

# Activity 6: My Snack Options

## Purposes:

- Youth will identify the influences on their snack choices.
- Youth will survey the types of snack foods that are available.
- Youth will plan to make more healthful snack choices.

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## Session One

### Before the session:

- Make copies of *What Are My Snack Options?* (pages 133 and 134).

### What to do:

1. As a group, ask youth to share some of their usual snack habits.
  - What types of food do you eat for snacks?
  - At what times during the day?
  - Where do you usually get your food? (e.g., snacking on vending machine foods between classes, visiting fast-food restaurants or corner stores on the way home from school, or snacking on what's available at home).
2. As a group, discuss some of the things that influence their snacking habits.
  - What is the first thing you think about when you want a snack?
  - What is of most importance to you when choosing snack foods? (e.g., cravings, taste, cost, convenience, availability, peer pressure, family, advertising, nutrition).

Have each youth identify three things that frequently influence his or her snack choices. Find out if they think these influences help them to make healthful choices or lead them to make unhealthful choices.

3. Take a few minutes and discuss the types of snack foods that are available to youth at home, in school, and in their neighborhoods. Ask them if they feel they have a wide variety to choose from, including healthful foods.

- What do you snack on at home?
  - On the way to/from school?
  - With friends?
4. Distribute the *What Are My Snack Options?* handout. Explain to the youth that they will be keeping track of the snack options they have at school, at home, and in their neighborhoods. Using the handout, they will record the available snack foods in the columns listed. Have youth fill in an example for each location (school, at home, and their neighborhood).

**Tip:** Take a few minutes to review examples. (See “*MyPyramid Food Guidance System*” on page 7.)

5. Tell youth to bring their completed handouts to the next session.

## Session Two

### Before the session:

1. Make copies of the *Snack Tips* handout (pages 131 and 132).
2. Remind youth to bring in their completed handouts.

### What to do:

1. As a large group, have youth share what they found.
  - What types of snacks were available to you?
  - What food group or in which column did most of the snack foods fall?
  - Were fruits and vegetables available everywhere?
  - Were whole-grain foods available?
  - Would you consider the snack foods that were available healthful or not?
2. Ask youth if any foods were not available that they would like to have.
  - What types of food would these be?
  - Fruits?
  - Veggies?
  - Whole grains?
  - Snacks high in fat or sugar?
3. Ask youth if, given the foods they have to choose from, they feel they usually make healthful or unhealthful snack choices. Why or why not? If not, what could they do to improve their snack choices? Have youth brainstorm ideas as a large group (e.g., plan snacks ahead of time and bring them from home; avoid candy bars and other high-sugar, high-fat snack foods; choose more fruits and vegetables).
4. Distribute and review the *Snack Tips* handout. Have youth come up with their own ideas for how they can make more healthful snack choices.

### Follow-up Activities:

- Write a letter to the school principal to request more healthful snack options in school vending machines.
- Have youth prepare a snack from the *Snack Tips* handout.

# Snack Tips

## Use the Nutrition Facts label and the ingredients list to help you make smarter snack choices!

- Make sure your amounts are sensible. Read the Nutrition Facts label to determine the size of a serving.
- Make snack drinks count. Drink fat-free or 1% milk or 100% fruit or vegetable juice instead of soda or sugar-sweetened fruit drinks.

### Choose more often juices that are made from 100% fruit juice and have no added sugar.

- Choose lowfat snack foods. Use the Nutrition Facts label to determine the amount of fat in a serving. Choose most often snacks that have a lower % DV for fat. Foods with 20% DV or more contribute a large amount of a nutrient, while foods that have 5% DV or less contribute a small amount of a nutrient.

#### Choose More Often:

Whole-grain cereal, bagels, whole-grain crackers, graham crackers, pretzels, lowfat cheese, fat-free yogurt, fruit, vegetables, fig bars, bread sticks

#### Choose Less Often:

Donuts, sweet bread, butter crackers or saltines, chips, ice cream, cakes, cookies

- Choose foods lower in added sugars. Look at the ingredients list to make sure that sugar is not one of the first two listed.

### Watch out for all forms of added sugar: table sugar, corn syrup, high-fructose corn syrup, fructose, maltose, dextrose, corn sugar, honey, or maple syrup!

- Choose high-fiber snack foods including fresh, canned, or dried fruits and vegetables.

#### Choose More Often:

Whole-grain ready-to-eat cereals, dried figs, almonds, apple, banana, orange, broccoli, oat bran muffin

#### Choose Less Often:

Chips, sugar-sweetened cereals, donuts, candy, pies

- Choose whole-grain foods. Look for foods made with whole-grain or whole-wheat flour rather than refined, bleached, or white flour.

#### Choose More Often:

Whole-wheat flour, whole-wheat or corn tortillas, pretzels, whole-grain crackers and breads, whole-grain cereals, brown rice

#### Choose Less Often:

Wheat flour, flour tortillas, saltine crackers, butter crackers, potato chips, white bread, sugar-sweetened cereal, white rice

# Try These Snacks

## Grains

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### Flavored Popcorn

Spray air-popped popcorn with a nonstick spray and add one of these: chili powder, onion powder, garlic powder, Parmesan cheese, or cinnamon.

### Snack Mix

5 cups bite-sized squares cereal, 1/4 cup raisins, 1/4 cup peanuts, 1/4 cup sunflower seeds. Combine all ingredients and store in plastic bags.

### Quesadillas

Cut corn tortillas into six triangles. Top with green chilies and a little grated lowfat mozzarella cheese. Place in a 350° oven to crisp tortilla and melt cheese.

### Other Snacks

Vanilla wafers  
Rice and marshmallow bars

## Fruits/Vegetables

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### Quick Pizza

Top an English muffin, bagel, or piece of pita bread with tomato sauce; vegetables such as broccoli, corn, or zucchini; grated lowfat cheese; and seasonings. Place in a 350° oven to heat and melt cheese.

### Frobana Crunch

Cut a banana into 4 pieces. Dip in fruit-flavored yogurt or peanut butter and roll in crushed graham crackers, and freeze.

### Fruit Spritzer

1 can unsweetened 100% frozen juice concentrate, and club soda. Mix juice concentrate according to directions on the can. Substitute club soda for water.

### Crispy Sweet Potato Wedges

Cut a sweet potato into wedges. Spray with cooking spray and bake at 450° until crispy on the outside and tender on the inside (about 25 minutes).

## Meat and Beans

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### Beans and Baked Tortilla Chips

Cover chips with 1/2 cup whole or refried beans and 1/4 cup shredded lowfat cheddar cheese. Cook in microwave until cheese is melted. Top with fresh tomatoes and lettuce.

## Milk

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### Fruit Shake

Chop your favorite fruit, add 1/4 cup chilled apple juice and 1 cup flavored lowfat or fat-free yogurt. Blend chopped fruit, apple juice, and yogurt until smooth.

### Other Snacks

1% lowfat chocolate milk  
String cheese with whole-wheat crackers  
Non-fat pudding with berries

# What Are My Snack Options?

Please list the foods you find to snack on today. List the foods in the columns below.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	<i>Grains</i>	<i>Vegetables</i>	<i>Fruits</i>	<i>Milk</i>	<i>Meat and Beans</i>	<i>Snacks High in Fat or Sugar</i>	<i>“Combo Foods”</i>
<b>At School</b> Example						<i>chips, soda, candy bar</i>	
In the cafeteria							
In the vending machine							
At the school store							
Other							
<b>At Home</b> Example	<i>crackers</i>	<i>carrots, celery</i>	<i>apple, banana</i>	<i>lowfat milk, fat-free yogurt</i>	<i>peanuts</i>	<i>cookies</i>	<i>turkey sandwich</i>
In the refrigerator							

*Continued*

	Grains	Vegetables	Fruits	Milk	Meat and Beans	Snacks High in Fat or Sugar	"Combo Foods"
In the freezer							
In the cabinets							
<b>In Your Neighborhood</b> Example	<i>bagel</i>					<i>soda, donut</i>	<i>cheese-burger, pizza</i>
At the corner store							
At a fast food place							
Other							

**Please answer the following questions.**

1. Which food group did most of the foods belong to?  
(Circle no more than 2)

Grains    Vegetables    Fruits    Milk    Meat and Beans    Snacks High in Fat or Sugar    "Combo Foods"

2. Which foods would you consider healthful options?

3. Are there any foods that you would like to have available for snacks?