

Why healthier snacking matters

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS OF SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN

Snacking is a big part of children's daily routine, but many popular snack choices are high in saturated fat, salt and sugars, and low in important nutrients like fibre and vitamins and minerals.

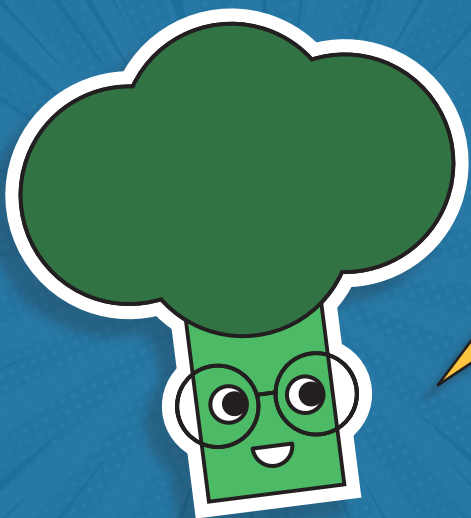
Over time, eating too many of these types of snacks can lead to health issues like too much weight gain and dental problems.

Snacking isn't necessarily bad, it's just about choosing the right snacks.



HEALTHY SNACKS CAN:

- **Provide important nutrients** to support children's growth and development.
- **Be an opportunity** to have a drink to stay hydrated (water or milk are best).
- **Help children feel less hungry** so they don't overeat at mealtimes.



Better snacking. One bite at a time.

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TRY these healthy snack ideas!

ON-THE-GO:

- Fresh fruit (e.g. apple, banana).
- A slice of malt loaf.
- Two or three wholemeal crackers with a 30g portion of reduced-fat cheese.

AT HOME:

- Vegetable sticks (e.g. pepper, carrot) with hummus or a reduced-fat dip.
- Half a wholemeal bagel with reduced-fat soft cheese, cucumber and tomato.
- A rice cake with peanut butter and banana.



ENCOURAGE OLDER CHILDREN

to prepare their own simple snacks:

- Wholegrain breakfast cereal with milk.
- Wholemeal toast or crumpets with reduced-fat spread.
- Pizza toast (cheese and vegetables, such as tomato, pepper and sweetcorn, on toast).

CELEBRATE SNACK-TEMBER

by trying out these tasty snack recipes!

- Paprika tortilla chips and spring onion dip
- Beany dip and crunchy veg
- Homemade popcorn
- Fruit and oat bites
- Pizza muffins



Take a look at these recipes!
www.nutrition.org.uk/snack-tember-2025



Beany dip

Ingredients

- 1 400g can butterbeans, in water
- 1 lemon
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1 x 10ml spoon olive oil
- ½ x 5ml spoon cumin powder
- 2 x 15ml spoons reduced-fat natural yogurt

Equipment

Measuring spoons, can opener, colander or sieve, sharp knife, chopping board, juicer, food processor, spoon, serving dish.



Serves 4

Nutrition

One quarter of the dip

A 126g serving contains

Energy 579kJ 138kcal 7%	Fat 3.5g 5%	Saturates 0.4g 2%	Sugars 1.9g 2%	Salt 0.05g 1%
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of an adult's reference intake

5.9g fibre per serving

Method

1. Prepare the ingredients:
 - drain the butterbeans;
 - halve and juice the lemon;
 - peel the garlic.
2. Put the butterbeans, lemon juice, olive oil, garlic, cumin powder and yogurt in a food processor.
3. Blend until smooth. (Add a little more yogurt if the dip is too thick.)
4. Spoon into a serving dish.

To serve

Chop up a selection of vegetables into dipping sized sticks or pieces, to serve with the dip.

For example:

- pepper
- courgette
- cucumber
- cauliflower
- carrot
- radishes

Fruit and oat bites

Snack tember

Ingredients

100g canned mandarins, in juice
1 egg
60g sultanas
50g porridge oats
150g reduced-fat natural yogurt
1 x 5ml spoon ground cinnamon

Equipment

Weighing scales, measuring spoons, sieve or colander, chopping board, sharp knife, mixing bowl, mixing spoon, muffin tray, 2 x spoons, cooling rack.



Makes 6

Nutrition

One fruit and oat bite:

A 61g serving contains

Energy 403kJ 96kcal 5%	Fat 1.7g 2%	Saturates 0.5g 3%	Sugars 10g 11%	Salt 0.08g 1%
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of an adult's reference intake

1.7g of fibre per serving

Method

1. Pre-heat the oven to 200°C/fan 180°C or gas mark 6.
2. Drain the mandarins.
3. Chop the mandarins into small pieces and add them to the mixing bowl.
4. Add the rest of the ingredients to the mixing bowl and stir thoroughly.
5. Spoon the mixture equally into the muffin tray.
6. Place in the oven and bake for 20-25 minutes until golden.
7. Remove from the oven and allow to cool for 5 minutes.
8. Use a spoon to loosen the bites from the muffin tray and transfer them onto a cooling rack.

Snack tip

The fruit and oat bites can be frozen and defrosted as needed. They defrost at room temperature in about 2 hours. Great to take with you straight from the freezer in the morning, and enjoy at breaktime!

Why not double the recipe so you have some extras?

Homemade popcorn

Snack tember

Ingredients

100g popcorn kernels (popping corn)
1 x 15ml spoon oil

Flavouring:

1 x 5ml spoon cinnamon
1 x 15ml spoon icing sugar

Equipment

Weighing scales, measuring spoons, large non-stick saucepan with a tight-fitting lid, mixing spoon, oven gloves, large bowl, 4 x serving bowls (or popcorn bags!)

Serves 4



Nutrition

One quarter of the recipe:

A 33g serving contains

Energy 552kJ 132kcal 7%	Fat 3.6g 5%	Saturates 0.3g 2%	Sugars 4.3g 5%	Salt 0g 0%
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of an adult's reference intake

3.9g of fibre per serving

Method

1. Heat the oil in the pan on a medium heat.
2. After 30 seconds to a minute, drop one of the kernels into the oil to test the temperature. When the kernel sizzles, the oil is hot enough.
3. Pour the popcorn kernels into the pan and stir gently to coat them with oil.
4. Place the lid on the pan tightly and keep on a medium heat.
5. When the kernels start to pop, turn the heat down to medium-low.
6. When you hear lots of popping, put on the oven gloves, hold the lid in place and gently shake the pan.
7. Shake the pan, around every 20 seconds, until the popping stops.
8. Once the popping stops, turn off the heat. Wait a few minutes until there is no more popping (or nothing for 10 seconds).
9. Tip the popcorn into a large bowl.
10. Sprinkle the flavouring (cinnamon and icing sugar), a bit at a time, over the popcorn and stir it through. Repeat this until all the flavouring has been added.
11. Divide the popcorn into 4 bowls, or popcorn bags, and serve!

Snack tip

You could make different flavours from your popcorn. Instead of tipping all the cooked popcorn into a large bowl, divide it into containers (with lids). Add a different flavouring to each. Put the lids on the containers and give them a good shake to coat the popcorn.

Paprika tortilla chips and spring onion dip

Snack tember

Ingredients

2 wholemeal wraps
Spray oil or 1x 10ml spoon oil
1 x 5ml spoon smoked paprika

For the dip:

150g reduced-fat natural yogurt
1 spring onion

Equipment

Weighing scales, measuring spoons, oven tray, baking paper, chopping board, kitchen scissors or sharp knife, small bowl for oil and a pastry brush (if you are not using a spray oil), tongs, mixing spoon, small bowl.

Serves 3



Nutrition

One third of the tortilla chips and dip

A 95g serving contains

Energy 747kJ 178kcal 9%	Fat 6.1g 9%	Saturates 1.3g 6%	Sugars 4.7g 5%	Salt 0.47g 8%
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of an adult's reference intake

4g of fibre per serving

Method

1. Pre-heat the oven to 200°C/fan 180°C or gas mark 6.
 2. Line the oven tray with baking paper.
 3. Place a wrap on the chopping board and lightly fold it in half to create a line down the middle.
 4. Snip (or cut) along the line.
 5. Fold each piece in half and snip (or cut) through the lines again.
 6. Repeat, so that you have created 8 triangles from the wrap.
 7. Do the same with the second wrap.
 8. Spread the wrap triangles out in a single layer on the oven tray. (You may need to do two separate batches if they won't all fit.)
 9. Spray (or brush) each triangle with a little oil, then turn each one over and spray (or brush) the other side.
 10. Bake the triangles for 4-5 minutes until they are lightly brown.
 11. Remove from the oven and, using the tongs, turn them over.
 12. Return them to the oven and cook for a further 4-5 minutes. (Keep an eye on them!)
 13. Once cooked, sprinkle on both sides with the smoked paprika.
- For the dip:
14. Finely snip (or chop) the spring onion.
 15. Mix the spring onion and yogurt together.

Snack tip

Pop the tortilla chips into an airtight container and take them for a breaktime snack the next day. You could take some dip too!

Pizza muffins

Ingredients

150g strong white flour
 100g strong wholemeal flour
 1 x 5ml spoon salt
 1 x 5ml spoon sugar
 1 x 7g packet fast action dried yeast
 175ml warm water
 1 x 15ml spoon oil
 Spray oil (or a little additional vegetable oil to grease the muffin tin)

Filling

80g reduced-fat cheddar cheese
 1 spring onion
 ¼ pepper
 1 tomato or 4 cherry tomatoes
 2 x 15ml spoons passata or tomato purée

Equipment

Weighing scales, measuring spoons, muffin tray, small bowl for oil and a pastry brush (if you are not using a spray oil for greasing the muffin tray), measuring jug, grater, sharp knife, chopping board, sieve, mixing bowl, mixing spoon, small spoons x 2, cooling rack.

Makes 8

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C/fan 180°C or gas mark 6.
2. Grease the muffin tray by spraying it lightly with spray oil (or brush with a little vegetable oil using the pastry brush).
3. Pour 175ml of boiled water into the measuring jug. Set it aside so it is the right temperature (warm) when you come to make the dough.
4. Prepare the filling ingredients:
 - grate the cheese;
 - finely chop the spring onion and pepper;
 - chop the tomato, or quarter the cherry tomatoes.
5. Sift together the flour, salt and sugar into a mixing bowl and then stir in the yeast.



Nutrition

One pizza muffin

A 78g serving contains

Energy 687kJ 163kcal 8%	Fat 4.2g 6%	Saturates 1.6g 8%	Sugars 1.7g 2%	Salt 0.81g 14%
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of an adult's reference intake

2.4g fibre per serving

5. Add the vegetable oil and enough warm water to mix into a soft dough. (Add the water gradually as you may not need it all.)
6. Knead the dough for 5-10 minutes.
7. Divide the dough into 8 golf ball sized balls and give each ball a quick knead.
8. Place the dough balls in the muffin tray and, using your fingers, press each dough ball to cover the base and sides of each cup.
9. Spoon the passata or tomato purée equally between each dough cup.
10. Divide the filling ingredients equally between the dough cups and then top each one with the cheese.
11. Bake for 20-25 minutes, until golden brown.
12. Cool on a cooling rack.

Snack tip

The muffins can be frozen and defrosted as needed. They defrost at room temperature in about 2 hours! Great to take with you straight from the freezer in the morning and enjoy at breaktime!