



## Snack time

Snacking is a normal part of healthy eating. It helps to provide your body with nourishment to sustain your daily activities and keep you healthy. Eating well includes choosing snacks that will meet your body's needs and satisfy what you feel like eating at that time. A good rule to follow is having 3 main meals and 3 snacks a day; with snacks usually eaten as morning tea, afternoon tea and supper. This ensures you're having something to eat every 2-3 hours to fuel your body throughout the day.

### **Snacks are important if you're:**

- trying to gain weight and meet your body's nutritional needs – snacks provide energy and nutrients in manageable sizes
- trying to stabilise your weight and eating habits – snacks will help prevent you from becoming very hungry and overeating later on as a result of going too long between meals. This happens not because of a lack of 'will power' but as a natural survival response, as your body senses food is scarce, and increases the urge for you to eat
- wanting more variety – snacking between meals can be fun and social, plus it adds variety to your daily eating

Often you might feel tired, shaky, dizzy or a bit queasy if you haven't eaten for a few hours. This is likely due to a drop in your blood sugar. Low blood sugar can also contribute to a low mood, headaches and difficulty concentrating. Snacks will help keep your blood sugar steady, and help prevent these feelings.

### **What is a snack?**

- Snacks can be lots of different types of foods like fruits, nuts, dairy foods, bread products, cereals and nourishing drinks such as milk or juice
- Snacks can also include foods such as cakes, chips, biscuits and ice creams
- At times you may feel like you are eating above your appetite depending on your energy needs, this means you may need to have more than one snack listed below to meet your nutritional goals
- There may be times where you feel like eating a little more or less of a snack than usual. This is normal as our body's appetite fluctuates on a day to day basis

There are many food options that can be made into a snack, including some nourishing drinks as well. The following page has a few ideas to get you started.

## Some simple snack and nourishing drink ideas

- Sweet biscuits (2 chocolate/rich e.g. Tim Tam or Monte Carlo or 3 plainer ones e.g. Arrowroot or Milk Coffee)
- A piece of cake or muffin
- Scone with butter and jam
- Bowl of cereal and milk
- ½ -1 protein filled sandwich or wrap
- 1 slice of toast, fruit loaf or a crumpet or an English muffin with butter and spread
- 1 slice of toast with 1 slice of cheese
- 1 slice of toast with ¼ avocado
- Fruit bun and butter
- A small croissant with/without cheese
- Breakfast, muesli or fruit and nut bar e.g. Carmen's
- Mini Nachos- small packet corn chips topped with salsa and melted cheese
- A row of rice crackers with dip
- Mid-size packet crisps (~50g) (e.g. twisties, grain waves)
- Savoury biscuits e.g. vita-weats (3-4) or savoy's (6-8) with cheese or peanut butter
- A serve of fruit, ¼ cup dried fruit
- Handful of dried fruit and nuts, or roasted chickpeas and fava beans
- Frozen yoghurt or dairy dessert (e.g. chocolate custard, panna cotta, Le Rice, chocolate mousse)
- An ice cream (e.g. Cornetto, Magnum, Splice, Billabong, Weiss bar)
- Tub of regular yoghurt (+/- fruit, nuts or granola)
- 5-6 squares of milk chocolate
- Chocolate bar (~45-60g) (e.g. Kit Kat, Cherry Ripe, Mars Bar, Picnic, Twirl etc.)
- A jam-filled or custard-filled doughnut
- A plain doughnut
- Pikelets with jam and cream or Nutella/peanut butter
- Mini pizza- English muffin topped with tomato paste and cheese
- Banana split (banana blended with ice cream)
- Milkshake with ice cream and topping (chocolate, strawberry, caramel)
- Up 'n Go or breakfast drink
- Sustagen made with milk
- Smoothie made with milk, yoghurt and fruit
- Large latte, chai latte, mocha
- Milk/soy milk +/- Milo, Nesquik, (~250mls)
- Flavoured milk (e.g. Chocolate, Strawberry, Banana) (~250-300mls)
- Iced coffee with milk and ice cream
- Iced chocolate with milk and ice cream
- Hot chocolate made with milk (~250mls)
- Glass of fruit juice (~250mls)

If you're not sure where to start or unsure of how many snacks you should be aiming to eat each day, your Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD) can support you to develop a meal plan, suitable snack ideas and help guide you to reaching your nutritional needs and goals.

*The product examples provided above are provided for informational purposes only; they do not constitute an endorsement by Dietitians Australia*