



Snack attack!




Many parents worry about their children's snacking habits. This is perhaps not surprising given that many children in the UK are eating up to four high sugar snacks every day!

Children have small stomachs and high energy demands for growth, and snacks can contribute valuable energy and nutrients to children's daily diets. The key to whether snacking is good or bad for your child is which snacks you choose and how much you give of them.

When is snacking a problem?

High energy, sugary snacks will give children an energy burst but will quickly leave them wanting more in a small amount of time – often leading to continuous grazing between meals and resulting in less being eaten at mealtimes. A frustration for many parents! Research in the UK shows us that children are eating more

HOW MUCH SUGAR PER DAY?

	4-6 year olds Max 19g per day 5 cubes of sugar		7-10 year olds Max 24g per day 6 cubes of sugar		11+ years Max 30g per day 7 cubes of sugar
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than double the maximum recommended amount of sugar per day, and that half of their sugar intake is coming from unhealthy snacks or drinks. If children eat too many high sugar foods over the long term this can lead to some serious health concerns including obesity and Type 2 diabetes. Encouraging children to eat less sugary snacks is an important health message.

How to plan healthy snacks

When planning healthy snacks it is best to use the Eatwell Guide in the same way that we would to plan main meals. Good snack choices include: fruit or vegetables; dairy foods such as milk or yogurt; protein foods such as fish, meat or eggs, and; wholegrain foods such as toast or cereal. These foods will make

a positive contribution to your child's daily diet, providing vitamins, minerals, fibre and protein.

You could also include a glass/cup of water; the perfect way to encourage your child to stay hydrated across the day, without adding extra sugar to your child's daily diet.

Make sure that you offer snacks at appropriate times and not too close to meal times. Appropriate portion sizes are important too; sufficient to keep your child going between meals but not so much that they don't eat their dinner.

What about packaged snacks?

Whilst the best kind of snacks are home-made and based on the four main food groups, it may not always be possible to provide this for our children. We all lead busy lives, and sometimes whilst we are out and about, we might have to reach for packaged or shop-bought snacks.

Packaged snacks vary greatly in their calorie content. The best way to ensure that we're making healthier choices is to choose packaged snacks below 100 calories per portion, and to restrict packaged snacks to no more than 2 a day.

100 calorie snacks – 2 a day max!

Some products have traffic light labelling and these can also be used to make healthier choices. Try and choose packaged snacks that have mainly green or amber labels and less red. Red means that the snack is high in fat, sugar or salt and are best kept as an occasional treat, not an everyday snack.

Further information:

- www.nhs.uk/change4life/food-facts/healthier-snacks-for-kids
- www.phunkyfoods.co.uk/parents/
- For more healthy snack ideas and recipes visit www.phunkyfoods.co.uk/recipes



Snack attack!

Make snacks count! Create healthier snacks based on the Eatwell Guide food groups, including wholegrains, dairy, protein, fruits and vegetables.

At home

- DIY snacks are healthier and can also be cheaper than pre-packaged snacks too.

Cheese, apple and wholegrain crackers



Supercrunch



Dips, pitta, veg sticks



- DIY snacks can be more satisfying and keep children fuller for longer; meaning they don't continually graze!

A slice of malt loaf



A small bag of popcorn



- DIY snacks are a great way to get kids involved in the kitchen, and improve their food prep skills.



Pin me up!

A mini muffin



2 rice cakes



Out and about

Need to rely on packaged snacks?
Remember: 2 snacks max./day

Choose snacks with more green and amber traffic lights, and less reds



A banana

Choose healthier options in the shops by checking the labels – choose snacks with less than 100kcal per snack.

Each breadstick contains				
Energy	Fat	Saturates	Sugars	Salt
95kJ 22kcal	<0.5g	<0.1g	<0.5g	0.10g
1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	2%

Plan ahead with grab & go snack ideas!

Breadsticks + low fat cheese...



and a small bunch of grapes



plus a bottle of water



Remember!

Offer the right snacks at the right time – not too close to meal times | Plan ahead for snacks on the go | Don't forget to offer a drink – water is best!