

Top Tips – Snack Smart/ Healthy Eating at Home:

(These top tips go alongside the lunch box ideas and oral hygiene guidance.)

Be snack smart and cut back on sugar with these easy tips and great snack ideas.

Half of the sugar children are having comes from snacks and sugary drinks. Too much sugar can lead to harmful fat building up inside and serious health problems, including painful tooth decay.

We know it can be difficult to know what the best choice might be, so we have listed a few top tips and advice to help you make and buy healthier options when it comes to snacks.

Tips for healthier snacking:

- Fruit and veg snacks are always the best choice for children's snacks, but if they are having packaged snacks, just remember to aim for a maximum of 2 a day.
- Many products also have traffic light labels on the front of packs, which can be a useful guide when choosing which ones to buy.
- Pick snacks with more greens and ambers on the label and cut down on snacks that show any reds.

- **Nuts and seeds:**

Nuts and seeds are a healthier snack, but they are high in energy, so remember to keep an eye on the amount you eat and don't give whole nuts to children under 5.

- **Make it fun:**

Offer your children a range of brightly coloured fruit and veg, cut into shapes, or draw funny faces on a banana or satsuma.

- **Dried fruit:**

Dried fruit counts towards your 5 A Day, but it can stick to teeth and could lead to painful tooth decay. Dried fruit should only be eaten at mealtimes to reduce the risk of tooth-decay.

- **Everyday sugar:**

There is often added sugar lurking in most food items like, juice drinks, cereal bars and yoghurts. Try the Food Scanner app to help you see how much sugar, saturated fat and salt are in everyday food and drink.

- **Leave it on the shelf:**

The simplest trick in the book, if you don't have sweets in the house, you cannot eat them. You will save money, too!

- **Add bite-sized fruit:**

Try chopped apple, peeled satsuma segments, strawberries, halved grapes, tinned pineapple or melon slices to make it easier for children to eat.

Healthy snack ideas:

- Muffins with cream cheese and cucumber sticks
- Yoghurt with mandarins
- Toasted malt loaf with strawberries
- Sugar snap peas with hummus

- Sliced fruit with yoghurt dip
- Mashed avocado and boiled egg
- Cheesy oatcakes and tomatoes
- Rice cakes with low fat cream cheese and cucumber
- Hummus with veggie sticks
- Boiled eggs and wholemeal toast

Choosing healthier snacks in the shops:

If you're short on time, here are some good ideas for snacks that you can pick up in the shops:

- a slice of malt loaf
- lower-fat, lower-sugar fromage frais
- plain rice cakes or crackers with lower-fat cheese
- sugar-free jelly
- a crumpet
- a scotch pancake

We have just listed a few top tips but there is plenty of help if you need more advice or ideas. Here are a few links to help. If you sign up to the NHS Change 4 Life where much of this information has come from, you can access a great deal of information to help you and your family live a healthy and active life.

<https://www.nhs.uk/change4life>

<https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/lunch>

<https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>