

- Children—nutrition

Healthy snacking for children

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NUTRITIOUS snacking can help children curb hunger throughout the day, as well as provide energy and important nutrients.

Getting children off to a good start with healthy snacking is a behaviour that will stick with them for a lifetime.

Here, we share some ideas:

Encouraging Healthy Snacking

By involving children in the preparation or purchase of healthy snacks, you are encouraging healthy snacking as well as independence.

The more exposure children have to healthy foods the better.

Have healthy options readily available such as ready-to-eat veggie sticks in a box for when you are out and about, fresh fruit available in a bowl in the kitchen and wholegrain cereal and canned fruit in your cupboards.

Timings

Having regular meals at set times, with two or three snacks per day is ideal.

Try not to allow snacks too close to mealtimes as this can cause children to fill up.

If your child is not eating well at mealtimes, try looking at the amount and type of snacks they are having; they could still be full from their last snack.

Ideas

Where possible, try to combine snacks from at least two food groups, for example vegetables and humous or fruit and sugar-free yoghurt.

Other healthy snack ideas include wholegrain foods such as bread, toast and breadsticks. This will provide extra nutrients and be filling for your little one.

Dividing up packaged snacks

If packaged foods are given to children, they may need to be divided up and shared.

This is because packaged foods are normally designed for adults.

As a general rule, one portion is roughly the amount that a child can fit in the palm of their hand.