

Dietician's Corner

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SMART SNACKING

By Amanda Thul, RD, LD

Skipping snacks because you're trying to save calories? That may end up backfiring. If you feel physical hunger in between meals, you'll likely end up saving more calories if you have a snack compared to ignoring your hunger and going into your meal over-hungry. We tend to eat too quick, don't always care about food choices, and overeat when we go into a meal too hungry. I don't want you to skip snacks but instead snack smartly. Having a snack with a higher fiber carbohydrate with a protein and/or fat is the way to go. This food combo provides your body with longer lasting energy that will help you make it to your next meal without an energy crash.

Here are some examples that provide good nutrition while keeping added sugar and saturated (less healthy) fat to a minimum:

Protein/Fat Ideas:

- Nuts/seeds
- Nut butter
- Cheese
- Greek yogurt
- Deli meat
- tuna or salmon pouches
- Cooked chicken
- Eggs
- Beans
- hummus
- Cottage cheese
- Milk

High Fiber/Carb Ideas:

- Fresh cut up veggies (carrots, snap peas, cauliflower, cucumber, peppers)
- Fruit cup (canned in 100% juice)
- 1/2 baked potato
- Fresh or dried fruit
- Fruit leather
- Fruit sauce pouches
- Whole grain crackers
- 1/2 whole grain bagel
- Oatmeal
- Dry higher-fiber cereal
- Popcorn
- Whole grain bread

Here are some combo ideas using both lists to make that dynamic duo of protein + carbs.

Apple slices with peanut butter, tuna pouch with wheat thins, 1/2 baked potato with beans and salsa, cottage cheese with diced cucumbers and tomatoes, Greek yogurt with fruit, 1/2 bagel with turkey slices, trail mix, egg salad with celery sticks for scooping, peanut butter energy bites.

Despite what Pinterest and Instagram says, you don't need to have everything packaged pretty, cut into fun shapes, or 100% homemade to have a good snack. Just have a couple options from each list on hand and you're golden! Happy snacking!

Have More Questions?

I'd love to help you weed through the nutrition pseudoscience and get to the answer.

Reach me at the hospital at 515-332-7608.

