



4 Rules for Healthier Snacks

So what's a healthy snack look like? Don't worry...you've got options. Follow these 4 rules:

1. **1-2 snacks between meals** if you're feeling hungry.
2. **100 calories or less** per snack (read the food label or look it up).
3. Choose snacks with a bit of **protein, fiber and fat**.
4. **Fresh is best** (fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, seeds, legumes, water).



The Truth About Late-Night Snacking

It's a recipe for weight gain, high blood sugar, and other health problems, according to a recent study.⁴

Researchers tracked the eating habits of a group of people for 16 weeks. They ate 3 meals and two snacks per day. During the first eight weeks, they ate between 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. The next eight weeks, they ate from noon to 11 p.m.

Researchers found that eating and snacking later:

- Slowed metabolism
- Increased weight gain
- Stored more fat
- Elevated blood sugar, cholesterol, and triglycerides
- Negatively altered hormones linked to hunger and appetite

References

1. Thomas, C., et al. (2016). Abundance, control and water! water! water! *Food, Culture & Society*, 19(2): 251-271. From: <https://tinyurl.com/y6tgpwbw>
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020). Improving your eating habits. From: <https://tinyurl.com/852gk52>
3. Cadario, R., et al. (2019). Which healthy eating nudges work best? A meta-analysis of field experiments. *Marketing Science*. From: <https://tinyurl.com/y46l2rhn>
4. Allison, K., et al. (2018). Timing of eating in adults across the weight spectrum: Metabolic factors and potential circadian mechanisms. *Physiology & Behavior*, 192: 158-166. From: <https://tinyurl.com/y26gvxgt>

There's nothing wrong with having a snack. It might be just the thing to help you make better food choices. But research suggests snacking after dinner or before bed won't help you tip the scale in the right direction.



Prepare for a Snack Attack

If you don't have a plan when a craving hits, there's a good chance you'll default to your old ways.

But it doesn't have to be like that. You just need to be prepared.

If you reach a point during the day that calls for a snack, make it a healthy one.

- **Plan ahead.** Make a list of healthier snacks you actually enjoy.
- **Stock up** on healthy snacks, and avoid heading to the vending machine, drive-thru or quickie-mart to satisfy a craving.
- **If you do give into junk food cravings**, and munch your way through some sweet treats or less-than healthy snacks, don't consider it a free pass to keep eating junk. Just get back on track.

99 healthy-snack recipes
<http://tinyurl.com/zffb5et>

What makes a healthy snack?
<http://tinyurl.com/jtq8deu>

Your Guide to Healthy-Snack Foods

Wondering how to create healthy-snack habits? Swap the junk food for healthier snacks, like this:



Cool as ice

- Fruit-juice popsicle
- No-sugar-added fudgsicle
- 1 small scoop of frozen yogurt
- 1 cup of fat-free pudding

Protein power

- 1 hard-boiled egg
- String cheese
- Non-fat Greek yogurt
- Cup of skim or soy milk
- Tuna packet
- Jerky

On-the-go

- Trail mix
- Pretzels
- Dry cereal (no sugar added)
- Rice cakes (with a healthy topping like peanut butter, hummus, or sugar-free jam)

Drink of choice

- Water
- 1 glass of low-sodium tomato juice
- Smoothie made with fruit, spinach, yogurt, non-fat milk or soy milk, and ice

Crunch & munch

- Celery sticks with peanut butter
- Sliced cucumber, bell pepper, or carrots
- Whole-grain crackers with hummus
- Air-popped popcorn

Sweet dreams

- Small banana
- Cup of strawberries
- Half a grapefruit
- Dried fruit



Got a craving for a snack? Toss out the junk food and stock up on healthy options. You'll satisfy your cravings without eating a ton of empty calories. You'll feel better and be healthier, too.

