

HEART HEALTHY SNACKS



The heart is one of the body's hardest working organs, pumping blood throughout the body to deliver oxygen and nutrients.

Heart health for children is important.

THESE NUTRIENTS SUPPORT HEART HEALTH:

UNSATURATED & SATURATED FAT

Unsaturated fats (“healthy fats”) improve cholesterol levels and fight inflammation in the body.

- Sources: Avocados | Nuts & seeds | Olive oil
Fatty fish (tuna, salmon)

Saturated fats (“unhealthy fats”) increase cholesterol and inflammation in the body.

- Sources: Red meat | Processed meats (deli meat, hot dogs, bacon, sausage) | Poultry with skin
Butter or lard | Cheese

Dietary fat recommendations

Reference the nutrition facts panel to understand how much fat a food contains.

- **Age 0-1:** dietary fat should not be restricted for infants under age 1.
- **Age 1-2:** 30-40% of daily calories from fat
- **Age 2-3:** 30-35% of daily calories from fat
- **Ages 4-18:** 25-35% of daily calories from fat

FIBER

Fiber has been shown to help lower blood pressure and cholesterol.

- Sources: Whole Grains (whole wheat bread and pasta, brown rice, popcorn) | Fruits (apples, pears, bananas) | Vegetables (greens, carrots, beans).

Fiber recommendations

Reference the nutrition facts panel to understand how much fiber a food contains.

- **Children 2-3 years:** 12-17 grams of fiber per day.
- **Children 4-5 years:** 14-17 grams of fiber per day.
- **Children 6-8 years:** 17-20 grams of fiber per day.
- **Children 9-10 years:** 20-22 grams of fiber per day.
- **Children 11-12 years:** 22-26 grams of fiber per day.

Fat is an essential nutrient for children. Young children especially need higher amounts of fat in their diet for healthy brain development and unsaturated fat can help prevent heart disease later in life.



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Limit or avoid these nutrients:

SODIUM

Too much sodium can lead to high blood pressure (hypertension).

- Sources: Processed snack foods | Processed meat (deli meat, hot dogs, bacon, sausage) | Burgers Tacos | Pizza | Soup

Sodium Limits

- **Ages 1-3:** 1,200 milligrams (mg)/day (1/5 teaspoon of table salt)
- **Ages 4-8:** 1,500 mg/day (1/4 teaspoon of table salt)
- **Ages 9-13:** 1,800 mg/day (1/3 teaspoon of table salt)
- **Age 14+:** Other age groups: 2,300 mg/day (2/5 teaspoon of table salt)

ADDED SUGAR

Eating too much **added sugar** can increase cholesterol levels and inflammation.

Added Sugar Limits

A 1,200-calorie diet should have no more than 7 teaspoons (28 grams) per day of added sugar.

- **Children 0-2 years:** no added sugar in the diet is recommended.
- **Children 2-19 years:** less than 10% of total daily calories should come from added sugar.

Heart-healthy snack ideas:

Snack	unsaturated fat	>2 g fiber	<200 mg sodium	<5 g added sugar
2 tbsp peanut butter + 1/2 cup sliced apples	✓	✓	✓	✓
2 cups air-popped popcorn* + 5 dried unsweetened apricots	✓	✓	✓	✓
2 tbsp hummus + 1/2 cup sliced carrots	✓	✓	✓	✓
1/2 cup sliced avocado + 1/2 oz whole corn tortilla chips	✓	✓	✓	✓
2 tsp chia seeds + 5.3 oz low fat plain greek yogurt	✓	✓	✓	✓
1 oz light salt Triscuit crackers + 1 oz swiss cheese	✓	✓	✓	✓

Safety Notes:

(*) Only serve popcorn to children ages 4 and up to avoid choking hazard.

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