

Understanding Food Labels:

High sugar is more than -
22.5g total sugars per 100g

Low sugar is -
5g total sugars or less per 100g
(NHS Choices, 2022)

NB: “Low Sugar” does not make a food safer for teeth - It is important to reduce the *frequency* of all dietary sugars, especially between meals.

Example of a nutritional food label on the back or side of packaging:

Ingredients

Wholegrain **Cat Flakes** (35%), Fruit Pieces, **Sweetened Dried Diced Cranberries** (18%) (Sugar, Cranberries (6%), Sunflower Oil), **Raisins** (4.5%), **Strawberry and Raspberry Flakes** (0.5%), Cornflour, **Raspberry Puree**, **Strawberry Puree**, Emulsifier (Sunflower Lecithin), **Glucose Syrup**, Wholegrain **Cat Flax**, **Sugar**, **Honey**, Sunflower Oil, Rice Flour, Natural Flavouring, Chopped Roasted **Hazelnuts**

Nutrition

Typical Values	Per 100g	Per Portion
Energy	1681 kJ	504 kJ
-	398kcal	119kcal
Fat	6.7g	2.0g
of which Saturates	0.9g	0.3g
Mono-unsaturates	4.0g	1.2g
Polyunsaturates	1.5g	0.5g
Carbohydrate	77.0g	23.1g
of which Sugars	28.9g	8.7g
Fibre	3.8g	1.1g
Protein	5.5g	1.7g
Salt	0.03g	0.01g
*Reference Intake of an average adult	-	-

This cereal bar has a **high** sugar content which at **28.9g of sugar** (the **dried cranberries, raisins, strawberry and raspberry flakes, strawberry puree, raspberry puree, glucose syrup, sugar and honey** circled above) is more than 22.5g total sugars per 100g of the product.

This leaflet was produced by, and further copies are available from the Oral Health Improvement team at:
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Version 4
Produced Oct 2012
Review Date: July 2025

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Healthy Snacks Guide



Children sometimes need a small snack in between meals. However ready made snacks and drinks are often very high in sugar, salt and/or fat.

This leaflet has been produced to give some advice on healthier options for children and families.

Choosing healthy snacks for the family can be a minefield.

It is important however to try and keep snacks and drinks low in **fat, salt** and **sugar**.

Sugar is very damaging to teeth when consumed frequently, so any snacks and drinks consumed between meals should be free from sugars.

Acids from sugar remain in the mouth and continue to weaken the tooth enamel for up to an hour after the sugar is consumed.

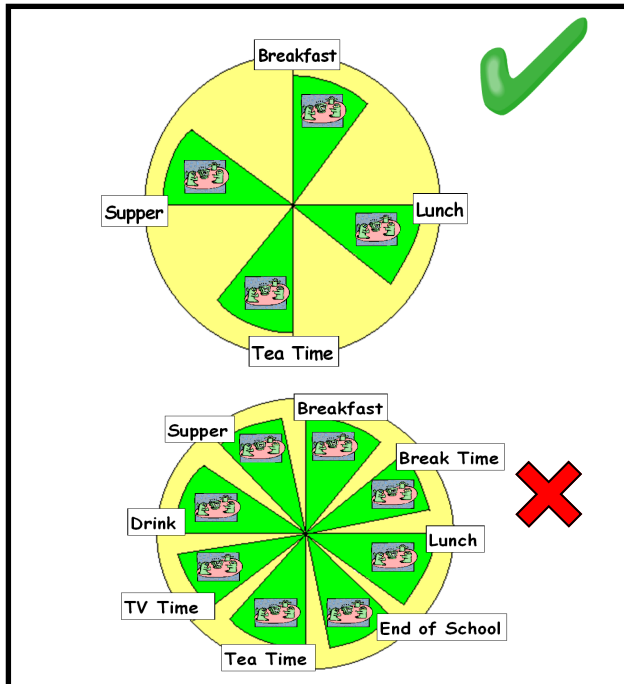


Fig 1

The green sections highlight the duration of the “acid attacks”
Frequent acid attacks will lead to tooth decay.

Practical Ideas for Healthy Snacks

Daily:

- Seasonal fresh fruit and vegetables - bananas, pears, apples, plums, peaches, strawberries, melon, mango, pineapple, cherry tomatoes, carrot or cucumber
- Plain, unsweetened popcorn
- Toast with low fat spread/ soft cheese
- Rice cakes
- Low fat/ salt crackers or oatcakes
- Pitta Bread
- Bagels or Bread rolls
- Savoury, low fat sandwich fillings or dips with bread or vegetable sticks
- Plain low fat natural/greek yoghurt (use fresh fruit or berries to add flavour)
- Low fat cheese
- Plain milk or water

No more than once or twice a week:

- Pancakes, crumpets or scones
- Low fat fruit yoghurts or fromage frais
- Low fat/salt crisps
- Flavoured water or low fat milk drinks
- Soya, rice or oat drinks low in fat and sugar

Mealtimes only:

- Dried fruits (e.g. raisins, apricots)
- Fruit or cereal bars (e.g. yoyo bears)
- Yoghurt pouches
- Fruit juices or drinks
- Any confectionery (e.g. sweets, chews, chocolate, yoghurt covered fruits)
- Pastries/tray-bakes/cakes/biscuits
- Breakfast cereals high in sugar, fat or salt

Fact or Fiction

There is a wide range of convenient snack foods and drinks to buy that claim to have health benefits (e.g. “Low in Fat”, “Organic”, “Natural Sugars”) however these claims do not necessarily make a product healthy.

It is important to check food labels (see back page) and if chosen, **restrict high sugar foods and drinks for occasional treats or mealtimes only**.



Only plain milk and water are advised as safe drinks for children.

Frequent sipping of **any** juice or fruit based drinks, including diet & unsweetened versions repeatedly bathes teeth in sugars and acids.

Diluting juice should be mixed **1 part juice to 10 parts water** and consumed with meals only.

By following these simple rules, your child need never experience the pain, infection and trauma of tooth decay.