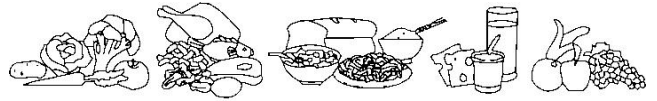


# Food \$ense

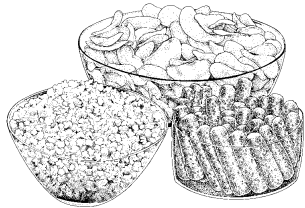


*Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program*

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## Sensible Snacks!

Snacks are a good source of energy during the day, and can help you have a healthy diet, **IF** you are making sensible choices. Grabbing a soda and chips, doughnuts or a candy bar doesn't make good money- or food-sense!

Because their stomachs are smaller, children need snacks to tide them over between meals. For adults, having a little snack can give you needed energy to get through a long stretch between meals. Older adults might prefer eating mini-meal snacks more frequently instead of three large meals a day. Because snacks can make up a significant portion of the foods we eat each day, it's important to choose foods for snacking that fit into MyPyramid:

- Whole grain products
- Vegetables
- Fruits
- Foods low in sugar, sodium or fat.

Take a close look at your snack habits:

- Make healthy choices available. If the cupboards are full of cookies and candy, it's easy to snack on them. If fresh fruits are washed, and veggies are cut up, they become the easy choice.
- Don't choose the same snack foods all the time—mix it up!
- Have a snack when you are really hungry, not out of habit or boredom.

If you are stressed out, feeling bored, depressed, or tired from lack of sleep, a snack will not fix your dilemma.

When you've got a craving, what type of snack do you reach for?

- Looking for something crunchy? Try fresh vegetables, air-popped popcorn, crackers, pretzels, or baked tortilla chips.
- Have an urge for something sweet? Animal and graham crackers, cinnamon-raisin toast, or gingersnaps are good choices for sweet, crunchy snacks. For sweet and smooth, pick yogurt, natural applesauce, dried fruits, instant pudding or smoothies made with skim milk.
- Looking for something refreshing? Try canned fruit packed in its own juice, frozen fruit bars, frozen grapes or banana chunks, or fruit juice mixed with clear diet soda.

Making your own snacks can save you money. Pre-packaged snacks may be convenient, but cost a lot more than the same foods you bag at home.



## Snacks on the Go

It's often hard to find healthy snacks when you're on the go, but planning ahead can help keep snacks healthy, safe and convenient. Take a few portable snacks with you to satisfy your hunger between meals. Pre-portion snacks and put them in bags or small containers. Use a cooler with an ice-pack if you plan to take snacks that need to be kept cool for longer periods of time.

Try these simple "on the go" snack suggestions:

- **Snack bars** – These are great "grab & go" snacks that don't require refrigeration. Keep them handy in a purse, backpack, glove compartment or pocket. Look for bars that are low in fat and sugar.
- **Dried fruits or vegetables** – Fresh fruits and vegetables can be great on the go too, but sometimes they end up bruised, or soft and spoiled. A small snack bag of dried fruits or veggies still pack the healthy vitamins and minerals in a more portable form.
- **Crackers** – Low fat or whole grain crackers can be a good energy source that keeps you going through the day.
- **String Cheese** – Kids love string cheese because it's tasty and fun to eat. It can be a great snack for adults too! This calcium-packed snack should be kept in the refrigerator when not in use, but it can be out of the refrigerator for a few hours – making it great for a mid-morning snack.

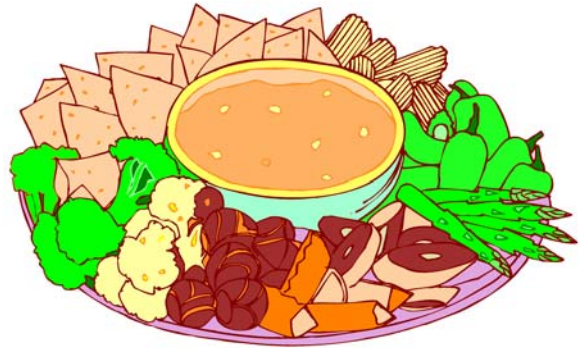
Make sure to read labels on pre-packaged snacks to keep an eye on calories and fat. Be creative and see if you can come up with other snacks that would be great on the go.

**Goal:** Do you want to offer healthier snacks? Do you need to save money on snacks? Pick one idea from this newsletter to try, and write it here \_\_\_\_\_

## Make Your Own Snacks

Making your own snacks is a great way to save money, eat more vegetables, and have more variety. The two dips below are great with baked chips, pretzels, or raw veggies.

Be sure to try the home-made granola bars on page 4—they are easy and yummy!



### South of the Border Dip

- 1 cup sour cream, nonfat
- 1 cup yogurt, nonfat plain
- 1 cup salsa

1. Mix the sour cream, yogurt, and salsa.
2. Store the dip in a covered container if you don't plan to eat it right away.
3. Keep the dip in the fridge until you serve it.

*Note:* Serve with baked tortilla chips, crackers, or bite sized vegetables.

### Confetti Bean Salsa

- 1 can (15 ounce) black or red beans
- 1 can (11 ounce) corn
- 1 cup salsa.

1. Drain and rinse the beans. Drain the corn.
2. Combine beans, corn, and salsa in a medium-size bowl. Mix.

*Note:* Like it hot? Add a few drops of hot sauce or chopped green chilies. Try chopped cilantro, parsley or green pepper, too.

## Water, Water Everywhere



Water? Unless your throat feels parched and sweat drips from your brow, you probably give little thought to water. Yet this clear, refreshing fluid is one of your body's most essential nutrients.

What does water do in your body? Far more than satisfy your thirst! Thirst is actually more like a warning light that's flashing on the dashboard of your car. This thirst signals you that your body needs more fluids to perform its many functions. To satisfy thirst, you drink fluids.

Before, during, and after any physical activity such as walking, drink water, especially in hot weather. Consume ½ to 2 cups of water every fifteen to twenty minutes while you are walking. Don't wait until you feel thirsty!

From the bone-chilling days of winter to the hot, sultry days of summer, your body needs water to maintain its normal temperature.

In hot, humid weather your body sweats, increasing water loss. Cool, refreshing drinks may help cool your overheated body.

Drinking enough water may seem like just a summer issue. Keeping your body well watered during winter is just as important. Even in the cold outdoors, you may sweat . . . perhaps from physical activity such as walking or from being bundled up with many layers of clothing.

So have a drink of cool, clear, refreshing water!



### *Dear Sue Keeney ...*

*Meet Sue Keeney--your source of research-based information about nutrition and health! Readers of all ages like Sue's practical tips on eating for good health, stretching the food dollar*

*Dear Sue,  
I've heard a lot about "not eating between meals" to control overeating and unnecessary snacking. Do we really need snacks?*

*Candi Barr*

Dear Candi,

Choosing snacks that contribute to health, as well as timing snacks so that they compliment meals is the key. Kids need to refuel their bodies more than three times a day, especially when they're really active. Adults and kids who don't get regular meals or snacks may get tired and grouchy simply from being hungry.

Schedule regular snack times and only eat if you're hungry. Don't eat because you're bored, watching T.V., or as a reward. Snacks can fill the gaps between meals, but shouldn't take the place of meals.

So what makes a healthy snack? Here are a few suggestions:

- Fresh or dried fruit
- Graham crackers or whole grain crackers
- Cereal and milk
- Peanut butter served on celery sticks, apple slices or whole wheat toast
- Popcorn
- Slice of cheese or string cheese
- Fresh-cut vegetables
- A glass of milk or 100% fruit juice

Healthy snacks help your children develop good eating habits that will last a lifetime, and help them grow both physically and emotionally.

Sue



## Does a Granola Bar a Day Keep the Doctor Away?

So, is a granola bar really a smart snack? Advertisements try to tell us that they are. After doing a broad comparison of many different brands and varieties, the question is still unanswered.

It's important for us to read labels if we decide to buy granola bars. They vary in calorie content from 90 to 200 calories, mainly because of the added ingredients like nuts and chocolate chips. Calories from fat vary from 14 to 70 calories! If you are looking to limit fat, look for bars with about 20 calories from fat.

Sodium (or salt) content varies from 2% recommended daily value (RDA) to 5%, so check that on the label if you are trying to limit your salt intake.

The range of fiber in granola bars is large—from 1 gram (4% RDA) to 9 grams (35% RDA). Be aware that the bars that are high in fiber contain *chicory root extract*, a form of soluble fiber. Eating large amounts of this extract (especially by some people) can lead to gas and bloating.

Some bars are fortified with calcium, iron, and B vitamins. Getting those extra nutrients is a plus.

### *Kids in the Kitchen*

#### No Bake Granola Bars

- 2 cups crispy rice cereal
- 2 cups quick-cooking oatmeal
- 1/3 cup brown sugar, firmly packed
- 1/2 cup light corn syrup
- 1/2 cup peanut butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/2 cup nuts, chopped

1. Combine oats and cereal in a large bowl and set aside.
2. Boil brown sugar and corn syrup in small saucepan over medium-high heat, or cook in microwave until boiling. Stir until sugar is dissolved.
3. Remove from heat and stir in peanut butter and vanilla.
4. Pour sugar mixture over cereal and stir until well coated.
5. Let stand 10 minutes.
6. Stir in nuts and press into 10"x15" pan.
7. Cut into 24 bars when completely cooled.

Bottom line—granola bars are quick, convenient snacks, but without much nutritional value. You would be making a better choice for your family if you used some of the ideas on page 1. Your WNEP program can give you lots of good ideas for healthy, low-cost snacks.

WNEP education is supported by the USDA Food Stamp Program, UW-Extension and local partners. Food stamps can help provide a healthy diet. To find out more about food stamps, call 920.386.3760. To learn more about the Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program in Columbia or Dodge County, please contact:



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