

Lunch Time & Snack ideas

Tips to get organized

- *Fill containers or baggies early*
- *Make several containers or sandwich bags of nonperishable items to include in lunches or for on the go snacks*
 - *Enough for a week*
 - *Cut up vegetables, crackers, pretzels, dry cereal, dried fruit, nuts*
- *If you are planning to pack dinner leftovers for lunch, pack the storage container as you are cleaning up after dinner and refrigerate the container until morning—this saves time.*

Arrange your storage container drawer to make items easy to find.

Set up a staging area, so everything you need is in one place, including:

- At least two lunch boxes
- Brown bags
- Baggies
- Storage containers (all sizes)
- Spoons and forks
- Napkins
- Straws
- Thermos or water bottle
- Markers

Have water chilled and ready to pack

- Buy 8-fluid-ounce bottles of water or fill several water bottles
- Keep the refrigerator stocked for the week
- Freeze them in the summer months

For children

Pack money to purchase beverages

- Have them purchase milk at school if possible
- Less worry about packing a drink, spoilage, or leaking

Know what to pack, involve your child- what are they most likely to eat?

Conventional

- Sandwich, fruit, vegetables, snack item, and a drink

Variety, when your child prefers to "pick"

- Protein, such as cheese, Greek yogurt, nuts, beans, hummus, or hard-boiled eggs
- Fruit and/or vegetables
- Whole grain carbohydrate, such as crackers or popcorn

Have your child help pack the lunch, as much as possible. Older children often can prepare and pack their own lunch with adult supervision, and all children are more likely to eat their lunch if they were involved with the selection and preparation.

Try these lunch ideas

- Turkey, ham, or roast beef with low-fat mayonnaise, a slice of cheese, and lettuce rolled in a tortilla, with an orange and milk
- Hummus on pita bread, sliced cucumbers, apple slices, and milk
- Slices or cubes of grilled chicken or turkey, cheese stick, 1 serving of high-fiber crackers grapes, and water
- Soup, stew, or chili in a thermos, one serving of high-fiber crackers, snap peas, and milk
- Breadstick wrapped with deli cheese and deli meat, baked potato chips, pear, and milk
- Salad with hard-boiled eggs, nuts, beans or meat, and oil-and-vinegar salad dressing, along with a multigrain roll, butter, and milk
- For snacks, choose:

-½ cup nuts or seeds and one piece of fruit

-Yogurt and high-fiber cereal

-Cheese and crackers

-No-sugar-added peanut butter* and vegetables

-Vegetable sticks and dip

Snacks can be included as part of any healthful meal plan. Because carbohydrate-based snacks can elevate your blood sugar, it is a good idea for anyone with diabetes to choose snack foods that are higher in protein and fiber, but provide a moderate amount of carbohydrates. The following list provides some suggestions.

Carbohydrate-free foods

- 1 hard-boiled egg
- 1 ounce (oz) of cheese (cheese stick)
- 1 single-serve pouch of tuna (2.6 oz)
- 2-3 slices of turkey or chicken breast
- 1 small stalk of celery*

Less than 5 grams (g) of carbohydrate

- ½ cup (C) reduced-fat cottage cheese
- ½ C mini sweet peppers*
- 4-5 baby carrots*
- 4 cherry tomatoes*
- 1 C cucumber slices*
- 20 whole almonds*
- 1 oz of olives
- 1 tablespoon (Tbsp) of peanut butter
- ¼ C part-skim ricotta cheese

5-10 g of carbohydrate

- 6-oz container of plain Greek yogurt
- 3 tablespoons hummus dip
- ¼ Greek yogurt dip
- ¼ C salsa
- 1 brown rice cake*
- ½ of an avocado
- 1 C raw zucchini “noodles” tossed with 1 teaspoon soy sauce and rice wine vinegar*

10-15 g of carbohydrate

- 1 6-oz container of fruit or honey-flavored Greek yogurt
- 1 C of strawberry halves*
- ½ C blueberries*
- 1 small whole-wheat pita bread
- 8 Wheat Thins Crackers*

* Contains fiber

Tips to make a healthy, low carb snack

- A lower carbohydrate snack should include between 15-30 g of carbohydrates. Check with your registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN) to determine your exact carbohydrate goal.
- To keep your snacks healthy and balanced, try to include several different food groups on your snack plate. Ideally, a balanced snack should be similar to a balanced meal, and include a source of protein, a whole grain or dairy, and a fruit or vegetable.
- Use the above list to combine different food groups to make a healthy, low-carbohydrate snack:
 - Tuna + celery + 2 Tbsp plain Greek yogurt + a brown rice cake
 - ¼ C ricotta cheese + chopped raw vegetables + 8 wheat crackers
 - ½ C cottage cheese + 20 chopped almonds + ½ C strawberries
 - 1 small wheat pita + ½ mashed avocado + sliced hard-boiled egg
 - 1 oz cheese + 5 olives + raw vegetables + wheat crackers
- Boiled edamame (soybeans)
- Bran muffins
- Cereal bars or cereal and milk
- Cheese and crackers
- Deli meat sandwiches
- Fresh fruit with Greek yogurt
- Hummus and pita bread
- Nuts
- Peanut butter and crackers
- Tortilla chips and salsa
- Trail mix
- Vegetables and dip

Take the time to prepare snacks, so that they are easily accessible