

# Eat Right

Food, Nutrition and Health Tips from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics



## 20 Health Tips

### 1. Eat Breakfast

Start your day with a healthy breakfast that includes lean protein, whole grains, fruits and vegetables. Try making a breakfast burrito with scrambled eggs, low-fat cheese, salsa and a whole wheat tortilla or a parfait with low-fat plain yogurt, fruit and whole grain cereal.

### 2. Make Half Your Plate Fruits and Vegetables

Fruits and veggies add color, flavor and texture plus vitamins, minerals and dietary fiber to your plate. Make 2 cups of fruit and 2 ½ cups of vegetables your daily goal. Experiment with different types, including fresh, frozen and canned.

### 3. Watch Portion Sizes

Use half your plate for fruits and vegetables and the other half for grains and lean protein foods. Complete the meal with a serving of fat-free or low-fat milk or yogurt. Measuring cups may also help you compare your portions to the recommended serving size.

### 4. Be Active

Regular physical activity has many health benefits. Start by doing what exercise you can. Children and teens should get 60 or more minutes of physical activity per day, and adults at least two hours and 30 minutes per week. You don't have to hit the gym – take a walk after dinner or put on music and dance at home.

### 5. Get to Know Food Labels

Reading the Nutrition Facts panel can help you choose foods and drinks to meet your nutrient needs.

### 6. Fix Healthy Snacks

Healthy snacks can sustain your energy levels between meals, especially when they include a combination of foods. Choose from two or more of the MyPlate food groups: grains, fruits, vegetables, dairy, and protein. Try raw veggies with low-fat cottage cheese or hummus, or a tablespoon of nut or seed butter with an apple or banana.

### 7. Consult an RDN

Whether you want to lose weight, lower your health-risks or manage a chronic disease, consult the experts! Registered dietitian nutritionists can help you by providing sound, easy-to-follow personalized nutrition advice.

### 8. Follow Food Safety Guidelines

Reduce your chances of getting sick with proper food safety. This includes: regular hand washing, separating raw foods from ready-to-eat foods, cooking foods to the appropriate internal temperature, and refrigerating food promptly. Learn more about home food safety at [www.homefoodsafety.org](http://www.homefoodsafety.org).

### 9. Drink More Water

Quench your thirst with water instead of drinks with added sugars. Stay hydrated and drink plenty of water, especially if you are active, an older adult or live or work in hot conditions.

### 10. Get Cooking

Preparing foods at home can be healthy, rewarding and cost-effective. Master some kitchen basics, like dicing onions or cooking dried beans.

### **11. Order Out without Ditching Goals**

You can eat out and stick to your healthy eating plan! The key is to plan ahead, ask questions and choose foods carefully. Compare nutrition information, if available, and look for healthier options that are grilled, baked, broiled or steamed.

### **12. Enact Family Meal Time**

Plan to eat as a family at least a few times each week. Set a regular mealtime. Turn off the TV, phones and other electronic devices to encourage mealtime talk. Get kids involved in meal planning and cooking and use this time to teach them about good nutrition.

### **13. Banish Brown Bag Boredom**

Whether it's for work or school, prevent brown bag boredom with easy-to-make, healthy lunch ideas. Try a whole-wheat pita pocket with veggies and hummus or a low sodium vegetable soup with whole grain crackers or a salad of mixed greens with low-fat dressing and a hard boiled egg.

### **14. Reduce Added Sugars**

Foods and drinks with added sugars can contribute empty calories and little or no nutrition. Review the new and improved Nutrition Facts Label or ingredients list to identify sources of added sugars.

### **15. Eat Seafood Twice a Week**

Seafood – fish and shellfish – contains a range of nutrients including healthy omega-3 fats. Salmon, trout, oysters and sardines are higher in omega-3s and lower in mercury.

### **16. Explore New Foods and Flavors**

Add more nutrition and eating pleasure by expanding your range of food choices. When shopping, make a point of selecting a fruit, vegetable or whole grain that's new to you or your family.

### **17. Experiment with Plant-Based Meals**

Expand variety in your menus with budget-friendly meatless meals. Many recipes that use meat and poultry can be made without. Vegetables, beans, and lentils are all great substitutes. Try including one meatless meal per week to start.

### **18. Make an Effort to Reduce Food Waste**

Check out what foods you have on hand before stocking up at the grocery store. Plan meals based on leftovers and only buy perishable foods you will use or freeze within a couple of days. Managing these food resources at home can help save nutrients and money.

### **19. Slow Down at Mealtime**

Instead of eating on the run, try sitting down and focusing on the food you're about to eat. Dedicating time to enjoy the taste and textures of foods can have a positive effect on your food intake.

### **20. Supplement with Caution**

Choose foods first for your nutrition needs. A dietary supplement may be necessary when nutrient requirements can't be met or there is a confirmed deficiency. If you're considering a vitamin, mineral or herbal supplement, be sure to discuss safe and appropriate options with an RDN or another healthcare provider before taking.

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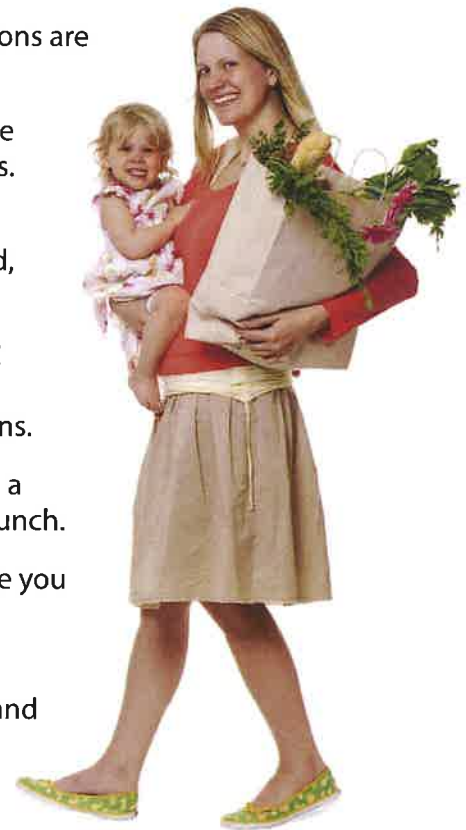
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## Healthy Eating on the Run: A Month of Tips

You may eat out a lot – many Americans do. People are looking for fast, easy and good-tasting foods to fit a busy lifestyle. Whether it's carry-out, food court, office cafeteria or sit-down restaurant, there are smart choices everywhere. Here are 31 tips to help you eat healthy when ordering out.

1. Think ahead and plan where you will eat. Consider what meal options are available. Look for places with a wide range of menu items.
2. Take time to look over the menu and make careful selections. Some restaurant menus may have a special section for “healthier” choices.
3. Review and compare nutrition information if it's available. Menu terms that may indicate an item is healthier include: baked, braised, broiled, grilled, poached, roasted, and steamed.
4. Menu terms that usually mean a food is higher in saturated fat and calories include: batter-fried, pan-fried, buttered, creamed, crispy, breaded. Choose these foods only occasionally and in small portions.
5. Think about your food choices for the entire day. If you're planning a special restaurant meal in the evening, have a light breakfast and lunch.
6. Hold the bread or chips until your meal is served. Hunger may drive you to fill up on these foods before your meal arrives.
7. Limit the amount of alcohol you drink. No more than one drink for women and two for men. Alcohol tends to increase your appetite and provides calories without any nutrients.
8. Order the regular or child-size portion. Mega-sized servings are probably more than you need. For a lighter meal, order an appetizer in place of a main course.
9. Begin with soup or salad as a way to include more vegetables at mealtime. Follow up with a light main course.
10. Or choose a salad with grilled chicken or seafood as your main course.
11. It's OK to make special requests, just keep them simple. For example, ask for a baked potato or side salad in place of French fries; no mayonnaise or bacon on your sandwich; sauces served on the side.
12. Ask for sauces, dressings and toppings to be served “on the side.” Then you control how much you eat
13. Split your order. Share an extra large sandwich or main course with a friend or take half home for another meal (some restaurants may not permit this or will charge for an extra plate).



14. Refrigerate carry-out or leftovers if the food won't be eaten right away. Toss foods kept at room temperature for more than two hours (one hour if warmer than 90 degrees).
15. All-you-can-eat specials, buffets and unlimited salad bars make it difficult to follow recommended serving sizes. Pass these up if you find it difficult to listen to your hunger cues.
16. If you do choose the buffet, fill up on salads and vegetables first. Use small plates, to encourage smaller portions, and limit your trips up to the buffet line.
17. At the salad bar, pile on the dark leafy greens, carrots, peppers and other fresh vegetables. Lighten up on mayonnaise-based salads and high-fat toppings. Enjoy fresh fruit as your dessert.
18. Load up your pizza with vegetable toppings. If you add meat, make it lean ham, Canadian bacon, chicken or shrimp.
19. Enjoy a variety of healthful foods from different cultures. Focus on dishes that emphasize vegetables and lean meats, seafood or beans.
20. Tempted by sweet, creamy desserts? Order a small portion or ask if it can be divided and shared with everyone at the table.
21. At the sandwich shop, choose lean beef, ham, turkey or chicken on whole grain bread. Ask for mustard, ketchup, salsa or low-fat spreads. And, don't forget the veggies.
22. Boost the nutrition in all types of sandwiches by adding tomato, lettuce, peppers or other vegetables.
23. Look for a sandwich wrap in a soft tortilla. Fillings such as rice mixed with seafood, chicken, or grilled vegetables can be healthier options.
24. In place of fries or chips, choose a side salad, fruit or baked potato. Or, share a regular order of fries with a friend.
25. Build a better breakfast sandwich: replace bacon or sausage with Canadian bacon or ham and order your sandwich on a whole grain English muffin or bagel.
26. Be size-wise about muffins, bagels, croissants and biscuits. A jumbo muffin has more than twice the calories of the regular size.
27. Try a smoothie made with 100% juice, fruit and low-fat yogurt for a light meal or snack.
28. For desk-top dining, keep single-serve packages of whole grain crackers, fruit, peanut butter, soup, or tuna around for a quick lunch.
29. Food items on your desk, like nuts or candy bowls, can lead to mindless eating. Keep all snacks and other food items in your desk to avoid the temptation to eat when you're not hungry.
30. Grabbing dinner at the supermarket deli? Select rotisserie chicken, salad-in-a-bag and freshly baked bread. Or, try sliced lean roast beef, onion rolls, salad and fresh fruit.
31. Always eating on the go? Tuck portable, nonperishable foods in your purse, tote, briefcase or backpack for an on-the-run meal. Some suggestions are peanut butter and crackers, granola bars, a piece of fresh fruit, trail mix, single serve packages of whole grain cereal.

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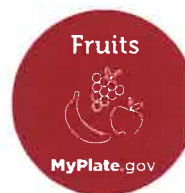
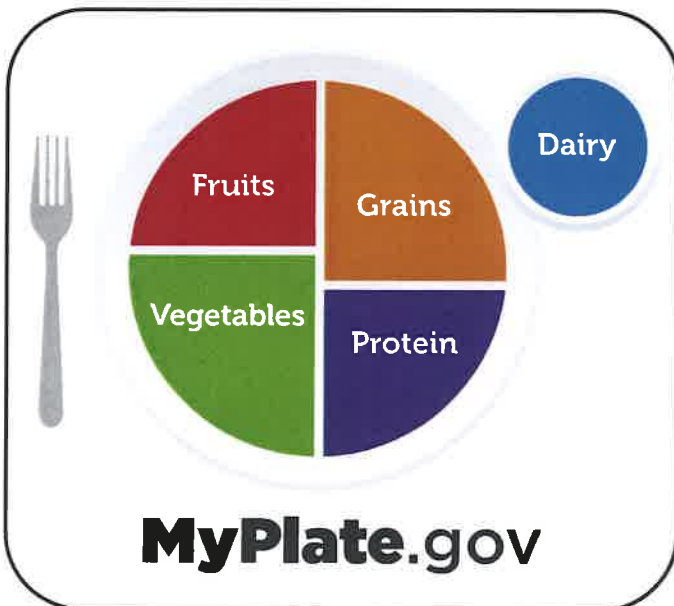
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## Eat Right with MyPlate

Find your healthy eating routine using these recommendations from the *2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

Simply start with small changes to make healthier choices you can enjoy.



**Make half your plate fruits and vegetables:  
Focus on whole fruits.**

- Choose whole, cut or pureed fruits – fresh, frozen, dried or canned in 100% juice.
- Enjoy fruit with meals, as snacks or as a dessert.



**Make half your plate fruits and vegetables:  
Vary your veggies.**

- Try adding fresh, frozen or canned vegetables to salads, sides and main dishes.
- Choose a variety of colorful veggies prepared in healthful ways: steamed, sautéed, roasted or raw.



**Make half your grains whole grains.**

- Look for whole grains listed first on the ingredients list - try oatmeal, popcorn, teff, quinoa, millet, bulgur, brown rice, or breads, crackers and noodles made with whole-grain flours.
- Limit grain desserts and snacks such as cakes, cookies and pastries.



### Vary your protein routine.

- Mix up your protein foods to include seafood, beans, peas and lentils, unsalted nuts and seeds, soy products, eggs, and lean meats and poultry.
- Try meatless meals made with beans and have fish or seafood twice a week.



### Move to low-fat or fat-free dairy milk or yogurt.

- Choose fat-free milk, yogurt and calcium-fortified soymilk to cut back on saturated fat.
- Replace sour cream, cream and regular cheese with low-fat or fat-free yogurt, milk and cheese.



### Choose foods and beverages with less added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium.

- Use the Nutrition Facts Label and ingredients list to limit items high in saturated fat, sodium and added sugars.
- Choose vegetable oils instead of butter and oil-based sauces and dips instead of ones with butter, cream or cheese.
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks

## Start simple with MyPlate

Find more healthy eating tips at:

[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)

[www.kidseatright.org](http://www.kidseatright.org)

[www.myplate.gov](http://www.myplate.gov)

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## Smart Snacking Tips for Kids

Snacks can play an important role in meeting kids' nutrient needs. Choosing a variety of foods from all of the food groups will give them the energy they need between meals.

It helps to plan and portion out snacks in advance. Kids will usually only need 2 or 3 snacks daily, and these should be provided at least one to two hours before meals.

It is recommended that snacks (and meals) be eaten in an area without distractions. So avoid snacking while watching TV or when using other electronic devices.

Better yet, let the kids help prepare the healthy snacks.



Here are a few easy, tasty (and healthy) snacks to help you get started.

*Adults may need to help with some of these.*

1. **Parfait:** Layer vanilla or plain low-fat yogurt with fruit and dried cereal.
2. **Toast a whole grain waffle** and top with low-fat yogurt and sliced fruit or smooth nut butter.
3. **Blend low-fat milk**, frozen strawberries and a banana for thirty seconds for a delicious smoothie.
4. **Sandwich cut-outs:** Make a sandwich on whole grain bread. Cut out your favorite shape using a big cookie cutter. Eat the fun shape and the edges, too!
5. **Mini-pizza:** Toast a whole wheat English muffin, drizzle with pizza sauce and sprinkle with low-fat mozzarella cheese.
6. **Frozen treats:** Mix equal amounts of fat-free plain or flavored yogurt with 100% fruit juice, then pour into paper cups and freeze for a tasty treat.
7. **Quesadilla:** Sprinkle shredded cheese over a corn or whole wheat tortilla; fold in half and microwave for twenty seconds. Top with salsa.
8. **Spread hummus** on a tortilla. Top with a slice of turkey or ham, low-fat cheese and lettuce. Then roll it up.
9. **Stuff a whole-grain pita pocket** with ricotta cheese and Granny Smith apple slices. Add a dash of cinnamon.

10. **Microwave a cup** of tomato or vegetable soup and enjoy with whole grain crackers.
11. **Make a mini-sandwich** with tuna or egg salad on a dinner roll.
12. **Microwave a small baked potato.** Top with reduced-fat cheddar cheese and salsa.
13. **Spread celery sticks** with smooth nut butter or low-fat cream cheese. Top with raisins. Enjoy your “ants on a log.”
14. **Dip slices of fruit** or whole-grain graham crackers into low-fat vanilla pudding or yogurt.
15. **Inside-out sandwich:** Spread mustard on a slice of deli turkey. Wrap around a sesame breadstick.
16. **Rocky road:** Smear low-fat chocolate pudding on a whole grain graham cracker, then top with a marshmallow.
17. **Sprinkle cinnamon** on unsweetened applesauce and enjoy with a whole grain graham cracker for a taste similar to apple pie.
18. **Make your own fruit roll-up** by pureeing fruit and either baking it in the oven or by using a dehydrator.
19. **Bake homemade chewy granola bars** using whole-grain oats and dried fruit.
20. **Whip up mini-muffins** using healthy ingredients, like whole grain flours and pureed fruit.

Portion sizes for kids are smaller than adults. However, certain foods due to their size pose a choking risk, especially for young children.

See below for a list of foods that may cause choking:

- Hot dogs and sausage links
- Meat chunks, unless finely chopped and combined
- Nuts, seeds and peanut butter
- Raw apple and pear slices
- Whole grapes
- Dried fruit
- Raw vegetables
- Whole kernels of corn
- Popcorn and chips
- Small candies and chewing gum

Find more healthy eating tips at:

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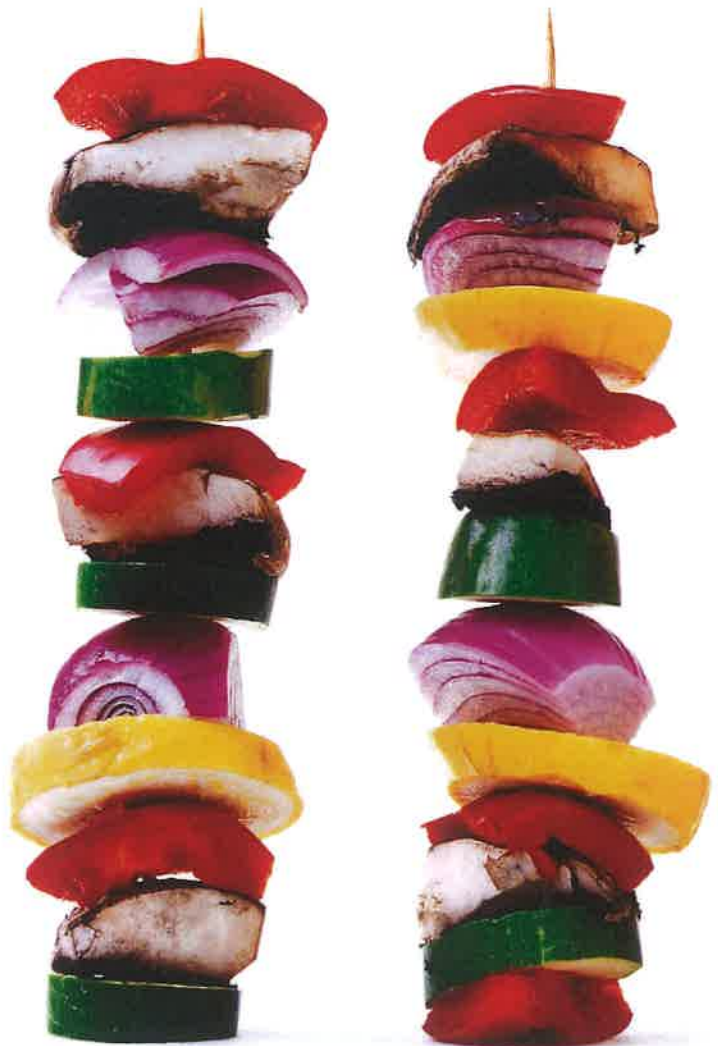
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## 20 Ways to Enjoy More Fruits & Vegetables

Building a healthy plate is easy when you make half your plate fruits and vegetables. It's also a great way to add color, flavor and texture plus vitamins, minerals and dietary fiber. Make 2 cups of fruit and 2 ½ cups of vegetables your daily goal. Try the following tips to enjoy more fruits and vegetables every day.

1. Variety abounds when using vegetables as pizza topping. Try broccoli, spinach, green peppers, tomatoes, mushrooms and zucchini.
2. Mix up a breakfast smoothie made with low-fat milk, and frozen fruit - try strawberries and banana, or mango with pineapple or peach.
3. Make a veggie wrap with roasted vegetables and low-fat cheese rolled in a whole-wheat tortilla.
4. Try crunchy vegetables instead of chips with your favorite low-fat salad dressing for dipping.
5. Grill colorful vegetable kabobs packed with tomatoes, green and red peppers, mushrooms and onions.
6. Add color to salads with baby carrots, grape tomatoes, spinach leaves or mandarin oranges.\*
7. Keep cut vegetables handy for mid-afternoon snacks, side dishes, lunch box additions or a quick nibble while waiting for dinner. Ready-to-eat favorites: red, green or yellow peppers, broccoli or cauliflower florets, carrots, celery sticks, cucumbers, snap peas or whole radishes.
8. Place colorful fruit where everyone can easily grab something for a snack-on-the-run. Keep a bowl of fresh, just ripe whole fruit in the center of your kitchen or dining table.
9. Get saucy with fruit. Puree apples, berries, peaches or pears in a blender for a thick, sweet sauce on grilled or broiled seafood or poultry, or on pancakes, French toast or waffles.



10. Stuff an omelet with vegetables. Turn any omelet into a hearty meal with broccoli, squash, carrots, peppers, tomatoes or onions with low-fat sharp cheddar cheese.
11. "Sandwich" in fruits and vegetables. Add pizzazz to sandwiches with sliced pineapple, apple, peppers, cucumber and tomato as fillings. Add raw or cooked veggies to tacos on whole-grain corn tortillas and whole wheat wraps.
12. Wake up to fruit. Make a habit of adding fruit to your morning oatmeal, ready-to-eat cereal, yogurt or toaster waffle.
13. Top a baked potato with beans and salsa or broccoli and low-fat cheese.
14. Microwave a cup of vegetable soup as a snack or with a sandwich for lunch.
15. Add grated, shredded or chopped vegetables such as zucchini, spinach, eggplant and carrots to pasta dishes, casseroles, curries, soups, and stews.
16. Make fruit your dessert: Slice a banana lengthwise and top with a scoop of low-fat frozen yogurt. Sprinkle with a tablespoon of chopped nuts.
17. Stock your freezer with frozen vegetables to steam or stir-fry for a quick side dish.
18. Make your main dish a salad of dark, leafy greens and other colorful vegetables. Add chickpeas or edamame (fresh soybeans). Top with low-fat dressing.\*
19. Fruit on the grill: Make kabobs with pineapple, peaches and banana. Grill on low heat until fruit is hot and slightly golden.
20. Dip: Whole wheat pita wedges in hummus, baked tortilla chips in salsa, strawberries or apple slices in low-fat yogurt, or graham crackers in applesauce.

\*See "Smart Tips to Build a Healthy Salad" at [www.eatright.org/nutritiontipsheets](http://www.eatright.org/nutritiontipsheets) for more tips on creating healthy salads.

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## Smart Snacking Tips for Adults and Teens

Snacks can fit into a healthy eating plan and provide an energy boost between meals, if they're planned right. Choosing nutritious foods from the MyPlate food groups can help increase variety and reduce sources of empty calories and added sugars.

Find the right snack for your eating style and activity level. Keeping snacks to 200 calories or less can be a reasonable goal for most people. Adults and teens who are more active, or eat smaller meals throughout the day may want to aim for 200 to 300 calories per snack.



### Make snacking a smart habit by:

- **Snacking only when you're hungry.**  
Eating out of boredom or for emotional reasons can lead to weight gain. Rate your hunger before reaching for a snack and avoid mindless eating.
- **Having snacks planned and portioned out ahead of time.**  
Fixing snacks in advance, like washed and cut-up fruits and vegetables, air-popped popcorn, and low-fat cheese, can save time later on.
- **Practicing food safety.**  
Keep perishable foods refrigerated or in a cooler bag with ice packs to help reduce the risk of food poisoning.

Make snacking simple by choosing different fruits and vegetables, depending on what is in season or on sale. Fresh, frozen, canned, or dried are all good options. Compare labels to limit items high in sodium, saturated fat and added sugars.

Keep your snacking lively by including snacks that contain grains, especially whole grains, lean protein and healthy fats. Some examples include fat-free yogurt with fruit, whole-grain crackers with low-fat cheese, or raw veggies with hummus.

Eating different combinations of foods can be very satisfying and help to curb hunger. Snacks that include fruit can also satisfy a craving for something sweet.

## Ways to make your own convenient and ready-to-eat snacks at home:

- Make your own trail mix by combining whole grain cereals, unsalted nuts or seeds and dried fruit. (Tip: portion into ¼ cup servings)
- Blend your own smoothie by adding 1 cup fat-free milk and frozen fruit to a blender.
- Mix 3 cups air-popped popcorn with grated cheese or dried spices.
- Bake vegetable chips, like kale or beets.
- Roast chickpeas (or garbanzo beans) and season with spices.
- Make a dip using low-fat cottage cheese or Greek yogurt for raw vegetables.
- Mash an avocado with salsa and eat with whole-grain tortilla chips or spread on a whole wheat tortilla, sprinkle with low-fat cheese, then roll it up and enjoy.
- Cut up fruit to make kebobs and serve with low-fat yogurt dip.
- Slice a medium apple and eat with 1 tablespoon of peanut, almond, or sunflower seed butter.
- Mix equal amounts of fat-free plain or flavored yogurt with 100% fruit juice, then pour into paper cups and freeze for a tasty treat.
- Top graham crackers with nut or seed butter or dunk them in low-fat vanilla yogurt.
- Cut a whole wheat pita into wedges and serve with 2 tablespoons of hummus or bean dip.
- Make a veggie pizza by topping a whole wheat English muffin or pita with 2 tablespoons tomato sauce, ½ cup diced fresh veggies, and 1 ounce low-fat mozzarella cheese.
- Create a scrumptious yogurt parfait by layering 6 ounces of fat-free yogurt with ½ cup fresh or frozen fruit, then sprinkle ¼ cup (or less) low-fat granola on top.
- Prepare instant oatmeal using fat-free milk, 1 tablespoon maple syrup, a sprinkle of cinnamon, and ¼ cup dried fruit.
- Dress up a salad with a hard cooked egg or edamame, tomato, and 2 tablespoons reduced-fat dressing.
- Whip up a quesadilla in the microwave using a whole wheat tortilla, ¼ cup black beans, 1-2 tablespoons low-fat cheese and 1 ounce of salsa.
- Build veggie skewers with cherry or grape tomatoes and cubes of low-fat cheese or cooked tortellini and lean luncheon meat.
- Make a tuna apple sandwich by combining a 5-6 ounce can of tuna packed in water (drained), 1 small apple (peeled and sliced into chunks), 1 tablespoon light mayo, then spread it on 2 slices of whole wheat bread.

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