

Clippings



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For Immediate Release

Summer Snacks

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Summer is here, the kids are home and 'What's to eat?' is the question of the hour... or so it seems! Here are some tips for busy families to think about for summer snacks:

- **Plan for Snacks.** Include foods for healthy snack options on the grocery list. Fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grain crackers and bread and yogurt are great options. Clean and prep the vegetables the day you bring them home. Store snacks in clear containers in the refrigerator or pantry so they are ready and visible when your children are hungry.
- **Choose foods from one or two food groups.** Preschoolers get nearly one-third of the calories they need from snacks so make them count. Help children learn that a treat such as candy, cookies and ice cream are for special occasions, not necessarily everyday snacks.
- Offer snacks at predictable times. Children have smaller stomachs so they need to eat more often. Children age two to five usually need to eat every two to three hours.
- **Designate an area in your home as the 'eating-only zone'.** Limit all snacking to that location when at home. The kitchen or countertop work well for this. In addition snacking should be done without the distraction of the TV, computers, tablets or cell phones. (How well are we as adults doing with this one?)



- **Limit milk and 100% juice consumption to meal and snack time.** The longer teeth come in contact with food and drinks, the more time bacteria have to produce acids that damage tooth enamel. To reduce the risk of cavities, milk or 100% juice offered at meal or snack time should be drunk during the meal or snack and not sipped on throughout the day.
- **Offer water to drink between meals and snacks.** It is easy to get a lot of calories from beverages. Beverages like pop and sports drinks are high in calories and added sugar or sweeteners. If pop is consumed, it should be on occasion for a special treat. Sports drinks also have added sodium and are meant to be consumed after heavy sweating or after more than one hour of vigorous exercise.

The ISU Extension and Outreach *Spend Smart Eat Smart* website has many good ideas and recipes for healthy summer snacks www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsavings/. Fruit Kabobs and Yogurt Dip, Whole Grain Cereal Treats, Peanut Butter Balls, Apricot Pops, Fruitastic Summer Smoothie, Frozen Fruit Cups, Fruit Pizza, Easy Bean Dip and After School Hummus are just a few you might want to try.

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