

Healthy Snacks for Adults

Healthy Snacking Can Be Part of Healthy Eating

Snacks are foods or drinks eaten between meals. Healthy snacking, as part of a healthy diet, is a great way to get all the nutrients you need. Nutrients help you stay healthy and give you energy. Snacks can keep your blood glucose (sugar) levels stable throughout the day. This can help to curb your feeling of hunger between meals and stop you from eating too much at mealtimes.

The keys to healthy snacking are:

- the foods you choose
- the amount you eat
- how often you snack

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. Try to include foods from at least 2 of the 4 food groups for each snack.
- Limit your snacks to no more than three a day. Aim for snacks with less than 200 calories each (see examples in the chart below).
- Keep a variety of healthy ready-to-eat snacks on hand. Examples of healthy ready-to-eat snacks are fruit with low fat yogurt, vegetables with light dip or low fat cottage cheese, whole grain crackers with hummus, peanut butter or low fat cheese.
- Watch your portion size. Buy small packages of food or take small portions from larger packages. Eat slowly. Don't snack directly

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from a large container, bag or box.

- Choose foods that are higher in calories, fat, sugar, or salt (sodium) and lower in fibre less often. These foods include cookies, cakes, chocolates, ice cream, chips, and deep-fried foods. If you can't resist eating these foods, try to eat only a small amount. For example, instead of eating two cookies, eat one cookie and some fresh fruit. Or put a small scoop (golf ball size) of ice cream in a small bowl and top it with fresh or frozen fruits.
- Drink water often. Water has no calories. Water quenches your thirst and helps you feel full.
- 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.

Here are some healthy snack ideas for you:

<i>Calories</i>	<i>Healthy Snack Ideas</i>
Less than 100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 medium fresh fruit (e.g. banana, pear, apple or orange). • 250 mL (1 cup) fresh/frozen/canned cantaloupe, berries (e.g. cherries, blueberries, strawberries, raspberries) or grapes. • 1 large stalk of celery with ¼ cup low fat cottage cheese. • 250 mL (1 cup) mixed green salad with 1 Tbsp low fat salad dressing. • 125 mL (½ cup) low fat yogurt. • 500 mL (2 cups) air-popped or low fat microwave popcorn. • 3-4 arrowroot cookies, ginger snaps, or plain graham crackers. • Low salt pretzels (30 twists or 18 grams).

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 250 mL (1 cup) of mini carrots, cut up cucumbers, zucchinis, cherry tomatoes or other raw vegetables. • 2 Tbsp of nuts such as unsalted peanuts, almonds, hazelnuts, cashews or walnuts.
100 to 200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 slice of whole grain/whole wheat bread or flat bread (e.g. Pita, Naan, or Roti) with 1 Tbsp of hummus. • ½ whole grain or whole wheat bagel with 1 Tbsp of peanut butter or nut butter. • 250 mL (1 cup) fresh fruit low fat yogurt parfait. Layer vanilla yogurt with mandarin oranges or berries. Sprinkle with granola. • 7 whole grain crackers or 2 melba toasts with 33 grams (1 oz) of low fat cottage cheese or light canned tuna. • 250 mL (1 cup) fruit smoothie made with yogurt, soy or low-fat milk and a blend of your favourite fruits. • 1 English muffin with 1 Tbsp of melted low fat cheese and apple slices. • 250 mL (1 cup) of plain milk or chocolate milk (skim, 1% M.F. or 2% M.F.). • 250 mL (1 cup) of unsweetened applesauce. • A bag of homemade trail mix (60 mL or ¼ cup of mini shredded wheat, 2 Tbsp of dried cranberries and 2 Tbsp of almonds or chopped walnuts). • 1 small bran muffin. • Unsalted soy nuts 60 mL (¼ cup). • 125 mL (½ cup) milk pudding.

Tips on Reading Food Labels

Reading food labels tells you if a food is a healthy choice. Look for a Nutrition Fact Table on packaged foods and drinks. It will tell you the

serving size and the amount of some nutrients in each serving. It will list the total fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium and fibre.

The percent Daily Value (% DV) column in the Nutrition Facts Table shows the amount of a nutrient in food compared to the average amount of a nutrient recommended each day. Choose foods with a lower % DV of fat, saturated and trans fat, cholesterol, and sodium. Choose foods with a higher % DV of fibre, vitamins A and C, calcium and iron. To learn more about how to read food labels, see the following links:

- Canadian Diabetes Association, Dietitians of Canada. "Healthy Eating is in Store for You - Nutrition Labelling Fact Sheets" www.healthyeatinginstore.ca/pdf/ENG_BW_FactSheet.pdf.
- Canadian Diabetes Association, Dietitians of Canada. "Healthy Eating is in Store for You - Frequently Asked Questions About Nutrient Content Claims Healthy Eating is in Store for You - Nutrition Labelling Fact Sheets" www.healthyeatinginstore.ca/pdf/ENG_RGB_FAQ.pdf.



Additional Resources

- "Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide" www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide. For a free guide, phone 1-800-622-6232.
- "Canada's Physical Activity Guide" www.paguide.com. For a free guide, phone 1-888-334-9769.
- EATracker www.eatracker.ca. Get personalized feedback on your daily food and activity choices.
- Dietitians of Canada www.dietitians.ca/eatwell. Find a variety of interactive areas to help you assess your food choices, plan menus and test your nutrition knowledge.

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Notes

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