

# Healthy Snacks for Adults



## Healthy Snacking Can Be Part of Healthy Eating

Healthy snacking is another way to help you get all the nutrients you need to stay healthy and feel energized. Snacks can keep your blood glucose (sugar) levels stable throughout the day if you find your energy level drops between meals. This can help to curb your feeling of hunger between meals and stop you from eating too much at mealtimes. Remember, not everyone needs snacks. In fact, too much snacking, could lead to unwanted weight gain.

- The keys to healthy snacking are to:
- Choose the foods you snack on wisely.
- Watch the portion size of the food you eat.
- Snack when you are hungry.

This fact sheet provides you with tips on choosing healthy snacks and healthy portion sizes.

## Steps You Can Take

- Plan healthy snacks by using Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide ([www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide](http://www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide)). Try to include foods from at least 2 of the 4 food groups for each snack.
- Keep a variety of healthy ready-to-eat snacks on hand. Examples are:
  - Fruit with low-fat yogurt.
  - Vegetables with low-fat dip or low fat cottage cheese.
  - Whole grain crackers with hummus, peanut butter or low-fat cheese.
- Buy small packages of food or take small portions from larger packages. Don't snack directly from a large container, bag or box.
- Eat slowly.
- Save snacks that are higher in calories, fat, sugar, or salt (sodium) and lower in fibre for special occasions. These foods include cookies, cakes, donuts, chocolates, ice cream, chips, and deep-fried foods. Choose small portion sizes of these snacks and try to combine them with a healthier option. For example:

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- Have one cookie with a piece of fruit rather than 2 or 3 cookies.
- Portion out a small serving of chips and have it with some raw vegetables.
- Put a small scoop (golf ball size) of ice cream in a bowl and top it with fresh or frozen fruits.
- Drink water often. Limit servings of regular pop and fruit drinks. They are high in calories and low in nutrients.
- Learn to recognize true hunger and fullness. Skip the urge to nibble when you are bored, tired, upset or stressed. Try something else like walking the dog, going for a jog, reading a book, writing in a journal or listening to your favourite music.
- Avoid snacking while watching TV, working or playing on the computer, reading, or driving. This is called “mindless eating” and can often cause people to eat more than they would if they were paying attention.
- Limit snacks to no more than 3 per day.

Here are some health snack ideas for you:

	Healthy Snack Ideas
Smaller snacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 medium fresh fruit (e.g. banana, apple or orange)</li> <li>• 250 mL (1 cup) fresh, frozen or canned fruit (in water or light syrup) e.g. peaches, mandarins, grapes, blueberries, strawberries or raspberries</li> <li>• 1 large stalk of celery with 60 mL (¼ cup) low fat, low sodium cottage cheese</li> <li>• 175 mL (¾ cup) low fat yogurt</li> <li>• 500 mL (2 cups) air-popped or low fat microwave popcorn</li> <li>• 3-4 plain cookies such as arrowroot, ginger snaps, or graham crackers</li> <li>• Low salt pretzels (30 twists or 18 g)</li> <li>• 250 mL (1 cup) of mini carrots, cut up cucumbers, zucchinis, cherry tomatoes or other raw vegetables with low fat salad dressing or dip</li> <li>• 30 mL (2 Tbsp) of nuts such as unsalted peanuts, almonds, hazelnuts, cashews, walnuts or soy nuts</li> <li>• 60 mL (¼ cup) dried fruit (e.g. apricots, prunes, dates or raisins)</li> </ul>

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Larger snacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 slice of whole grain or whole wheat bread or flat bread such as pita, naan, or roti with 15 mL (1 Tbsp) of hummus</li> <li>• ½ whole grain or whole wheat bagel with 15 mL (1 Tbsp) of peanut butter or nut butter</li> <li>• 7 whole grain crackers or 2 melba toasts with 30 grams (1 oz) of low fat, low sodium cottage cheese or canned light tuna</li> <li>• 250 mL (1 cup) fruit smoothie made with low fat yogurt, soy milk or low fat milk and a blend of your favourite fruits</li> <li>• 1 English muffin with 15 mL (1 Tbsp) of melted low fat cheese and apple slices</li> <li>• 250 mL (1 cup) of low fat plain milk or chocolate milk and a banana</li> <li>• 250 mL (1 cup) of unsweetened applesauce and 1 small bran muffin</li> <li>• 60 mL (¼ cup) of homemade or prepackaged trail mix (dry cereal, dried fruit and unsalted nuts and seeds)</li> <li>• 250 mL (1 cup) fresh fruit low fat yogurt parfait. Layer vanilla yogurt with mandarin oranges or berries. Sprinkle with a spoonful of trail mix (above)</li> <li>• 60 mL (¼ cup) of unsalted nuts and 1 medium fresh fruit (e.g. plum, nectarine or pear)</li> </ul>

### Tips on Reading Food Labels

Use the food labels on pre-packaged foods to help you make healthier choices. Look for a Nutrition Fact table. It will tell you the serving size and the amount of the listed nutrients in each serving. It will list the calories, total fat, saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, sodium and fibre.

The percent Daily Value (% DV) column in the Nutrition Facts table shows you if a specific amount of food has a little or a lot of a nutrient. 5% DV or

less is a little and 15% DV or more is a lot of the nutrients. Compare foods. Choose foods with a lower % DV of fat, saturated and trans fats, cholesterol, and sodium. Choose foods with a higher % DV of fibre, vitamins A and C, calcium and iron.

### Additional Resources

Health Canada, Interactive Nutrition Labeling Tool

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/in-an/label-etiquet/nutrition/cons/dv-vq/interact-eng.php>

EatRight Ontario website. Watch videos for snack ideas and label reading tips. Read more on easy snack ideas.

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