

Snacking 101 and Healthy Halloween Tips

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Healthy snacks don't have to be hard to prepare or unhealthy. Try these fun and nutritious options.

- Fruits and veggies: the #1 choice for snacking. Make sure they are easy to get to, clean and cut up. Canned fruits in water, juice or light syrup are healthy and quick options.
- Ants on a log: a fun way to eat celery and carrot sticks - celery and carrot sticks topped with low fat peanut butter and raisins
- Popcorn faces: instead of store-bought cookies - rice cakes with low-fat cream cheese or peanut butter. Get creative with your toppings and let your child design faces out of raisins, nut, carrot sticks, apple slices, and granola.
- Apple Swirl: cheap, quick and low in sugar - buy a large jar of unsweetened applesauce and let your kids add their own cinnamon.
- Healthy trail mix: instead of chips & Doritos: add together unbuttered popcorn, small pretzels, shredded white bite or honey nut cheerios cereal, peanuts and raisins.
- Cheese roll-up: use any type of low-fat cheese slices and roll up your favorite fruit or vegetables such as apples, pears, green peepers or cucumbers.
- Monkey Dip: use low-fat pudding or yogurt and let your child dip a banana.
- A word about drinks: water is the preferred drink choice; other healthy options include low-fat or fat free milk and 100% fruit juice; try mixing juice with seltzer water for a fun "spritzer."
- Go for the golden wheat: whole wheat fig Newton's with a glass of cold low fat or fat free milk
- Chewy, gooier and crunchy: dried fruit and peanut mix.
- To control portion sizes and overeating, put snack items such as crackers into smaller baggies to prevent kids from eating directly out of the bag.

Trick or Treat Tips

Here are some tips to control the candy craze and provide a bit of fun along the way this Halloween.

- **Buy Wise:** it's OK to procrastinate at Halloween - buy your candy at the last minute to avoid temptation. Buy less than what you think you need so you aren't eating leftovers. Try non-candy or healthier food treats like stickers, pencils, crayons, raisins, granola bars, etc.
- **Eat Well:** feed yourself and family a good dinner. Try to have dinner ready earlier than usual to get ready for evening activities. After trick or treating, offer a cup of non-fat or 1% milk with the treats.
- **Walk:** take a long walk around your neighborhood and enjoy the decorations and your neighbors.
- **Sort:** when the candy comes home, sort through it to weed out anything looking suspicious. Kids can make a game of sorting the treats by color, size, or even fat or calorie content; see how the loot stacks up and play a few sorting games before the eating begins. Have the kids discard or give away what they don't like so there is no temptation to eat it.
- **Limit:** set limits on the treats consumed - perhaps kids can pick a few pieces from each sorted pile. Also limit the amount of time kids are out – or take a smaller container to hold the "loot" and when it is full, it's time to check the "goods."
- **Store:** out of sight, out of mind – store the treats in an "out of the way" place.

For more tips and ideas on healthy snacking and Halloween tips, visit the MCCPTA web site – Health Committee section (<http://www.mccpta.com/health.html>)