Smart Snacking

Have you found yourself reaching for a snack to eat? We all have before!

Snacks may get a bad reputation for commonly referring to high-calorie foods like chips, desserts, soda. However, snacks are any food that is eaten in between a main meal and there can be many positives to snacking. Let’s look at a few.

Snacks…
• Provide a boost in energy if several hours have passed between meals.
• Help your body recover after exercising.
• Provide extra nutrients when choosing certain snacks.
• Can help maintain adequate nutrition if unable to eat full meals.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020-2025 includes recommendations for nutrient-dense snacks. More satisfying snacks include protein and fiber. Think of pairing your carbohydrate source (fruits, vegetables, popcorn, crackers) with a protein source (yogurt, nuts, cheese, hummus). You can also think of pairing tastes like crunchy with creamy or sweet with savory.

So how can you reap the benefits of snacking? Plan your snacks similarly to how you plan your meals. Whether you are at work, in school, at home, or on the go, snacking can help you achieve your nutritious goals. Make sure to have fun with it!
Crunchy Granola

Consider pairing this delicious snack with yogurt, fruit, or milk of your choice. It can also be eaten on its own!

**Ingredients**
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar, packed
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 1 1/4 teaspoons vegetable oil
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 cups rolled oats
- 1 cup almonds
- 2/3 cup raisins

**Directions**
1. In a 1-quart saucepan, combine sugar, honey, oil, cinnamon and vanilla. Stir over low heat until sugar dissolves.
2. Remove from heat and mix in oats. Spread over the bottom of a lightly oiled baking sheet.
3. Bake at 350°F for 10 minutes.
4. Sprinkle almonds over the top and bake another 10 minutes until almonds are golden brown.
5. Cool completely. Mix with raisins in a bowl and store in an airtight container.

**Makes 16 servings**
Choosing: Choose apples that are firm and lack mealliness or softness. Apples should be free of bruises, decay, or insect damage.

Storing: Apples can be stored in the fridge for 4-6 weeks. Apples ripen 6-10 times faster at room temperature than if they were refrigerated.

Preparing: Wash apples by rinsing in cool water just before eating. If cutting raw apples to be eaten later, the cut surface may darken when exposed to air. Protect cut apples by mixing with lemon or orange juice.

Uses: Apples can be eaten as is. They can also be made into applesauce, baked goods, in salads, and more!

Nutrition: Apples are a good source of fiber. One medium-sized apple contains 4 grams of fiber when eaten with the skin. Fiber helps with digestion and steady blood sugar levels.

Fun Fact: The saying, “An apple a day keeps the doctor away.” comes from an old English adage, “To eat an apple before going to bed will make the doctor beg his bread.”

### Our Favorite Applesauce

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<th>Ingredients</th>
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<td>6 medium apples, washed, cored and diced</td>
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<td>1 cup water (or more as needed)</td>
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<td>1 teaspoon ground cinnamon</td>
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<th>Directions</th>
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<td>1. Put all the ingredients in the pot and put it on the stove. Turn the heat to high and cook until it just comes to a boil (you’ll hear it first but may have to look at the sides of the pot to see the bubbles).</td>
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<td>2. Lower the heat to low, cover the pot, and cook until the apples are falling apart tender, 30 to 45 minutes, stirring every few minutes to make sure the apples aren’t sticking. If the mixture seems dry at any point, add another 1/4 cup water. Set the cooked apples aside to cool a bit, about 10 minutes.</td>
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<td>3. Mash the apples using the potato masher or fork, then set aside to cool until just warm. Serve right away, or transfer to an airtight container and refrigerate until cold, or up to 1 week.</td>
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Kids in the Kitchen

Engaging children in the kitchen can motivate them to try new foods, be more comfortable with cooking, and spend time together as a family. Here are some ways to involve younger and older children into the kitchen.

Younger Children:
• Pick at least one new fruit or vegetable when shopping.
• Wash the produce or rinse canned beans.
• Measure dried pasta, beans, vegetables, or rice.
• Stir ingredients.
• Mash potatoes with a masher or fork.
• Add pre-measured ingredients to a recipe.

Older Children:
• Peel and slice carrots, cucumbers, or potatoes.
• Flip pancakes.
• Form meatballs or cookie dough balls.
• Thread food onto skewers.
• Make a side dinner dish or snack.
• Make their own meal like a pizza.

Want some ideas for family-friendly recipes? Check out Click ‘N Cook’s collaboration with ChopChop Family on clickncook.org.