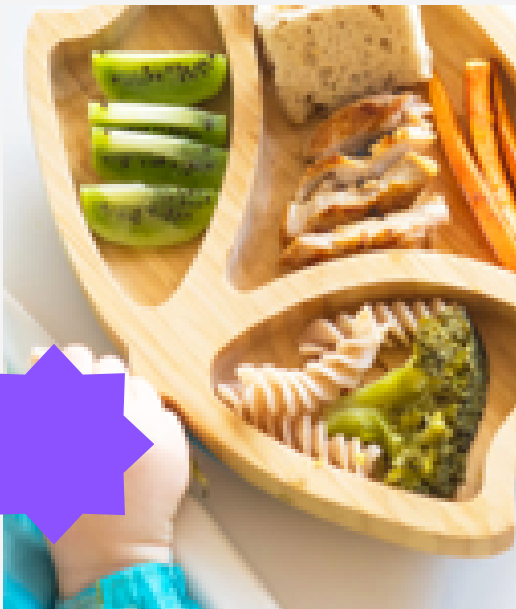


# MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## SNACKS



OCTOBER 2023



### ARE SNACKS ESSENTIAL

Snacks may not always be necessary if, for example, your child eats big portions and meets their nutritional needs at mealtimes.

*They can be helpful for:*

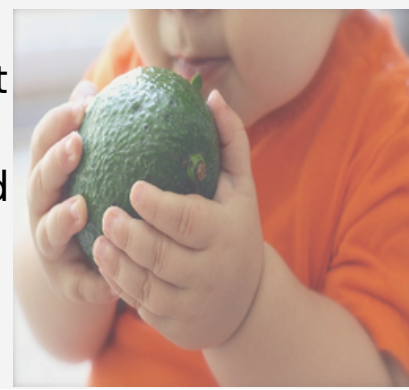
- keeping children occupied
- avoiding hunger if usual mealtimes are missed or you are on the go
- can top up missed energy and nutrients if children have small appetites at meal times
- offer an opportunity to introduce new foods, flavours and textures particularly if your child can be fussy

### FOOD GROUPS



Typically snacks consist of smaller servings and, some guidance suggests, should only make up ~10% of your child's overall energy intake. You can still use the 4 main food groups to guide your choices to ensure balance throughout the day

Our idea of snacks can often lean towards less nutritious foods such as crisps and sweets, potentially influencing your child's future snack choices. Instead of seeking a quick energy fix, snacks should be nutritious, not highly processed, ideally a mix of food groups and a potential new food, flavour and/or texture opportunity.



# FOOD GROUPS



## ● WHOLEGRAIN FOODS

bread/breadsticks/scones	flapjacks/granola bars*
oatcakes/crackers	cereal
rice cakes	popcorn*

• (\*careful of nuts and kernels if under 4)

## ● FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

fruit (eg tub of berries, banana, orange, plums, apple slices)	vegetable sticks (eg carrots, cucumber, green beans, slices peppers, cooked sweet potato wedges)
--	--

1-2 years

2 to 3 servings

3-4 years

4 to 5 servings

## ● DAIRY FOODS

Cheese, sliced, cubed, or string cheese.	yogurt or yogurt drinks
Cottage cheese (or Cottage Cheese Dip)	milk or smoothies

## ● PROTEIN FOODS

hummus or nut butters	Falafel bites, meat slices/pieces (eg chicken strips)
hard boiled eggs	tinned fish

# IDEAS

## Mid Morning Snack

- Sliced or cubed fresh fruit (e.g., apple, banana, pear, or berries)
- Low-fat yogurt or Greek yogurt (unsweetened)
- Whole-grain crackers or rice cakes with cottage cheese

OR

- Baby carrots or cucumber slices with hummus
- Small cheese cubes or cheese sticks
- Water or diluted 100% fruit juice (50% water, 50% juice)

## Afternoon Snack

- Mini sandwiches with whole-grain bread, lean protein (e.g., turkey or chicken), and a slice of cheese
- Cherry tomatoes or bell pepper strips
- Water or milk

OR

- Sliced banana with a thin spread of peanut butter (if no allergies)
- Whole-grain crackers or whole-grain bread with cream cheese or avocado

## Late Afternoon/Evening Snack

- Sliced cucumbers or celery sticks with a light dip (e.g., yogurt-based dressing)
- Dried or dehydrated fruits (in moderation, as they can be high in sugar)
- Water or a small cup of milk

OR

- A small serving of fruit or fruit pot
- Whole-grain cereal with milk

### **Avoid\_**

- high sugar foods and drinks
- processed foods
- high salt and fat

### **INCLUDE**

- Variety
- mix the groups for a more nutritionally complete snack

***more colour = more variety***

Be mindful of choking hazards by cutting or preparing foods into small, manageable pieces.

Follow your child's cues and try to avoid pressuring to eat more

# **TOP TIPS**

Introduce new foods gradually, and offer a variety of colors and textures to keep snacks interesting.

Snacks can be helpful around times of routine change (eg holidays starting creche or school)

### **Useful tools**

freezer bags  
tupperware  
ice packs  
non spill/lidded cups

Keep them active