

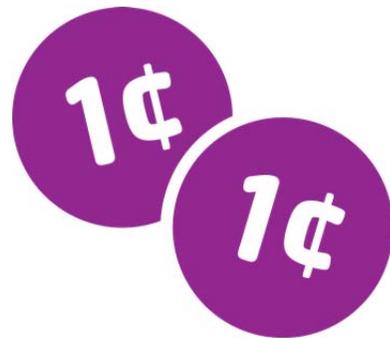


# HEALTHY SNACKING AT HOME

## FAMILY SNACK SENSE

A snack planning tool  
to provide fun, healthy,  
and budget-friendly  
snacks for children

YMCA OF THE USA



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# FAMILY SNACK SENSE

This guide aims to help parents and caregivers incorporate healthy eating into their regular snack time routine at a low price. It includes tips for buying healthy and inexpensive snacks, information on healthy eating, budget-friendly sample snacks, and a shopping guide. To learn more, visit [www.ymca.net/healthy-family-home](http://www.ymca.net/healthy-family-home) and [www.foodandfun.org](http://www.foodandfun.org).

## HINTS FOR A HEALTHY HOME

- Serve water at every meal and snack
- Do not allow sugar-sweetened beverages in your home
- Serve a fruit and/or vegetable at every meal and snack
- Choose foods with 0g of trans fat that do not have partially hydrogenated oils in the ingredient list
- When buying grains (like bread, crackers, and cereals), choose whole grains



## BUDGETING FOR HEALTHY SNACKS

Although people worry that healthy foods can be expensive, there are a lot of healthy snack options that are inexpensive. When shopping, remember to select foods that are consistent with healthy eating.

- Buy fresh fruits and vegetables that are **inexpensive and available year-round**, like bananas and baby carrots. More examples are listed on page 5.
- Buy canned fruits in 100% juice or light syrup and canned veggies without added salt. Stock up on canned fruits and veggies when they are on sale because they don't go bad!
- **Avoid highly processed and refined packaged foods** like cookies and animal crackers. These can be expensive, less healthy, and may contain trans fats.
- Serve **tap water** instead of sugar-sweetened beverages. Tap water is a refreshing, healthy, no-calorie beverage that is virtually free!
- Buy foods that are **on sale**.
- **Buy in bulk**. If available, buy snacks from a wholesale retailer. Or, buy snacks in **large containers**; individually wrapped "single serving" sizes are expensive.
- Buy **generic or store brand foods**, which are usually less expensive than brand names.

## BE SUGAR SMART



Avoid having sugar-sweetened beverages in your home. Why should you avoid soda, juice drinks, or sports drinks? Because they all contain **sugar**! Sugar-sweetened drinks are the top source of added sugar in kids' diets. Drinking too many high sugar drinks increases the risk for overweight in kids. These drinks add extra calories our bodies don't notice. Soda, juice, and sports drinks can also cause **dental cavities**. Diet sodas contain **artificial sweeteners**. They train kids to crave "sweetness" in drinks and foods. Their long-term safety is not fully known, so it is best to avoid them. All of these sugary drinks are much more expensive than tap water which costs only pennies! If you do serve 100% juice, limit to 4 ounces per day. But remember, juice doesn't substitute for whole fruit.

### DRINKS TO AVOID HAVING IN YOUR HOME

Soda	Sweetened iced teas	Fruit punches, fruit-ades, and other fruit drinks
Sports drinks	Energy drinks	Drinks with sugar substitutes, including diet sodas

## SERVE WATER AT EVERY MEAL AND SNACK

Water is a great drink choice for adults and kids. It is **calorie-free and low cost** from your nearest tap! Offer water with every snack and meal time. Drink plenty of water when you or your children are playing and being active. Even with a slice of fruit or splash of 100% fruit juice, this is the most **inexpensive** beverage option.



### JAZZ UP WATER WITH THESE SIMPLE TRICKS

- Add sliced fruit like oranges to the water fruit for a light yummy flavor
- Serve sodium-free seltzer water
- Mix a splash of 100% juice with sodium-free seltzer water
- Mix oz. of water with oz. of juice for a refreshing drink

## SERVE A FRUIT AND/OR VEGETABLE AT EVERY MEAL AND SNACK



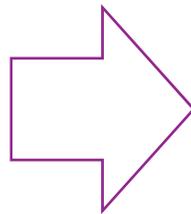
Fruits and vegetables are full of **vitamins, minerals, and fiber**. A diet high in fruits and vegetables can help fight illness. The fiber and water in fruits and vegetables also help you feel full. Serving 100% juice doesn't substitute for whole fruit! Some fruits and veggies are less expensive in season, such as strawberries and blueberries. On the other hand, many fruits and veggies are inexpensive year-round. Check out the section, "Snack Sense Shopping Guide," on page 6 for some examples of inexpensive fruits and veggies!

## CHOOSE FOODS WITH NO TRANS FAT

Trans fat is an unhealthy fat because it **increases the risk of certain diseases**. Trans fat is often hidden in packaged foods like muffins, cookies, brownies, and crackers. Some brands of popcorn and peanut butter may have trans fat, too. **Read nutrition labels and select only foods with 0g of trans fat**. By law, products containing up to 0.49 grams trans fat per serving can still be listed on the nutrition label as 0 grams trans fat. Check the ingredient list and avoid buying any foods that list "**partially hydrogenated oils**"; this means there is trans fat in the food.

### LOOK FOR AND AVOID TRANS FAT IN SNACKS LIKE THESE...

- Saltine and oyster crackers
- Animal crackers
- Snack mixes
- Processed cookies
- Graham crackers
- Other processed crackers, often with cheese or butter flavoring



### ...AT SIMILAR PRICES, TRY THESE HEALTHIER OPTIONS INSTEAD:

- Whole-wheat bread
- Whole-grain cereals with low sugar
- Whole-grain crackers
- Whole-wheat mini bagels
- Whole-wheat pita bread
- Whole-wheat pita chips

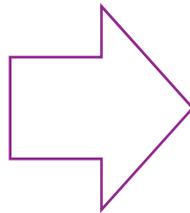
## WHEN BUYING GRAINS, CHOOSE WHOLE GRAINS

Whole grains contain **fiber, vitamins, and healthy fats** that are good for you and help you feel full longer. Many of these nutrients are not contained in refined “white” flour or sugar. Whenever possible, substitute whole-grain products for refined grain foods; whole grains are often available at the **same price as refined options**. These are some frequently served snack foods that are available as whole grain for a similar price!



### INSTEAD OF SERVING THESE GRAINS...

White bread  
Bagel  
English muffin  
Flour tortillas  
Saltine, cheese, butter, and other processed crackers



### ...SERVE THESE WHOLE GRAINS INSTEAD:

Whole-wheat bread  
Whole-wheat mini bagels  
Whole-wheat English muffins  
Corn or whole-wheat tortillas  
Whole-grain crackers  
Whole-wheat pita bread

# SNACK SENSE IDEAS

Below are some sample snack menus that your Y is serving after school. You can serve these same snacks in your home, too. These ideas are great because they support the Healthy Eating and Physical Activity standards *and* they are less than 75¢ per serving.\* Remember! Serve tap water at every snack—for virtually no cost. What a bargain!

SNACK FOODS	BEVERAGES
Apple slices, peanut butter	Water and 1% milk
Celery, raisins, string cheese	Water
Oranges, whole-wheat crackers	Water
Whole-wheat crackers, oranges	Water
Salsa, beans, corn tortilla chips	Water
Banana, oatmeal	Seltzer water
Egg salad w/mayo, whole-wheat bread, cucumber slices	Water and 1% milk
Broccoli, couscous	Water with splash of 100% fruit juice
Tuna salad w/mayo, baby carrots, whole-wheat crackers	Water
Banana, peanut butter, raisins	Water
Peanut butter, whole-wheat mini bagel, raisins	Water
Applesauce, popcorn	Water and 1% milk
Banana, whole-grain cereal	Water and 1% milk
Baby carrots, hummus	Water
Tomato wedges, string cheese	Water
Whole-wheat spaghetti, tomato sauce	Water with orange slices
Colored pepper slices, cheese	Water and 1% milk
Whole-grain crackers, raisins	Water
Fruit canned in 100% juice, whole-wheat pretzels	Water
Trail mix (nuts, sunflower seeds, dried fruit)	Water with splash of 100% fruit juice

\*Note: The price of foods and beverages are estimates based national price averages. Prices in the area where you shop may be more or less expensive.

# SNACK SENSE SHOPPING GUIDE



Fruits, vegetables, proteins, and grains are the building blocks of healthy bodies. Each day at snack, offer a fruit or veggie AND a protein or grain. Serving sizes are on the Nutrition Facts label of packaged foods. In general, 1 medium fresh fruit or ½ cup of chopped or canned fruit counts as a serving. One serving of dried fruit is ¼ cup. 1 cup of raw leafy veggies or ½ cup of other vegetables is one serving. These are standard serving sizes, but children may eat more or less of a food based on individual needs. For more information on serving sizes, see the “Snack Sense Serving Size Guide” on page 7.

Below are some examples of budget-friendly healthy options for fruits, veggies, proteins, and grains that YMCAs are serving in afterschool programs!

## OFFER A FRUIT OR VEGETABLE OPTION WITH EVERY SNACK!

### FRUITS

- Apple slices
- Apricots
- Raisins
- Bananas
- Applesauce
- Canned fruit in 100% juice
- Grapes
- Oranges
- Dried mixed fruit without added sugar
- Avocado
- Frozen berries

**Note:** Avoid fruit snacks, fruit leathers, roll-ups, and other synthetic “fruit”

### VEGETABLES

- Celery
- Salsa
- Frozen peas
- Canned corn niblets
- Cucumber
- Colored pepper slices
- Baby carrots
- Broccoli
- Lettuce
- Tomatoes

**Note:** Avoid french fries and tater tots

## OFFER A PROTEIN OR WHOLE GRAIN OPTION WITH EVERY SNACK!

### WHOLE GRAINS

- Whole-wheat bread
- Couscous
- Quinoa
- Whole-wheat bagels
- Whole-grain crackers
- Whole-grain cereals
- Corn tortillas
- Whole-wheat tortillas
- Whole-wheat English muffins

**Note:** Avoid whole-grain foods with trans fats. Make sure trans fat is 0g. Do not buy anything with “partially hydrogenated” in the ingredient list.

### PROTEIN

- Canned black beans
- Hard-boiled egg
- Peanut butter
- Tuna
- String cheese
- Mixed nuts
- Hummus
- Yogurt
- Cottage cheese

**Note:** Nut allergies are a serious issue. Make sure no one is allergic before serving any products with nuts.

# SNACK SENSE

## SERVING SIZE GUIDE

What counts as a serving? It depends on the type of food! Check out the general guidelines below and a few examples for each type of food. For packaged foods, check the nutrition label—it lists the serving size! Note that serving sizes are standard serving sizes for planning purchases, but children may eat more or less of a food based on individual needs.

### FRUITS

In general, 1 medium fresh fruit or ½ cup of chopped or canned fruit counts as a serving. One serving of dried fruit is ¼ cup.

Here are some examples of 1 fruit serving!

- 1 medium banana
- 1 medium apple
- ½ cup of sliced strawberries
- ½ cup canned pineapple or peaches
- ¼ cup of raisins or dried cranberries
- ¼ of a medium avocado

### VEGETABLES

In general, 1 cup of raw leafy vegetables or ½ cup of other vegetables (cooked or raw) counts as 1 serving.

Here are some examples of 1 vegetable serving!

- 1 cup of baby spinach or lettuce
- ½ cup of baby carrots
- ½ cup of sliced cucumbers
- ½ cup of cherry tomatoes
- ½ cup of tomato sauce

### WHOLE GRAINS

One slice of bread, about 1 cup of cereal, or ½ cup of cooked cereal, rice or pasta is one grain serving.

Here are some examples of 1 whole grain serving!

- 1 slice of whole-wheat bread
- 1 whole-wheat tortilla (7 inches in diameter)
- 1 cup of whole-grain cereal
- ½ cup of couscous
- ½ whole-wheat English muffin
- 6 whole-wheat crackers
- ½ whole-wheat pita bread

### PROTEIN

One cup of yogurt, 1½ ounces of cheese, 2 tablespoons of peanut butter, ½ cup of beans, and 1/3 cup of nuts is one serving.

Here are some examples of 1 protein serving!

- 1 hard-boiled egg
- 1 cup of yogurt
- 1 stick of string cheese
- ¼ cup of shredded cheese
- 2 Tbsp. hummus
- ½ cup of black beans
- ½ can of tuna
- 1/3 cup of almonds or mixed nuts

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