

SNACK SMART THINK FUEL

Snacks are the bridges of your diet, giving you energy and brainpower between meals.

Stock up on healthy ingredients so the right stuff is always within reach. Good snacks are around 200 calories each and contain:

PROTEIN

Since it's digested slowly, a protein-rich snack gives you a steady stream of energy. Aim for a minimum of 3 to 5 grams of protein per serving.

FIBER

Crucial for staving off hunger, fiber helps slow the release of energy you get from carbohydrates. A healthy snack has at least 3 grams per serving.

GOOD CARBS

Yes, you need them! Choose whole grains, which also give you the necessary fiber for a gradual and longer-lasting energy boost. Look for *whole grain*, *whole oats*, or *whole wheat flour* in the ingredients list. Fruits and vegetables also count as healthy carbs.

EGG BURRITO

Place one boiled or scrambled egg, two thin avocado slices, and ¼ cup salsa in an 8-inch whole wheat tortilla.

EACH SERVING

197 cal, 4.3 g fiber, 10.5 g pro.

SNACK SOLUTIONS

What to eat if ...

■ DINNER'S NOT UNTIL 8

Enjoy a protein-packed appetizer

In the afternoon so you're not famished by mealtime. Try chicken nachos: Sprinkle about eight whole grain pita chips with shredded rotisserie chicken and shredded part-skim mozzarella. Just heat in the oven or microwave.

■ YOU AND THE KIDS GET HUNGRY ON THE GO

Think nuts for a stick-it-in-your-bag-and-forget-it snack to carry with you at all times. Pick pistachios, which are high in protein, fiber, and antioxidants. "You can have 30 pistachios for about 100 calories, but with most other nuts you only get about half this amount for the same calories," says Lyssie Lakatos, R.D.N., coauthor of *The Nutrition Twins' Veggie Cure*. Also take along small apples for doses of fiber and healthy carbs.

■ YOU'RE LOW ON FRUITS AND VEGGIES

Try a smoothie instead of juicing. What's the difference?

"Juicing leaves out the pulp, which is the good stuff you need," says Keith-Thomas Ayoob, R.D., associate clinical professor of nutrition at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. For a smoothie, you put in the entire fruit or vegetable so you get its full nutritional benefits. Try ½ cup plain regular or fat-free Greek yogurt, 1 cup berries, a few spinach leaves, and one large shredded carrot. For a sweeter drink, blend 1 cup milk, 1 banana, 1 cup strawberries, and ½ Tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder.

■ A BIG NIGHT OF STUDYING OR WORK IS AHEAD

Make a mini egg burrito with one egg, avocado, pico de gallo (or salsa), and a small whole wheat tortilla. "Egg yolks have lutein, an antioxidant that gives you a brain boost," says Jackie Newgent, R.D.N., author of *The All-Natural Diabetes Cookbook*. "In adults, higher amounts of lutein have been linked to increased mental sharpness, and in school-age kids, a lutein-rich diet may help them perform better on standardized tests."

PS: One-fourth cup of salsa counts as half of a vegetable serving. We'll take all we can get! —Barbara Brody



SUPER SMOOTHIE

Combine 2 cups frozen unsweetened dark cherries, 1 cup unsweetened vanilla almond milk, one 6-oz. carton Greek yogurt, ½ cup fresh or frozen unsweetened blueberries, and 1 small banana, peeled.

MAKES 4 SERVINGS.
EACH SERVING 98 cal, 3 g fiber, 5.5 g pro.



SNACKS WE LOVE

Move over, chips. These packaged snacks are delicious and healthy!

1. HALF NAKED POPCORN Whole grain, high in fiber, and only 120 calories per bag. goodhealthnaturalproducts.com **2. SAFFRON ROAD CRUNCHY CHICKPEAS** Big on crunch, fiber, and protein; they come in chipotle, Korean BBQ, or plain sea salt. saffronroadfood.com **3. NOURISH SNACKS** Choose from among flavor combos of granola bites, popcorn, and nut mixes created by nutritionist Joy Bauer (so you know they're healthy!). ■