

# Pack and Go Snacks for Young Children

Routine snacks are part of healthy eating. They provide children with energy to grow, learn and play. They also prevent hunger-related mood swings. Think of snacks as mini-meals to fuel busy brains and bodies. Pack a mid-morning and mid-afternoon snack if your child will be away all day.



## Smart snacks have...

- at least two food groups
- a fruit or vegetable most of the time and
- a little protein or healthy fat for longer lasting energy (try cheese, plain yogurt, avocado, beans, egg, tofu, seed/nut butter)

## Winning Snack Combos

- Yogurt parfait with berries and granola
- Lightly steamed broccoli and bean dip
- French toast with applesauce to dip
- Whole grain crackers and cheese
- Mini [egg bites](#) and red pepper slices
- Thinly spread peanut butter between apple slices
- Smoothie (in thermos) and muffin
- Chopped strawberries and cottage cheese
- Baked tofu bites and cucumber slices
- Banana bread and soft melon pieces
- Mini avocado toast sandwiches
- Hummus and pita bread

## Ready to Go Snacks

Packaged snacks are convenient but many have a lot of added salt, sugar or unhealthy fats. Use food labels to make a healthier choice.

Try these ready to go snacks:

- Unsweetened fruit sauce cups
- Fruit cups (packed in fruit juice)
- Cheese strings/sticks
- Individual yogurts / yogurt tubes
- Individual hummus cups

## Choking Hazards:

**Adapt foods for young children to prevent choking.** See [Reducing Choking Hazards](#).

## Vegetable and Fruit Tips

- Keep a variety of freshly washed and safely prepared (e.g. chopped, thinly sliced, grated) vegetables in the refrigerator.
  - ◊ E.g. cauliflower, broccoli, cucumber, pepper, turnip, zucchini, carrots, etc.
- Steam extra veggies at dinner time and pack as a cold re-run.
- Make a quick vegetable dip by mixing a bit of ranch dressing with plain Greek yogurt.
- Keep your pantry stocked with unsweetened applesauce and canned fruit, and dried fruit.
- Keep frozen berries in the freezer to add to yogurt and smoothies.



### Allergy Aware:

If nut products are restricted, sunflower, soy or pea butter may be an option.

### Bean Dip

This spread is a great meat-free option for lunches and snacks. Spread on crackers, pita or bread, or use as a dip for vegetables.

#### Ingredients:

1 tin (19oz/540 mL) chick peas, rinsed and drained (*also called garbanzo beans*)  
1-2 cloves garlic, minced  
1-2 green onions, chopped  
¼ cup (50 mL) peanut butter or tahini (optional)  
2-3 Tbsps. (30-45 mL) lemon juice  
¼ - ½ cup (50-125 mL) plain yogurt  
Pinch salt, cayenne and cumin

#### Fun variations:

For a purple colour, add some canned beets or beet juice (or fresh, cooked beets).  
For a green colour, use shelled edamame beans instead of chick peas.

Puree all ingredients in a food processor (or mash by hand) and chill. Makes ~ 2 cups.



### For more information:

- Resources on the Interior Health website:
  - [Nutrition for infants, toddlers and preschoolers](#)
- Appetite to Play (see information for families) [www.appetitetoplay.com/](http://www.appetitetoplay.com/)
- Call 8-1-1 to ask a registered dietitian your feeding and nutrition related questions.