Kids need snacks
Tiny tummies can’t hold lots of food. Kids may need to eat four to six times a day to get the nutrients and energy they need to play, learn and grow. Don’t worry — snacks eaten two to three hours before meals won’t spoil appetites.

Teens need snacks
 Teens have high energy needs and are snacking machines! Let them fill up on healthy snacks to make up for meals they miss due to busy schedules.

Adults need snacks
There’s no evidence that snacking makes you fat. On the contrary, healthy snacks can take the edge off your hunger and keep you from overeating at meals. Ever experience late afternoon fatigue? It could be due to hunger. A healthy snack will give you the energy you need to do errands, pick up kids and prepare meals.

Make room for snacks — they’re good for you!
Feel guilty when you have a snack? Get rid of the guilt. Healthy snacks are a great way for people of all ages to meet their daily nutrient needs. Planned snacks promote good health and add pleasure to life.
What’s your snack plan?

With just a little planning, you can have snacks that are healthy, quick and tasty.

✔ When you shop for groceries, don’t forget snacks. Buy individual containers of yogurt, canned fruit, tuna packed in water, pudding, low-fat milk, juice boxes (100-percent fruit) and water.

✔ When you’re putting away groceries, take time to wash fresh fruit and vegetables. Store them by low-fat yogurt and dips in the refrigerator so they will be ready to grab for quick snacks.

✔ Put snacks on lower shelves so children can serve themselves.

✔ Hang a snack list on the refrigerator so everyone can see what is available.

Pack a snack box

Avoid the temptation of high-fat, salty snack foods by packing a box of tasty, healthy snacks to keep at work, in the car and in your child’s backpack.

Stock the box with foods that don’t need refrigeration, such as raisins, nuts, peanut butter, whole-grain crackers, pretzels, whole-grain cereal, bottled water, juice boxes (100-percent fruit), trail mix and small cans of tuna packed in water. If you have cooking facilities at work, add hot cocoa mix, instant soups and oatmeal to the box.

✔ Check before sending snacks to school with your child — many schools have policies about what kinds of food your child can bring from home.
* Baby carrots, broccoli or cauliflower and low-fat dip
* Whole-grain crackers and peanut butter
* String cheese and an apple
* Grapes and a bagel with peanut butter
* Pretzels and raisins
* Nuts and orange slices
* Whole-grain cereal and a banana
* Banana and a fig bar
* Cheese cubes and apple or pear slices
* Grape tomatoes and whole-grain crackers
* Applesauce and graham crackers
* Flavored yogurt and roasted soy nuts
* Baked corn chips and bean dip
* Lean ham or turkey slices wrapped around a breadstick

Store these foods in the refrigerator: meat, poultry, fish, eggs and dairy foods like milk, cheese, yogurt and sour cream dips. Canned foods and salad dressings need to be refrigerated after they have been opened. Fruits and vegetables stay fresh longer when refrigerated.

To keep foods cold away from home, add an ice pack or frozen container of juice, yogurt or water. Ice packs or frozen containers thaw slowly, keeping foods cold for several hours.

Low-fat microwave popcorn and 100-percent fruit juice.

**Milk shakes:** Pour milk, juice and ice in a covered container and shake.

**Ants on a log:** Fill celery sticks with peanut butter and sprinkle with raisins.

**Spread:** Peanut butter on whole-wheat bread, top with fresh or dried fruit.

**Yogurt sundae:** Slice a banana, add vanilla yogurt and sprinkle with nuts.

**Mini pizza:** Top French bread, pita bread or a tortilla with tomato sauce, sprinkle with garlic powder and oregano, add a slice of cheese and broil one to two minutes.

**Microwave:** A potato and top it with grated cheese and salsa.

**Mexican tortilla:** Top a tortilla with refried beans and cheese. Warm in a toaster oven or microwave. Add lettuce and salsa.

**Stuff:** Whole-wheat pita bread with tuna and lettuce.

**When you have extra time on the weekends, prepare some snacks for the week ahead. Cook up some family fun by having your kids pitch in and help:**

**Nutty bananas:** Wash and peel bananas. Roll them in peanut butter and chopped nuts. Freeze on a tray, then store the bananas in a freezer bag in the freezer.

**Designer trail mix:** In a large bowl, mix 1 cup nuts, 1 cup whole-wheat squares and 1 cup dried fruit. Stir well and divide mix into individual plastic snack bags.

**Bunny dip:** Mix together 1 cup plain low-fat yogurt, 1 cup light sour cream and 1 package dry ranch dressing mix. Store in a covered container in the refrigerator. Wash and prepare vegetables like carrots, green peppers and cauliflower, and store by the dip.

**Chewy peanut butter logs:** In a large bowl, mix ½ cup peanut butter, 2 cups dry milk powder and ¼ cup honey. Stir and knead until smooth. Chill until firm. Then, have fun shaping into logs or balls. Pack each log in a plastic snack bag and store in the refrigerator.
Vending machines are a fact of life in workplaces and schools. Pass on foods that are high in fat, sugar and salt, such as soda, fruit drinks, candy, cookies, snack cakes and regular chips. The foods available are getting healthier – look for the healthy choices listed below.

- bottled water
- 100-percent fruit juice
- nuts
- fresh fruit
- fresh vegetables
- dried fruit
- pretzels
- baked chips
- salads
- lean meat sandwiches on 100-percent whole-wheat bread
- unsweetened fruit cups
- unsweetened applesauce cups
- unsweetened whole-grain cereal
- low-fat cheeses

A word about granola bars

Not all granola bars (or cereal bars) are created equal. To make the best choice, read the Nutrition Facts panel and ingredient list on each package.

✔ On the ingredient list, look for whole-grains like oats and whole-wheat to appear first.

✔ On the Nutrition Facts panel, look for a bar with at least 1 to 2 grams of dietary fiber. Look for fat and saturated fat that is 5 percent or less of the Percent Daily Value. Trans fat should be 0 grams.

✔ Keep in mind, store-bought bars are convenient, but expensive.

Did you know ...

Fatigue can be due to hunger or thirst. To make sure you drink enough fluids throughout the day, check your urine. Urine that is the color of lemonade means you are drinking enough. A small amount of dark-colored urine means you need to drink more fluids.