

**Join us for the Fitwize Nutrition Talk on
Friday, January 19 from 4 to 5 PM!**

**Our first nutrition session
of the New Year will focus on
snacks made with nutritious
and powerful ingredients!**

Bang for your Buck Snacks

By Stephanie Mull, MS, RD, CSSD, CSCS

Snacking is a great way to fill in the nutrient gaps that aren't met with meals. If a child were to only eat three meals a day, then it would be difficult to obtain all the necessary nutrients to support growth and development. Including a variety healthy snacks at the optimal times can control a child's appetite and provide energy to support everyday tasks, including school work and play time. It's important to mix up the snacks provided in order to simulate a child's appetite. That way they never get bored with what they eat.

Luckily for us parents, we can offer our children plenty of healthy snack options in the form of a fun and crunchy food. Food companies have taken advantage of some superfood ingredients, such as chia, flax, quinoa and kale, to create delicious chips and crackers. Pair them with hummus or mashed avocado and the nutrient content of the snack has increased significantly. However, these snacks are nutritionally outstanding all on their own.

A few products to include in your snack rotation are:

- Simply 7 Quinoa Chips
- Rhythm or Trader Joe's Kale Chips
- Crunchmaster, Garden of Eatin, Vintage Italia, and Lundberg all offer whole grain and multigrain crackers made from seeds including chia and flax
- Beanitos and Back to Nature offer chips and crackers made from beans

In addition to trying some new products with some of these powerful and functional ingredients, you can support your child's nutrition by following the snacking tips below.

- Have healthy snacks easily accessible in the fridge and pantry. For example, keep vegetables already cut and washed plus fresh fruit in the fridge and on the counter or table for quick access.
- Don't eliminate snacking. As mentioned earlier, snacking helps fill the nutrient gaps. Snacks should be consumed at least 2 hours before or after a meal. However if your child is begging for a snack right before dinner, appease him/her with some fruits or vegetables. Don't let them fill up on empty carbs like crackers or pretzels or else their dinner appetite will be ruined.
- Mix up the snacks you offer. Variety will enhance consumption.
- Let your child dictate how much or if they eat their snacks. Encourage them to be mindful of when they feel full so they don't overeat.

At the nutrition session this month, we will taste test a few of products made from these powerful and nutritious ingredients.