute to excess weight gain, and they can be harmful to teeth
- ♦ Juice should also be limited to one small glass daily - encourage your child to eat fruit instead
- ♦ Do not use snacks as a reward



Making your own healthy snacks with your children can be fun!

The Caribbean Food Groups

FOOD GROUP	EXAMPLE OF FOODS
STAPLES	Oat flakes, rice, pasta, cou-cou, corn, bread, biscuit, English potato, yam, sweet potato, breadfruit, cassava, plantain, green banana
LEGUMES	Dried peas & beans, nuts, peanut butter, soy products (granules & chunks, veggie burgers, tofu, soy milk) bean dips like hummus
FOODS FROM ANIMALS	Meat, chicken, turkey, fish (including canned fish), eggs, milk, yogurt, cheese
FRUITS	Banana, pawpaw, mango, orange, cherries, soursop, guavas, golden apple, grapefruit, pineapple - fruit can be fresh, canned or dried 100% fruit juice
VEGETABLES	Spinach, broccoli, cabbage, pumpkin, string beans, carrots, squash, lettuce, cucumber, tomato - vegetables can be fresh, frozen or canned 100% vegetable juice
FATS & OILS	Vegetable oils, margarine, butter, mayonnaise, avocado pear Sweets are also included in this food group

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Childhood Nutrition Series



Healthy Foods for Children & Young People **SNACKS**

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Nutritious Snacks

Snacks are foods and beverages used between meals and, if chosen carefully, they will contribute some additional nutrients and energy.

Snacks provide a great opportunity to sneak in some of the five or more servings of fruits and vegetables that are recommended each day.



When preparing snacks for children and young people, you should try to include a variety of foods from the **Caribbean Food Groups** (see chart overleaf).



Foods used for snacks should be low in saturated fat, trans fat, sodium, and added sugar.



Choosing snacks

Many convenience snack foods are high in fat, salt and sugar. Although snacks should appeal to the appetite, they should never be selected based on advertising, packaging, or taste alone.

When buying convenience snack foods read labels and try to choose items that contain 100 calories (or less) per serving.



Timing of snacks

Snacks given too close to meal times can discourage children from eating their meal, and may lead to more snacking later on. Allow at least two hours between snacks and meals.



Ideas for nutritious snacks

- ◆ Sandwiches made with whole wheat or multigrain bread
- ◆ Whole wheat or multigrain crackers with low fat cheese or peanut butter
- ◆ Whole grain cereals like oats, granola, shredded wheat and raisin bran with fat free milk or soy milk
- ◆ Nuts or trail mix (in moderate amounts)
- ◆ Fat free milk or soy beverages
- ◆ Yogurt - ultra heat treated yogurts (UHT) do not need refrigeration
- ◆ Fruit: fresh, dried, or canned (in water or juice), or snack-size apple sauce
- ◆ A handful of cherry tomatoes or vegetable sticks (sweet pepper, broccoli, cucumber, carrot) with a dip like hummus or salsa
- ◆ Plain popcorn or baked chips
- ◆ Home-baked oatmeal or bran muffins, oatmeal cookies, cassava pone, whole wheat coconut or banana bread, or fruit cake using recipes with less sugar and fat



Equal quantities of fruit purées (like apple sauce or mashed banana) can replace margarine or oil in recipes