

Smart snacking for adults

Snacking can be part of a healthy eating plan. Snacks can help curb your hunger and provide an energy boost between meals. But it's important to remember that snacks are not meals.

Smart snacking means being careful about what type of snacks you eat, how much and how often. Most popular snacks are sugary and fatty, like biscuits, cakes and chocolate. Or they're salty and fatty like crisps, movie popcorn, instant noodles and crackers. If you eat lots of these foods, you can gain weight. Sweet and chewy snacks like lollies, dried fruit and fruit leathers can cause tooth decay.



Snacks don't need to come in packets. You can make them easily and cheaply at home.

Healthy snack ideas

Choose snacks low in kilojoules (calories), fat and added sugar.

Fruit and vegetable ideas

- Convenient fresh fruit such as apples, bananas, blueberries, mandarins, pears or plums.
- Frozen fruit such as grapes, peeled mandarin segments, pineapple slices or chopped banana.
- A fruit smoothie made from low-fat milk, yoghurt and fresh or frozen fruit.
- Hummus or a healthy dip or spread with rice crackers or carrot, cucumber and celery sticks.
- Avocado on wholegrain toast or crackers with sliced tomato and ground pepper.

More snack ideas

- A small bowl of wholegrain cereal with low-fat milk.
- A slice of wholegrain bread or three to four wholegrain crackers with a healthy topping. Try peanut butter and sliced banana, hummus and sliced tomato or thinly sliced reduced-fat cheese.
- A small bag of plain or lightly salted popcorn.
- A hard-boiled egg.
- A small handful of nuts or seeds (30 g), raw or roasted without added fat.
- A small tin of tuna (95 g). Eat on its own or spread on wholegrain bread or crackers.
- Plain, unsweetened yoghurt. Add chopped fresh fruit or a drizzle of runny honey or pure maple syrup.

Smart snacking tips

Here are some ideas for snacking, including ideas for when you're shopping, when you're at home and work. There are also some tips for when you are snacking or wanting a snack.

Tips for shopping

- Try to avoid buying less nutritious snacks, so you avoid the temptation while you are at home.
- If you do buy less nutritious snacks, buy small food packages such as small bags of crisps or a fun-sized chocolate bar.



Tips for home and work

- Display healthy options, such as a bowl of fruit on the kitchen counter or cut up vegetable sticks at the front of the fridge.
- Cut up extra vegetables at dinner time for snacks the next day.
- At work keep healthy snacks at your desk or in the work refrigerator. Bring fresh fruit to work each week or keep rice crackers in your desk drawer.
- Keep a variety of portable, healthy ready-to-eat snacks in your bag.

Tips for when you want a snack

- Snacks with protein and fibre slow your digestion and can help you feel fuller for longer. For example, try wholegrain toast and peanut butter, fruit and yoghurt, or nuts.
- Eat snacks in the kitchen or in the dining room rather than in front of the TV or computer. Stop what you are doing and eat your snack.
- Have small food packages or take smaller portions from larger packages. Don't snack directly from a large container, bag or box.
- Save snacks that are higher in kilojoules (calories), fat, salt or added sugar for special occasions. Choose small portions of these snacks. Try to combine them with a healthier option. For example, if you eat ice cream, have a small scoop topped with fresh or frozen fruit.
- Only snack when you're hungry, instead of grazing between meals. Skip the urge to nibble when you are bored, tired, upset or stressed.
- Drink water often, as being thirsty can make you feel hungry.

Hummus recipe

Ingredients

- 800 g (two 400 g tins) of chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 garlic cloves crushed or finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons of tahini (sesame seed paste)
- ¼ cup oil
- ¼ cup water
- Juice of 1 to 2 lemons



Method

- 1) Blend all the ingredients in a food processor until smooth.
- 2) Add more lemon juice, water or salt to your preferred consistency and taste. Flavour and consistency will vary with different brands of chickpeas and lemon juice.

See the Health Promotion Agency's website for more healthy snack recipes.

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