

Healthy Snacking: Make Your Own Trail Mix

In today's world, kids tend to eat on the run, grazing through their day on snack foods instead of sitting at the table for a meal. Many processed snacks are high in refined grains and added sugars, and they also don't provide the nutrients necessary for growth and optimal health.

What if there was a way for kids to get the nutrition they need from their snacks? What if their snacks contained protein, whole grains, and healthy fats?

The solution may be in the GORP.

GORP, or "good ol' raisins and peanuts" is the original name for the trail mix that hikers and endurance athletes used as a snack to refuel when on the run (literally!). While just raisins

and peanuts every day can be a bit dull, substituting or adding other ingredients can make trail mix a creative and nutritious on-the-go snack.

Follow the guidelines using the five categories below to make a tasty mix. Experiment with different flavor combinations and allow kids to build their own original recipes.

In a sealable container or bag, add in one or more of the ingredients from each category:

Nuts – ¼ cup

Almonds, peanuts, pistachios, pecans, walnut halves, macadamias, cashews

Seeds – 2 tablespoons

Sesame, sunflower, pumpkin, flax

Grains - ¼ cup

Pretzels, popcorn, puffed whole grain cereal, granola

Extras - 1-2 tablespoons

Shredded coconut, raisins, dried cherries, dried cranberries, chocolate chips

Seasoning (optional) - ¼-½ teaspoons

Cinnamon, cayenne, garlic, ginger, nutmeg

Trail mix provides healthy fats, fiber, protein, and whole grains. It is a delicious and nutrient-dense alternative to candy, chips, and most snack bars on the market. Kids will enjoy consuming this on-the-go snack, especially when they have the opportunity to create their own trail mix recipes.

By Beth Rosen, MS, RD, CDN



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