

Healthy Snacking

There are things you can do to help yourself avoid the ugly urge to snack uncontrollably.

First things first: Eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Plan to have healthy snacks throughout the day. Do not skip meals or planned snacks.

Skipping nutritious foods will make you feel uncontrollably hungry! To build a balanced meal, choose a fruit, veggie, or grain and a protein choice to create a meal that is nutritionally balanced and balances blood sugar. The bonus is that by eating fruit or veggies and/or whole grains together with a protein food, you will influence your blood sugar levels for 3 to 4 hours at a time. Stable blood sugar levels prevent you from feeling hungry all the time, and offer you better energy. You really won't believe the difference!

If you can, avoid purchasing any unhealthy snacks. There are so many "good-for-you" snacks on the market today. Start learning to read the back of the packages of foods - look at the kind of fat and sugar content - if it says that it has hydrogenated fat, stay away. Also stay away from the fake sugars like aspartame.

Easy Snack Ideas

Here's a list of healthy snacks that are low in sugar, but still high in satisfaction.

- String cheese
- Low fat popcorn with very little real butter & unrefined sea salt
- High fiber cereal like All Bran, Puffins, and shredded wheat (look for more than 5 grams of fiber per serving) with organic milk
- Raw Nuts
- Fruit such as an apple, orange or grapes with cheese
- Peanut butter and celery, apple
- Low fat yogurt with low sugar granola or real fruit
- Hummus and carrots
- Cottage cheese
- Cheese and high fiber crackers like Dr. Kracker, Triscuit, or WASA (look for at least 2 grams of fiber per serving)
- Fruit Salad with plain yogurt or kefir
- Soy nuts
- Raw vegetables (like baby carrots) with reduced-fat ranch dressing or yogurt dip
- Celery with low fat cream cheese
- Raw Sunflower seeds
- Sprouted Grain bread (without gluten) with natural peanut butter

- Ezekiel toast with butter or nut butter
- Hard boiled egg
- Baked chips with guacamole or fresh salsa
- Organic Tortillas (Corn or Wheat) with low fat refried beans
- Brown Rice with butter or ghee
- Brown Rice Cakes with nut Butter
- Homemade oatmeal with milk or yogurt
- Little green salads
- Celery, especially the tender inner stalks with dip or nut butter
- Organic Peanut or Almond Butter
- Organic Fresh Fruits (Apples, Pears, Peaches, Grapes, Bananas, etc.) with string cheese
- Raisins and other Dried Fruits without nitrates with raw nuts
- Homemade Fruit Smoothies with yogurt and flaxseeds
- Sandwiches – on good-quality, sprouted grain bread (Ezekiel): Tuna salad, Turkey (oven-roasted or other nitrite-free packaged or deli turkey).

Avoid intake of foods with unhealthy additives. The basic additives to watch for: Artificial colors, in food and drinks, and many other colored foods. Excess refined sugar in a wide variety of processed foods and baked goods MSG (monosodium glutamate) found in soups, cereals, and crackers. Aspartame (an artificial sweetener) found in sodas and gum. Sodium nitrite in treated meats contains sulfites and sulfur dioxide used in drying fruits and other preserved foods. Hydrogenated fats found in many baked goods and cereals Olestra, the fake fat used in potato chips. Also limit intake of foods containing artificial flavorings, the preservatives BHT and BHA, and excess salt.

Foods from the grain, fruit, vegetable, protein, and dairy groups are healthy snacks because they are packed with nutrients. Foods like chips, cookies, and candy are not as healthy because they are loaded with refined grains and sugars that can raise your insulin levels. It's okay to eat these snacks once in a while, but not every day. Remember to pick high fiber, low sugar foods from the grain group and combine them with high protein foods. For example, try apple or celery and peanut butter, whole-wheat crackers and cheese, whole-wheat pita or carrots and hummus, or yogurt and nuts.