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Now You're Cookin'!

# Nutritious After-school Snacks!

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## Home Alone

According to a 2005 national survey, 17% of children in kindergarten through eighth grade spend time alone after school. When children are alone, they usually help themselves to a snack. Being independent is desirable, but when choosing healthful snacks, kids often need a little help. If a box of cookies is sitting next to a box of raisins, chances are they will grab the cookies and run.

Chips, cookies, candy and cake are among the most frequently chosen snack foods, according to a national survey done by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In fact, snacks make up about 20% of daily calories among children ages 6 to 11.

## Filling the Gaps

What food groups are lacking in your child's diet?




The average 6- to 11-year-old eats about half the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables in a day, and 45% of children eat no fruit on a given day, according to the National Center for Health Statistics. Snack time provides the perfect opportunity to include more fruits and vegetables in their diets. Keep track of what your child eats for a few days and compare that with the recommendations at www.choosemyplate.gov. You can print a sample plan based on age, gender and physical activity. If you notice your child is lacking certain food groups, plan snacks that will help him or her meet his or her daily needs.

## Sample MyPlate Plan

Female Age: 8 Activity: 30 to 60 minutes/day

| | |
|---|---|
| Grain Group | 5 ounces |
| Vegetable Group | 2 cups |
| Fruit Group | 1½ cups |
| Dairy Group | 2 cups |
| Protein Foods Group | 5 ounces |

## 100-Calorie Snack Options

Eating too many calories is easy to do if you don't know what the portion is supposed to look like. These snacks each contain about 100 calories:

- Half an apple with 2 teaspoons of peanut butter or sunflower seed butter
- 10 almonds or cashews
- Half an English muffin with 1 teaspoon of peanut butter or sunflower seed butter
- Thirteen plain animal crackers
- Half cup of toasted oat cereal with a half cup of skim milk
- One cup of raw carrots with 3 tablespoons of nonfat dressing
- 10 grapes with 2 tablespoons of cream cheese fruit dip

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## Plan Healthy Snacks

Providing nutritious snacks doesn't have to be expensive but you may need to do some planning to make them readily available for your child.

- Plan snacks with your child so you buy things they like and actually will eat.
- Involve your child in grocery shopping. Let them pick out one new fruit or vegetable or other nutritious food to try each time you shop.
- Make snacks that require more preparation the night before so they are ready to go when you need them.

## Make Fruits and Veggies Fun

Getting kids to eat fruits and vegetables can be difficult. Make snack time fun. For example, provide a variety of cut-up fruits and vegetables and let your kids create their own kabobs. You also may want to try serving vegetables with low-fat dip to make them more appealing.

**Tip:**
Keep baggies of cut-up fruits and veggies in the fridge for a healthy grab-and-go snack.

## Be Safe in the Kitchen

Safety is a major issue when kids are working alone in the kitchen. If kids are expected to prepare their own snacks, practice with them any skills they need in the kitchen. They will enjoy spending time with you while learning the safe and correct way to use age-appropriate utensils and appliances.

**Here are some tips for keeping kids safe in the kitchen:**

- Lay out specific rules so your child knows what they are and are not allowed to do..
- Teach them how to safely retrieve items from the toaster if they become stuck. (Do not stick in a utensil while the toaster still is plugged in. Unplug it and allow it to cool first.)
- Make sure they know metal and microwaves don't mix.
- Supervise them when using an oven.
- Teach them to wash their hands properly.
- Teach them to clean up after themselves.

## Beverages Count

Liquid calories can add up quickly. One can of soda pop has up to 170 calories and no nutrients. Replace soda pop with healthier options, such as water, low-fat/fat-free milk or 100% juice. These provide children with the nutrients they need to grow and develop properly.

Don't overdo juice, though. Stay with 4 ounces as a serving size.

**Did you know?**
**According to the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, sweetened beverages contribute 8% to 9% of total calories for adults and children.**

### Try these simple, healthy snack ideas from each food group:

| Grain Group | Vegetable Group | Fruit Group | Dairy Group | Protein Foods Group |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cereal | Fresh veggies with low-fat dip | Apple slices with peanut butter* or sunflower seed butter | Yogurt | Hard-cooked egg |
| Wheat crackers with cheese | Celery with peanut butter* or sunflower seed butter | Dried fruit | String cheese | Peanut butter* or sunflower seed butter (on crackers) |
| Rice cakes | Cherry tomatoes | 100% fruit juice | Pudding | Bean dip |
| Trail mix (cereal, nuts,* dried fruit) | Vegetable juice | Applesauce | Flavored low-fat milk | Mixed nuts* |
| Graham crackers | Sugar snap peas | Canned fruit (in juice) | Cottage cheese with fruit | Tuna salad |

*Be aware of potential allergies.

# Fun and Easy Recipes

Here are some recipes your kids will have just as much fun preparing as eating.

**Guide to abbreviations:**

c. = cup
Tbsp. = tablespoon
tsp. = teaspoon
g = gram

## Pretzels

1 Tbsp. yeast
½ c. warm water
1 tsp. honey
1⅓ c. flour
1 tsp. salt

1. Preheat the oven to 325 F.
2. In a small bowl, combine yeast, water and honey and let sit for 5 minutes.
3. In a medium bowl, mix flour and salt together.
4. After 5 minutes, add the yeast mixture to the flour and salt and mix well. (Mixture will be slightly crumbly and flaky.)
5. Place the dough on a cutting board and knead it into a big ball.
6. Break off 12 pieces of dough about the size of a big gumball and roll each one into a skinny snake.
7. Twist the dough into a pretzel shape (or any shape you want).
8. Bake for 10 minutes and let cool.

*Makes 12 servings. Each one-pretzel serving has 50 calories, 0 g fat, 2 g protein, 11 g carbohydrate, 0 g fiber and 190 mg sodium.*
*Source: www.kidshealth.org*


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## Mini Pizzas

1 English muffin
2 Tbsp. tomato sauce
Diced peppers, onion or other topping
2 Tbsp. shredded mozzarella cheese

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.
2. Spread tomato sauce on English muffin.
3. Add toppings.
4. Bake until cheese is melted.

*Makes one serving with 180 calories, 3.5 g fat, 10 g protein, 28 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber and 310 mg sodium.*
*Source: http://homeparents.about.com*

## Favorite Pumpkin Bread

3½ c. flour
2 tsp. baking soda
1½ tsp. salt
2 tsp. ground cinnamon
1 tsp. ground nutmeg
2 c. brown sugar
1 c. canola oil
4 eggs
2 c. canned pumpkin

**Quick Tip:** Make this recipe on the weekend so it's ready for quick snacks.

1. Preheat oven to 325 F. Spray 2 loaf pans (9- by 5-inch) with canola baking spray.
2. In a large mixing bowl, combine all ingredients until just blended.
3. Pour batter into pans and bake for about 1 hour and 15 minutes. Cool on wire racks.

*Makes 24 servings. Each serving has 220 calories, 10 g fat, 4 g protein, 31 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber and 260 mg sodium.*

*Recipe courtesy of Sheri Coleman, Northern Canola Growers, www.northerncanola.com*

## Vegetable Dip

1 c. cottage cheese
1 c. low-fat plain yogurt
1-ounce package ranch-style dressing mix

1. Put ingredients in a blender.
2. Blend on medium speed for about 30 seconds or until mixture is smooth.
3. Serve with assorted vegetables.

*Makes eight servings (¼ cup per serving). Each serving has 120 calories, 1 g fat, 5 g protein, 5 g carbohydrate, 0 g fiber and 500 mg sodium.*
*Source: Penn State Cooperative Extension*

## Easy Bean Dip

1 can refried beans (no fat added)
¼ c. salsa

1. Mix beans and salsa together.
2. Microwave until heated through.
3. Serve with crackers or veggies.

*Makes five servings (¼ cup per serving). Each serving has 70 calories, 0 g fat, 4 g protein, 13 g carbohydrate, 0 g fiber and 410 mg sodium.*

## Fruit Dip

2 c. low-fat sour cream
1-ounce package sugar-free instant vanilla pudding mix
¼ c. fat-free milk
4 tsp. lemon juice

1. Whisk together all ingredients until well-blended.
2. Serve with assorted fruit.

*Makes eight servings (¼ cup per serving). Each serving has 70 calories, 4 g fat, 4 g protein, 5 g carbohydrate, 0 g fiber and 180 mg sodium.*
*Source: Penn State Cooperative Extension*

## Simple Snack Mix

1 c. whole-grain cereal
¼ c. dried fruit of your choice
¼ c. nuts (walnut pieces, slivered almonds, pistachios)
¼ c. small whole-grain snack crackers or pretzels

1. Place all ingredients in a large zip-close baggie or storage container.
2. Shake it up.

*Makes three servings. Each serving has 180 calories, 7 g fat, 4 g protein, 26 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber and 250 mg sodium.*
*Source: www.kidshealth.org*


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## Eat Smart. Play Hard. Together

- For more information about food safety and nutrition, contact your county office of NDSU Extension.
- Visit the NDSU Extension website at www.ag.ndsu.edu/food

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