

Healthy Snack Choices



Why we need to Snack

Snacks can keep your blood glucose (sugar) levels stable throughout the day. When you snack, your body will begin to burn the calories you are taking in for energy right away and storage won't happen. This, in turn, burns fat and calories more efficiently, resulting in fewer cravings and increased energy.

What Happens when you do not Snack?

Several hours without food will dramatically lower your blood sugar levels. Your body ends up burning the wrong fuel type (protein) and stores fat. This results in energy levels plummeting, and food cravings increasing which may contribute to weight gain.

Do you Really Need a Snack?

Before you reach for a snack, make sure you're really hungry. Use the log on the next page to identify your snacking habits. Pay attention to your body's clues. Is it thirst or hunger? When you first feel the need to munch, grab a tall glass of water or cup of tea.



What Makes a Healthy Snack?

On the nutrition facts label, look at ...

1. **Portion size.** It's easy to eat more than this amount! Remember to refer back to this serving size when reading the label.
2. **Fat.** Watch out if more than half of the total calories are coming from fat. Look for low in saturated and trans fat.
3. **Sugar on ingredient list.** If sugar is first on the ingredient list, it's not a healthy snack. Watch for "corn syrup" or "high fructose corn syrup."
4. **High in fiber and low in sugar.**
5. **Sodium.** If something is "low in fat" it may be compromised with higher sodium content.
6. **Total calories.** For a small snack, under 100 calories is a good guide. For a more substantial snack, 200-250 calories is a good cap.

What is a "Good Snack?"

A good snack is **nutrient dense** = lots of nutrients and few calories. Make sure it contains some protein, fiber, healthy fat, and unrefined carbohydrates.

100 calories or less (small snack)	200-250 calories (substantial snack)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 apple (72 calories) • 1 banana (105calories) • 1 cup grapes (100 calories) • 1 cup carrots (45 calories) • 1 cup air-popped popcorn (31 calories) • 1 rye crispbread cracker (37 calories) • 10 almonds (70 calories) • 2 tablespoon hummus (46 calories) • 1 cup nonfat milk (83 calories) • 1 ounce of part-skim mozzarella cheese (72 calories) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peanut butter and low-sugar jelly sandwich • Fortified, high-fiber cereal and low-fat milk or soymilk • 1 tbsp peanut butter, spread evenly on slices from a small apple • Toasted whole-wheat English muffin half topped with 1/4 of a small avocado • Small baked sweet potato • 1/2 cup pineapple chunks on 1/2 cup low-fat cottage cheese • 1/4 cup raw steel-cut oats and 1/2 cup of raspberries stirred into 1/2 cup of Greek yogurt

Snacking Log

Time	Place	Food	Calories	Circumstance (angry, habit, tired, lonely, bored, social event)
3:30	Car	M&Ms, 1 pckg	250	Hungry, skipped lunch

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Eat this	Not that
98% Fat free popcorn and drizzle a little margarine	Buttered popcorn
Homemade fruit smoothies, water	Fruit juice, pop, sugary drinks
1 cookie with a piece of fruit	3 cookies
High-fiber, low-sugar cereal (Oatmeal, Kashi, Shreddies)	Low-fiber, high sugar cereal (Fruit Loops, Rice Krispies)
1 scoop of ice cream with a lot of fresh fruit	4 scoops of ice cream
Crunchy, low-sugar, high fiber granola bars	“Chewy”, high-sugar, low-fiber granola bars