

Rate That Snack

Segment 2

Purpose

- To identify the function of vitamins and minerals to a healthy body
- To plan a nutritionally balanced snack
- To design a realistic nutrition label for a snack food

Background

Vitamins are small molecules that the body needs to function properly. The body requires various vitamins. Children's bodies rely on the foods they eat to provide these vitamins, which are necessary for growth and development. Each vitamin has a different function in the body.

Minerals are also important to maintain a healthy body. Minerals, like vitamins, help the body grow, develop, and stay healthy. Minerals fall into two categories: macrominerals and trace elements, or microminerals. Macrominerals are minerals that the body needs in large amounts (100 mg/day or more). Trace elements are minerals that the body needs in small amounts to stay healthy.

Many people understand the importance of eating healthy meals for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, but they often forget to plan healthy snacks between meals. Snacks are especially important for growing children. Due to their smaller stomachs, children cannot take in enough food to provide adequate daily nutrition in just three meals. Snacks between meals can help satisfy a child's daily nutrition requirements when healthy foods are chosen.

Snacks should be planned as part of the day's food plan and eaten at regular times during the day. Also, snacks should only be eaten when you are hungry, not because you are bored or upset. Healthy snacks such as raw vegetables, fresh fruit, low-fat yogurt, low-fat cheese with whole-grain crackers, popcorn, and nuts are healthy alternatives to less nutritious snacks such as cookies and candy bars. If less nutritious foods are used for snacks frequently, they can adversely affect your health. It is very important to make healthy snack choices to keep your body healthy.

For most foods, nutrition facts can be found on the nutrition label on the outside of the food package. Labels include information about serving size, calories, fat, cholesterol, and percentage of daily values for certain nutrients, including vitamins and minerals. Recommended daily values (DV) are the amounts experts have decided are necessary to maintain good health. Because these daily values are based on a 2000 calorie diet, your diet values may be higher or lower depending on your personal calorie needs.

Packaging of certain foods can be deceiving. Just because the packaging on your snack food is fun and interesting does not mean that the food is necessarily a healthy choice. Likewise, packaging that appears dull and boring does not mean that food will not taste good. Do not judge a food by its packaging. Read the nutrition label so you can evaluate how healthy the snack food really is and be able to make wise food choices.

Teacher Prep

Request that students bring a sample of one or two snacks that they eat most often.

Procedure

1. Conduct research on the Internet or at the library to learn more about the vitamins and minerals your body needs.
2. Create a chart to show the most important vitamins and minerals and the recommended daily allowance for each.
3. Include a column to list the main purpose of that vitamin or mineral.
4. Using the Snack Questionnaire, keep a log of all snack foods you eat in a week.

Materials

Snack Questionnaire
(p. 56)
snack food items
art paper (various colors)
pen or pencil
science journal
computer with Internet
access
library access

Rate That Snack

- Examine the food labels for each snack. Note: If you made the snack, you may need to do some research to learn about its ingredients.
- Use the key on the questionnaire to rate each snack by using a number from 1 to 4, with 4 being a very healthy snack.
- Have a partner become your “expert nutritionist.”
- The expert nutritionist should evaluate your snacking habits and give you advice on how to improve your snack choices to help keep your body healthy.
- Make a list of the reasons you snack. If you snack for reasons other than hunger, brainstorm with your nutrition expert for ways to find other activities to do instead of snacking.
- Work with your nutrition expert to create a healthy snack.
- In your science journal, describe the snack and list all ingredients.
- Conduct research to find the nutritional content of the ingredients in your snack.
- Make a nutrition label for your snack. Be sure to identify the vitamins and minerals that the snack contains and list the fats and sugar content.
- Using art paper, create the packaging and nutrition label for your snack item.
- Remember to make the packaging fun and interesting enough to grab the shoppers’ attention.
- Share your new idea of a snack food with your class and explain why it is nutritious, or healthy, and why they should eat it.

Discussion

- Why are vitamins and minerals important to the body?
- What kinds of foods could you eat to add more vitamins and minerals to your diet?
- If you are eating healthy meals, why is it important to eat healthy snacks?
- What unhealthy snack habits might you need to change?
- Make a list of healthy snacks for you and your family.

Extension

Using the library and Internet, research the various vitamins and minerals your body needs. Create an A to Z book to show the necessary vitamins and minerals your body needs. Be sure to include why each vitamin and mineral is important and what foods are the best sources for each.

Refried Beans Fat Free

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1/2 cup (125g)

Serving Per Container 3.5

Amount Per Serving

Calories 130 Calories from Fat 0

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 0g **0%**

Saturated Fat 0g **0%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 490mg **20%**

Total Carbohydrate 24g **8%**

Dietary Fiber 7g **28%**

Sugars 0g

Protein 9g **16%**

Vitamin A **0%**

Vitamin C **0%**

Calcium **6%**

Iron **15%**

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

		Calories: 2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

SAMPLE NUTRITION LABEL

Rate That Snack

Snack Questionnaire

Snack Food	Where You Ate It	Why You Ate It	Vitamins and Minerals	Sugar Content	Calcium Content	Fat Content	Snack Rating*

Snack ratings:

- 4 – a very healthy snack; low in sugar; low in fat; high in one or more vitamins or minerals
- 3 – a healthy snack; low to medium in sugar, but high in vitamins or minerals
- 2 – a somewhat healthy snack; low in sugar, but may be high in fat; has only small amounts of recommended vitamins or minerals
- 1 – unhealthy snack; high in sugar and fat; has little nutritional value