



10 Healthy Food Choices For Kids

Whether they are packed in a lunchbox or easy to grab when kids get home from school, stocking your kitchen with healthy snacks for kids helps make sure there is always something for growing brains and bodies to snack on.

Kids require even more of the important nutrients our bodies need on a daily basis. Lean sources of protein like eggs, complex carbohydrates like oats, and sources of healthy fats like avocados are the key cornerstones to focus on when choosing a healthy, balanced snack for your child. Omega-3 DHA is a type of healthy fat that is crucial for brain development-making it of special importance to young children who are still rapidly strengthening their brains and absorbing new information every day. Omega-3s are found in fatty fish like salmon and in some fortified foods such as yogurt, eggs and waffles.

Other nutrients to include in healthy snacks for kids are calcium for building bones, fiber to keep them full, iron and vitamins A, C and D to nourish their growing bodies. Beyond just food, drinking enough water is also key to making sure they are energized throughout the day.

Need help fueling the little ones in your life? Fill your kitchen with these 10 healthy snacks for kids.

Make Ahead Smoothie Freezer Packs

If you're looking to clean out your fridge and freezer or pump up your snack, smoothies are the perfect option, especially when it's hot outside or after a sweaty play session. Choose liquids with low or no added sugar. Milk or unsweetened nondairy milk add creaminess without added sugar. To build a power smoothie, add fruits and vegetables, kefir or yogurt, and a source of healthy fats (including chia seeds, flax or nut butter). You can also add whole grains to the mix-like oats or iron-fortified oatmeal, found in the baby aisle-for extra nutrition. Beyond just filling kids up with the good stuff, smoothies also hydrate and provide a crucial boost of energy.

Cheese

String cheese and cheese cubes make great protein-packed finger foods for all ages! Cheese is rich in protein and calcium, key nutrients that help muscles and bones grow bigger and stronger at a time when children need these nutrients the most. Opt for full-fat or 2% cheese to help the kiddos feel more satisfied at snack time.

Whole Grain Cereal

That's right, cereal isn't just for breakfast. Whole-grain cereals provide complex carbohydrates to fuel active muscles-including the brain! Choose an iron-fortified cereal that is low in sugar (7 g or less per serving) and contains some fiber (at least 3 g per serving). Whole grains should be the first ingredient. Have fun with it by adding cereal to a trail mix, mixing it into homemade granola bars, or sprinkling it on top of a smoothie! Kids will love that extra crunch.

Hummus

Veggie sticks, whole-grain pita bread or broccoli with hummus for dipping is an easy-to-pack snack for all age groups. Cruciferous vegetables, which include broccoli and cauliflower, are rich in vitamins and disease-fighting phytonutrients. Tahini (crushed sesame seeds), an ingredient in hummus, provides healthy fats, while whole-grain pita bread and vegetables supply satisfying fiber to keep kids fuller longer.

Whole Grain Muffins

Making muffins from scratch is an easy way to ensure a whole-grain, veggie-filled option that you can store for eating all week long. Add shredded zucchini, carrots, pureed sweet potatoes or fresh fruit to your mix to pack these snacks full of antioxidants and fiber. Have kids top warm muffins with their favorite nut butter to amp up the nutrients even more.

Freeze Dried Produce

If raw fruits and vegetables just won't cut it all the time, freeze-dried produce is a great snacking alternative that doesn't (usually) contain added sugar. Dehydrated broccoli, edamame, okra, beets and kale are a great place to start to get your kiddos to load up on vegetables. Freeze-dried raspberries, blueberries, apples, bananas, peaches and other fruits are tasty for the kids and full of antioxidants too. New to freeze-dried produce? Trader Joe's, Whole Foods and Target have a great selection. Dried fruit is also rich in fiber and can help with keeping kids regular; just make sure to choose ones without added sugar.

Hard Boiled Eggs

Create a protein-packed snack in just minutes by boiling eggs. Simply sprinkle with salt and pepper. Beyond protein, eggs are an excellent source of choline, which is crucial for proper brain development, as well as nervous system and muscle function.

Nut Butter

Whether they prefer peanut, sunflower, almond or others, nut butters are an excellent source of kid-friendly healthy fats. Smear their favorite spread on apple slices, blend it into a smoothie, or combine it with Greek yogurt for a tasty dip for fruit. What kids won't like the taste of hazelnut, chocolate flavored Nutella?

Frozen Fruit Pops

Want a treat that will get the kids excited? Try serving them frozen fruit pops at snack time! Choose treats made with 100 percent fruit and fruit juices to keep added sugars to a minimum. Or, just make your own and get the kids to help! Yogurt squeezes found in the dairy aisle can be frozen into a tasty, protein-rich snack the kids will love. Fruit pops also help with hydration and cool our bodies down during the hottest months.



Whole Grain Waffles

Not only a breakfast staple, whole-grain waffles also make a tasty snack on the go. Pop them out of the freezer and into the toaster, then smear them with peanut butter and banana, or almond butter and blueberries! Let the kids choose their toppings and decorate their waffles for even more snack-time fun. For a healthy frozen waffle, look for whole grains listed first (after water) in the ingredient list. And choose brands that are at or below 200 calories, 4 grams of





My List of Healthy Foods to Try

Here's a list of foods to try, pick one to start now don't be shy. One bite requirement is a must ... soon your taste buds will adjust. For every food you start to eat, you will earn your favorite treat.

Check the boxes as you try the foods. Once you complete the list you will earn your Certificate of Achievement Award. (Get the entire family to play along)

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- | | | | |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Carrot Sticks | <input type="checkbox"/> | Granola |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Red or Yellow Pepper Slice | <input type="checkbox"/> | Pumpkin Seeds |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Cherry Tomatoes | <input type="checkbox"/> | Wheat or Rice Crackers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Un-sweetened Applesauce | <input type="checkbox"/> | Slices Cucumbers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Bananas or Apples | <input type="checkbox"/> | Snap Peas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Grapes | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sunflower Seeds |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Blueberries | <input type="checkbox"/> | Cheese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Kiwi | <input type="checkbox"/> | Broccoli |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Rice Cakes | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yogurt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Raisins | <input type="checkbox"/> | Hard Boiled Eggs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Celery
(Peanut Butter and Raisins for "Ants on a log") | <input type="checkbox"/> | Hummus |



Healthy Food Choice Certificate of Achievement

GREAT JOB!

This certifies that -

**Has successfully tried all the healthy food choices and has earned
this special achievement award.**



Signed

Date

