

# Live Well, Snack Wisely

*Feel a little guilty when you reach for a snack? Don't. Eating between your regular meals can be a healthy part of your diet. If you plan for snacks the way you plan for other meals, you can have good choices ready to go when hunger strikes. So go ahead and have a snack. Just be smart about it.*

## Snacks can work in your favor

If you do it wisely, snacking every few hours can help you:

- **Get better nutrition** — by giving you more chances to get in your fruits, vegetables, and other healthy choices
- **Keep up your physical and mental energy between meals** — by keeping your blood sugar levels balanced
- **Manage your weight** — by preventing you from getting too hungry and overeating at your next meal

## Plan ahead to make a good choice be an easy choice

You know you're going to get hungry between meals sometimes. If you plan on it, it'll be much easier to make good choices. If you don't, you'll be more likely to reach for convenient choices like candy, chips, and soda. Here's what to plan for:

### 1. What: Healthy foods you need more of

Choose foods that digest slowly and will keep you from getting hungry again right away — and that have important nutrients that you need. A great snack has both:

- **High-fiber carbohydrates**, such as whole grains, fruits, and vegetables
- **Protein**, such as dairy products, nuts, and seeds

Try to avoid snacks that are high in fat, especially saturated or trans fat. They add a lot of calories without filling you up.

### 2. How much? About 100 to 200 calories

Even healthy snacks have calories and can cause weight gain if you eat too much. For most people, a snack should be about 100 to 200 calories — just enough to keep you going until your next meal. If you're really active, you might need up to 300 calories.



*For me, smart snacking starts at the grocery store. I try to plan ahead and buy the foods I like. Then when hunger strikes at 3:00 I'll have a good choice ready to go. If I don't, I'll end up getting a candy bar from the machine.*

### 3. WHEN and WHERE: A regular time and place, if possible

The best time to have a snack is when you're physically hungry. For many people, this is about every 2½ to 3 hours. Snacking more often — or grazing all day — can be a sign that you're eating out of habit, out of boredom, or for emotional reasons.

Plan a snack about the same time most days. Think about where you usually are at that time. Then find a place to have your snacks ready when you need them. This might be your desk, purse, bag, car, or fridge.

### *This is NOT snacking wisely:*

- **What:** Having chips, candy, sweetened drinks, or other foods with a lot of added salt, fat, or sugar
- **How much:** Eating out of the bag or container and not really knowing how much you just ate
- **When:** Grazing on snacks all day, or eating when you're bored, stressed, or want to reward yourself
- **Where:** Snacking in front of the TV, computer, or any place that distracts you from what you're eating

# Your smart snack plan-of-attack

Use this page to make a plan for how you'll snack wisely.

The table below lists healthy snacks that are high in protein or high-fiber carbohydrates. Check the foods you like, or write in your own. Portion sizes listed provide about 70 to 100 calories.

PROTEIN	HIGH-FIBER CARBOHYDRATE
<p><b>Low-fat dairy</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cheese (1 ounce, such as a mozzarella stick)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Low-fat, low-sugar yogurt (1 cup)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Low-fat cottage cheese (1 cup)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Low-fat milk or soy milk (1 cup)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hard-boiled egg or egg white (1 egg or 2 egg whites)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p><b>Nuts and seeds</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Trail mix (2 Tbsp.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unsalted nuts (2 Tbsp.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unsalted seeds, such as sunflower or pumpkin (2 Tbsp.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Peanut butter or almond butter (1 Tbsp.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Spreads such as hummus (3 Tbsp.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p><b>Lean meat</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Tuna, water-packed (½ cup)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p>	<p><b>Whole grains</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Whole-grain crackers (¾ ounce)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pretzels (¾ ounce)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Granola (read label)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Popcorn (3 cups, unbuttered)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Whole-grain granola bars (read label)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Whole-grain bread (1 ounce)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p><b>Fruit</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A piece of fruit, such as an apple, orange, pear, banana, peach (1 small)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Dried fruit, such as raisins or cranberries (2 Tbsp.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Berries (1 cup)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p><b>Vegetables</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Vegetables, such as carrots, celery, snap peas, or broccoli (1 cup)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p>

## 1. What: List healthy snack foods you like

Make combinations you like that have both protein and high-fiber carbohydrates. It's fine to eat one or the other, but a snack with both will be extra satisfying.

\_\_\_\_\_ *peanut butter* + \_\_\_\_\_ *celery* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_

- Add these foods to your grocery list

## 2. How much: Pre-portion your snacks

Some foods come in snack-sized portions. If they don't, take them out of the container they came in and pre-portion them yourself. Then you'll know when you've had the right amount.

- Follow suggested serving sizes on food labels. Make snacks that add up to 100 to 200 calories.
- Get small bags or containers to keep them in.

## 3. When and where: Store them where they'll be ready when you're hungry

Time of day or night you most often get hungry: \_\_\_\_\_

Where you could store snacks so they'll be ready to go at that time:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> desk or locker | <input type="checkbox"/> kitchen or fridge at home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> purse or bag   | <input type="checkbox"/> kitchen or fridge at work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> car            | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                     |

## 4. Prepare for temptation: Decide what to do

No matter how well you plan, someone may bring donuts to work or leave a bag of chips by the TV. A small bite is okay now and then. For most days, have a plan: what can you say or do to keep those snacks out of your mouth?

Situation: \_\_\_\_\_

Your response: \_\_\_\_\_

## 5. Try out your snacking plan: Build a habit

Try it for a week and see how well it works. Make changes to your plan as you need to, and start building a new habit of snacking wisely!