



FACT SHEET:

Healthy snack ideas

Eating the right balance of healthy foods can help you live well with diabetes. Snacks can be a part of our daily eating plans. It is important to make healthy choices and to consider the portion size when you snack.

Carbohydrate-based snacks

The snacks listed below contain **one carbohydrate (carb) exchange**, or approximately 15 grams (g) of carb. Talk to your diabetes health professional about whether you need to eat carb-based snacks and which types are best for you.

Fruit

- Fresh fruit:
 - » 1 apple
 - » 1 pear
 - » 1 orange
 - » 1 large peach or nectarine
 - » 1 small banana
 - » 3 medium apricots or plums
 - » 2 kiwifruits or medium mandarins
 - » ½ cup of grapes
 - » 1 cup blueberries or 20 cherries
 - » 1½ cups diced melon.

- Dried fruit:
 - » 1½ tablespoons of sultanas
 - » 4-6 prunes
 - » 4 whole dried apricots or eight halves.
- Canned fruit in natural juice drained:
 - » 1 cup of fruit salad, apricots or peaches.

Vegetables

- ½ cup of no added-salt baked beans
- 1 steamed cob of corn
- 1 small can (125 g) corn kernels
- 1 small can (125 g) of 4-bean mix or chickpeas
- 40 g cooked or canned chickpeas tossed in a little olive oil, add your favourite spices and bake in the oven until crisp.

Dairy and alternatives

- 200 g natural yoghurt flavoured with nuts or seeds
- 100 g low-fat flavoured yoghurt or 200 g of diet yoghurt
- 250 ml of low-fat plain milk or calcium-fortified soy milk
- 1 medium cappuccino, café latte or flat white coffee with low-fat milk or soy milk.

Breads and cereals

- 1 slice of dense grainy or seeded bread (plain or toasted) with a thin spread of avocado, low-fat ricotta, cottage cheese or hummus. Add sliced tomato and sprouts
- ½ wholegrain English muffin grilled with one slice of low-fat cheese and a sliced tomato
- ½ small wholemeal pita pocket or 1 barley, rye or oat mountain bread wrap with grated carrot and grated low-fat cheese
- 2 wholegrain crispbread with cottage cheese, low-fat ricotta, hummus or avocado and tomato.

Muesli and nut bars

Muesli and nut bars are a ‘sometimes’ snack as they can be high in kilojoules, added fat and sugar. Check the nutrition information panel to see if the product is a healthy option. It is best to only eat these occasionally.

Homemade snacks

Homemade snacks can be a healthy choice. But they can also be high in kilojoules so it is important to be mindful of portion size when eating these.

Cakes, biscuits, muffins and slices baked at home can be healthier when using:

- wholemeal flour, oats or oat bran, legume flours and nut meals, instead of white flour
- olive, canola, rice bran, grapeseed or sunflower oils or margarines, instead of butter
- stewed or dried fruit, instead of sugar.

Snacks low in carb

These snacks are good choices for people who want to include snacks without affecting their blood glucose levels. Try these ideas in the recommended portions:

Nuts and seeds

- 1 small handful (30 g) of plain, raw unsalted nuts: mixed, macadamias, walnuts, almonds, cashews, brazil, hazelnuts, pecans or pistachios
- 1 small handful (30 g) of pumpkin or sunflower seeds.



Salad and vegetables

- Vegetable sticks of celery, carrot, capsicum, cucumber or snow peas with one slice (20 g) of low-fat cheese or one tablespoon of hummus, tomato salsa or tzatziki yoghurt dip
- 1 celery stick with 2 tablespoons of natural peanut butter or hummus.
- 1 small punnet of cherry tomatoes.

Protein foods

- 1 mini can of tuna, salmon or sardines served in half a capsicum or a lettuce cup
- 1 hard-boiled egg
- 1 slice of marinated tofu, grilled
- ½ cup boiled or roasted edamame (green soy beans).

Grains

- 1 cup of air-popped popcorn served plain, or sprinkled with cinnamon, paprika or chilli.

Fruit

Some fruits do not contain enough Carb to impact your blood glucose levels. They include:

- 2 passionfruit
- ½ cup of strawberries
- ½ cup of raspberries or blackberries
- 1 fresh fig
- ½ medium grapefruit.

Drinks

It is important to stay hydrated throughout the day. Water is the best drink, but some alternatives are listed below:

- mineral or soda water flavoured with sliced lemon, lime, frozen berries, cucumber or fresh mint
- black, oolong, green or herbal tea
- coffee or decaffeinated coffee with a dash of skim or low-fat milk.

An occasional diet drink may add variety without extra sugar or kilojoules.

Shopping

When shopping, try to limit buying snacks that are high in saturated fat, sugar and salt (sodium) and low in nutritional value, such as the examples below:

- sweet biscuits and some crackers
- cakes, muffins and slices
- pastries
- chocolates and confectionary
- potato crisps, corn chips and other salty snacks
- processed and pre-packaged snack foods
- fast foods and high fat takeaways.



More information and support

- Go to [ndss.com.au](https://www.ndss.com.au) to search for 'Glycemic index', 'Making healthy food choices', 'Alcohol', 'Understanding food labels' and other fact sheet.
- Go to [ndss.com.au](https://www.ndss.com.au) to access the Carb Counting program online and other NDSS programs and services in your state or territory, or online.
- The healthy shopping guide – is your essential supermarket companion and can help you make healthy snack choices. To order a copy, please email info@ndss.com.au or call the NDSS Helpline on **1800 637 700**.
- Go to [dietitiansaustralia.org.au](https://www.dietitiansaustralia.org.au) to find a dietitian or call Dietitians Australia on **1800 812 942**.

