

Healthy Snacking

Let's be real. Everyone snacks. And actually, snacking isn't "bad" if you do it in moderation and make healthy choices. Yes, everyone has long days at work where you crave something sweet or need something salty to help you snap out of the workday lull. If you're smart about how you snack you'll feel, and maybe even look, better. And who doesn't want that? As boring as "healthy snacks" might sound, you'd be surprised at just how tasty they are. Try some new things and see how easy they are to tote around with you on the go. (And, they fit in your laptop bag, purse, workout bag or backpack just as easily as the prepackaged stuff.) Give these healthy, nutritious items a try. You're sure to find some you will like and make them part of your routine diet.

First: Munchies that crunch.

Chew on the following to satisfy a craving:

- Apples and pears
- Carrot and celery sticks
- Bell pepper slices
- Zucchini or cucumber circles (Sounds fancy, huh?)
- Roasted chickpeas
- Broccoli and cauliflower florets
- Popcorn (It's a whole grain! Who knew?)
- Rice cakes and whole-grain crackers
- Nuts and seeds (Hit those good fats!)

Second: Rethink your drink.

Ditch your high-sugar go-to and try:

- Plain or sparkling water (Not glamorous enough? Add some fruit and herbs to it!)
- Fat-free milk or plain soy milk
- Unsweetened tea or coffee
- 100% fruit juice (Stick to a small glass)
- Low-sodium tomato or mixed vegetable juice



Third: Snacks that satisfy.

Guaranteed to fill you up:

- Whole-grain toast with peanut or almond butter
- Cherry tomatoes with hummus
- Low-fat or fat-free cheese
- Plain low-fat or fat-free yogurt (An awesome pairing with fruit!)
- Fruit and vegetable smoothies
- Whole-grain crackers with canned tuna or salmon

Fourth: Snacks to curb your sweet tooth.

Give these a try:

- Canned fruit (in natural juice or light syrup)
- Thin slice of angel food cake or homemade banana-nut bread
- Baked apple
- Raisins, dates, figs and other unsweetened dried fruits
- Frozen banana
- Frozen grapes
- Fresh fruit salad (Use your imagination and get creative when choosing fruits)

Be sure to check out the nutrition label and choose wisely when shopping. Watch for added sugars and salt, and try making healthier versions of packaged snacks at home so you can choose the ingredients.

**What other healthy snacking creations do you love?
Share your ideas on Facebook and Twitter using
#PlusColor.**

The Kansas Hospital Education and Research Foundation of the Kansas Hospital Association has created a series of resources designed to inform and support efforts to promote healthy food and beverage environments in Kansas hospitals. The Public Health Law Center assisted in creating this document. These resources are funded by the Kansas Health Foundation. Footnotes providing reference materials are available online at www.HealthyKansasHospitals.org.