

Department of Nutrition and Dietetics

Paediatric Diabetes- Snacks

If you have any questions please speak to your Paediatric Dietitian, Diabetes nurse or Paediatrician

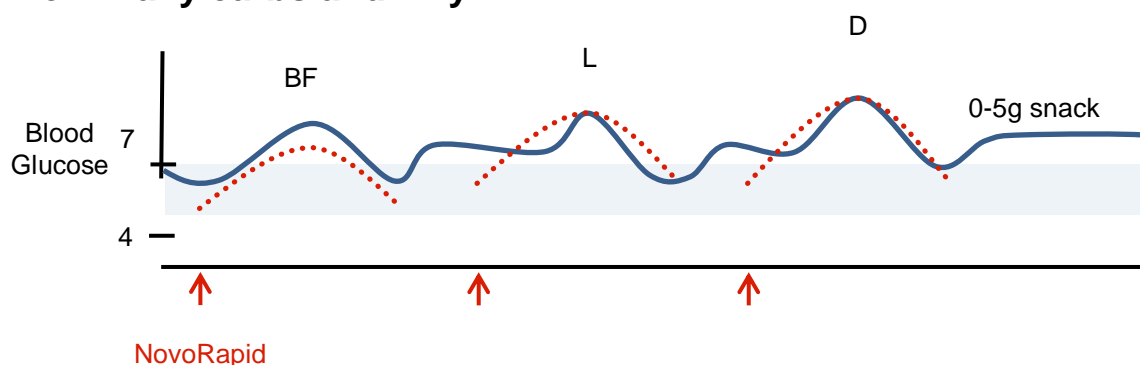
Myth busting

- When you have diabetes you do not usually 'need' to eat snacks unless you have been advised to do so by your dietitian. Provided that main meals are well balanced (contain carbs, protein and vegetables), lack of snacks should not cause hypoglycaemia.
- ALL children and adults (not just those with diabetes) should limit processed snacks (such as crisps) to 1-2 per week.

Consider reason for snack

- In most children snacks should only be given if the child is hungry to avoid creating unhealthy "grazing" habits which contribute to obesity later in life. Current research also shows that grazing is associated with higher HbA1c. Therefore, a routine eating pattern is important in diabetes management.
- If hunger is the reason for snacking, vegetables and fruit will provide greater satiety per carb amount than biscuits or other snack foods.

How many carbs and why



Patient Information

For optimal diabetes control, the aim is to keep blood sugars between 4mmol/l - 7mmol/l pre meals. **Any carbohydrate given without insulin will increase your blood glucose levels, so it is important to choose snacks that contain little or no carbohydrates as much as possible.**

If your child is still hungry between meals, you can:

- A. Offer snacks that has very little or no carbohydrates and limit this to less than 5g of carbohydrate.
- B. If you offer a larger carbohydrate snack, you will have to have an extra insulin injection
- C. If child is continually hungry between meals, consider whether mealtime portions should be increased. Is there always a protein/vegetable source? Can the meal times be adjusted?

Children under 5 years of age may need a bigger snack to meet their nutritional requirements. Snacks at bedtime are not needed if you are not feeling hungry. If you feel hungry before going to bed, limit your bedtime snacks to no more than 5g of carbohydrates.

If you still have problems with your blood sugar levels at night or overnight, please speak to your Dietitian, diabetes nurse or your Paediatrician.

Which foods are best for snacks?

Snacks with 0-5g carbohydrate

- Carrot sticks
- Cucumber sticks or slices
- Cherry tomatoes
- Celery sticks
- Sweet pepper slices
- Broccoli
- 1 String cheese or low-fat cheese
- 1 handful of unsalted nuts
- Sugar-free jelly
- Low-fat cold cut of meat (turkey, chicken, low-fat ham)
- Eggs



Patient Information

Snacks with 5-10g carbohydrate (always check label)

- 1 small apple
- 1 large handful strawberries
- 1 large handful blueberries
- 1 large handful raspberries
- 10 grapes
- 2 plums
- 2 satsumas
- Half a mango
- 1 small orange
- Plain flavoured yoghurt
- Plain flavoured Greek-style yoghurt
- Small bowl of unsweetened popcorn
- 1 glass of milk (unflavoured)
- Cheese and 2 plain crackers



Produced by Coventry & Rugby Paediatric Dietitians, University Hospitals Coventry & Warwickshire NHS Trust

Contact number: 024 7696 6161

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Document History

Department:	Dietetics
Contact:	26161
Updated:	March 2021
Review:	March 2023
Version:	4.1
Reference:	HIC/LFT/1630/13