

# SNACK FIX

## ADD, ADHD & NUTRITION



### Make every calorie count

ADHD medications tend to suppress the appetite, and therefore it's important to make every calorie count.

#### So what's the key?

- ➔ Give small regular snacks
- ➔ Make snacks more energy and nutrient dense.
- ➔ Load up on protein (to sustain alertness)
- ➔ Load up on complex carbohydrates (to avoid blood sugar spikes and crashes).

Consult a registered dietitian (RD) to get recommendations for your individual requirements.



To contact RD

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or find a dietitian on  
[www.adsa.org.za](http://www.adsa.org.za)

### Quick Snacks

Quick, energy and nutrient filled snack combos for kids with ADD and ADHD include:

- ➔ Creamy or cheesy soups with croutons
- ➔ Crackers and cheese or peanut butter
- ➔ Fruits such as apple and bananas slices dipped in peanut butter
- ➔ Dried fruit and nuts
- ➔ Mini pizza bread squares - add tuna, beef strips, mince or chicken strips for additional protein



### Stimulant medication and loss of appetite

Stimulants (including *Methylphenidate*, *dexamphetamine* and *atomoxetine*) are prescribed to help improve short-term behavioural, academic and social functioning in the majority of children with ADHD and ADD.

Generally, side-effects (including loss of appetite and stomach cramps) of stimulants are dose-dependent, mild to moderate in severity, and in some cases diminish with

modification of medication dose, dose timing, or choice of medication.

Poor appetite of children should be of concern for caregivers, so weight should be monitored on a regular basis to ensure the child is following expected growth rates. Reduced appetite may result in discontinuance of medications and hence increased behavioural and academic problems at school.

- **Chantelle van der Merwe (RD)**