

## Smart Snacking

Snacks are a great way to keep our bodies nourished throughout the day, but it's important that we choose smart snacks. Smart snacks are healthy snacks that are low in fat, sugar, and salt, but high in fiber and protein. Being a smart snacker means choosing a snack that will keep you nourished until your next meal while also giving your body the nutrients it needs. Some examples of snack ideas could be trail mix, yogurt with fruit slices, roasted chickpeas, celery sticks with low-fat ranch dressing, popcorn, and baked tortilla chips with salsa.

Did you know that the snacks we offer at your school are smart snack compliant by following the USDA's nutrition standards? For a snack to qualify as a smart snack, it must have a fruit, a vegetable, a dairy product, or a protein food as the first ingredient. It could also be a combination food that contains at least 1/4 cup of fruit and/or vegetable. If it's a grain product, it has to contain at least 50% of whole grains. The amount of calories, saturated fat, trans fat, sugar, and sodium are also compliant with the standards. A tool called the Smart Snacks Calculator can be used to determine whether or not a product meets school nutrition standards.

**CLICK HERE FOR SMART SNACKS CALCULATOR:**  
<https://foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org/calculator/>

To avoid becoming hungry in between meals, remember to pack snacks. The best time to eat a snack are a few hours after a meal ends and approximately 1-2 hours before the next meal.



## Dietitian's Pick

This salad features romaine lettuce, peas, mozzarella, and cucumber providing a dish that is rich in many nutrients such as vitamin A, potassium and fiber. The mozzarella also adds protein to the salad which helps us stay full for longer. Romaine lettuce is a good source for folate which helps the body form red blood cells and is important in cell growth, while peas are a good source of fiber, vitamin K, zinc, copper, and manganese. Overall, this green salad provides a diverse array of nutrients that support overall health and well-being.

## Green Salad with Peas, Mozzarella and Cucumber



### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup Peas, Fresh, Frozen or Canned
- 6 cups Salad Greens, torn in bite size pieces
- 1/2 cup Chopped Cucumber
- 1/2 cup low-fat Salad Dressing
- 1/2 cup Mozzarella Cheese

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Thaw and drain Frozen Peas or rinse and drain Canned Peas.
2. In a large serving bowl, combine Peas, Salad Greens and Cucumber.
3. Add dressing just before serving. Toss to mix well. Sprinkle with Mozzarella cheese.
4. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.



## March Holidays

National Nutrition Month	
March 1	National Nutrition Day
March 2	Dr. Seuss Birthday, Read Across America
March 3-7	National School Breakfast Week
March 3	National Cold Cuts Day
March 4	National Snack Day
March 7	National Cereal Day
March 9	National Meatball Day
March 9	Daylight Savings Time
March 11	National Johnny Appleseed Day
March 12	National Registered Dietitian Nutritionist Day
March 14	National Pi Day
March 17	Saint Patrick's Day
March 18	National Sloppy Joe Day
March 19	National Poultry Day
March 20	Spring Begins
March 20	National Ravioli Day
March 24	National Cheesesteak Day
March 26	National Spinach Day

## Registered Dietitian Nutritionist Day

In March, we celebrate National Nutrition Month. March 12th is registered dietitian nutritionist day. Let's explore what a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN) is and what they do. A dietitian is a health professional who specializes in nutrition and diet. Dietitians can be found working in various fields such as working for hospitals where they are a member of the healthcare team, they can work for food manufacturers in product development where they help develop recipes and ensure products meet nutritional standards. They can also be found working in private practices with patients of all ages and needs. They are able to provide dietary advice for a balanced diet, as well as nutrition counseling to help patients lose or gain weight.

Dietitians also have a huge role in the education industry. They plan school meals that follow specific nutrition standards. Each meal has to have an offering of fruits, vegetables, grains, meat or meat alternate and milk. In addition to balancing food items, they also ensure compliance with following a range of calories, sodium and sugar limits. This ensures that students are eating healthy, balanced meals at school. Next time you have a nutrition-related question, don't hesitate to ask your dietitian!