

Nutritious Snacks Kids Really Like!

Summer's full of swimming, hiking, biking, ball games and other activities for children that use lots of energy. To keep their energy at a high level, kids need snacks to keep them going the whole day.

When snacks are made with whole or mixed grains and milk, they can provide protein and essential nutrients instead of just empty calories. But it's a problem finding snacks like this that kids really like and that fit into the food budget.

Here are three nutritious snacks that are simple and quick to make with a microwave. And it is much less expensive to make these at home, than to buy similar high-protein snacks ready-made.

Do kids like them? My recipe testing samples disappeared instantly! So keep these ingredients on hand, and let your kids make their own snacks to keep them going.

These first two peanut butter snacks can be mixed up by any age.

Peanut Logs

- ½ cup smooth peanut butter ⅓ cup light corn syrup ¼ teaspoon vanilla
- ½ cup dry milk powder ¾ cup dry, unsweetened cereal 2 tablespoons wheat germ
- 1. Put the peanut butter in a small bowl or 4-cup measure. Microwave on high for 30 seconds, until the peanut butter is soft and runny.

- 2. Stir in corn syrup and vanilla, then milk powder, stirring until well mixed.
- 3. Put the cereal in a sandwich bag, tie it closed, and crush it with a rolling pin or bang on it with your fist! (Not too hard, or the bag will break!) Put the crushed cereal and wheat germ in a cereal bowl and mix them up.
- 4. (Now, make sure your hands are clean.) Take a spoonful of dough and roll it in your hands into a short log. Right away, roll the log in the crushed cereal to coat the outside. Then set the log on a plate to harden a little. Repeat with the rest of the peanut butter mixture. Makes about 20 logs.

Tips: If the cereal doesn't stick to the log, wet your hands with one or two drops of water before rolling the logs.

- —Wrap each log in a small piece of foil to take on a hike—so you don't peanut butter your pockets together!
- —Pancake syrup or honey can be used in place of corn syrup, but the logs are stickier and taste different. My recipe testers preferred corn syrup!

Chocolate Marble Peanut Bars

- ½ cup light corn syrup
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 34 cup chunky peanut butter
- ½ teaspoon vanilla
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- ½ cup nonfat dry milk powder
- 2 tablespoons wheat germ
- 34 cup wheat or oat cereal 34 cup rice or corn cereal
- ½ cup raisins
- ½ cup raisins ½ cup mini chocolate chips

- Put waxed paper in the bottom of an 8-or 9-inch square pan.
 Mix corn syrup and brown
- sugar in a glass or plastic bowl.

 Microwave on high for 1½ to 2

 minutes, until the mixture boils

 and the sugar melts.
- 3. Stir in peanut butter, vanilla, salt, dry milk, and wheat germ; mix well.
- 4. Stir in cereal and raisins, then add chips last. Mix gently until chips melt a little and "marble" the peanut butter. Press mixture in pan and put in refrigerator to set.
- 5. When cold, cut in bars. Wrap bars separately for packing in lunch, etc. Makes 15 to 18 bar.s

Tips: One kind of cereal may be used instead of combination, if necessary.

- —To have chocolate icing on top of the bars, don't mix chips into peanut butter mixture. Sprinkle chips over top of warm mixture after pressing it in the pan. Wait a few minutes for chips to melt, then spread with a knife.
- -Chocolate chips may be left out, if desired.
- —To double recipe, double ingredients and press into waxed paper-lined 9x13-inch pan.

Cereal Crunch is a delicious trail mix or gorp to take along on hikes. Younger children will need supervision in making this, because of the very hot syrup.

Cereal Crunch

2 cups round oat cereal 2 cups square rice or wheat cereal

- 1 cup raisins 1 cup peanuts
- ½ cup sugar ¼ cup butter or margarine
- 2 tablespoons light corn syrup 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 cup candy-coated chocolate pieces
- Combine cereal, raisins and peanuts in a large (3- or 4-quart) glass or plastic mixing bowl, set aside.
- 2. Put sugar, butter and corn syrup in a 4-cup glass measure or mixing bowl. Microwave on high for 1½ minutes, then stir.
- 3. Microwave on high for 1 minute, until mixture boils. Stir again.
- 4. Microwave on low (30,3 defrost) for 3 minutes without stirring. Use potholders to remove hot syrup from microwave. Stir in

baking soda, mix well.

- 5. Immediately pour hot syrup over cereal mixture, and stir with a long handled spoon until cereal is coated.
- 6. Put cereal mixture in the microwave and microwave on medium (50,5) for 3 minutes, stir. Microwave on medium (50,5) for 2 to 3 minutes, until the cereal is lightly toasted.

 7. Line a tray with waxed paper
- 7. Line a tray with waxed paper and spread cereal mixture out to cool. When cold, break into chunks and stir in candy coated chocolate pieces. Store tightly covered. Makes about 7 cups.

NOTE: The times above are for microwaves with 600-700 watts of power. For 500-600 W add 10 seconds to each minute; for 400-500 W, add 20 seconds to each minute.

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Vegetable Storage Alternative

NEWARK, Del. — Now that most summer produce is ready for picking, it's time to think about long-term storage. But many freezers can't hold all the frozen produce you have, and canning can be a chore — especially in hot summer weather. According to Dr. Jim Scarborough, University of Delaware extension agricultural engineer, there are altenatives to canning and freezing.

"Many fruits can be stored right in your garden," says Scarborough, "and garden storage actually improves the flavor of vegetables such as horseradish and turnips because the light freezing converts the starches into sugar." Heavy mulches, trenches, buried containers and outdoor storage cellars can all provide safe storage for some vegetables.

Scarborough also says that many areas in the house, garage or barn can be adapted for storage. He stresses the importance of proper ventilation in these areas, though.

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