



## To Snack or Not To Snack? Snacking as part of weight management



Nothing is worse than that burning feeling of hunger in your stomach, especially when you are trying to lose weight. The good news is that snacking between meals can be of great benefit to not only stabilize your blood glucose (sugar) and energy levels, but also to prevent you from overeating at main meals. The trick is to make the right choice of snack to balance your energy intake while helping to provide that feeling of fullness. This ultimately helps excess weight come off quicker!

Chips, chocolates and sweets may be the first options that come to mind (especially as they are so convenient), but we all know we have to compromise somewhere for results. The right choice of snack would be one that provides vitamins, minerals and sufficient energy to keep you going without contributing to an excess in daily energy intake. Stock your pantry with wholegrain crackers, fresh fruits and tasty protein options to prepare quick, easy and nutritious snack combinations that still please your palate and help those kilos disappear.

Here are some great ideas to try at home:

- One medium fruit (about the size of a tennis-ball) or ½ cup of fresh fruit salad with low fat/fat free, smooth, unsweetened yoghurt. For extra taste, add a teaspoon of crushed nuts or seeds
- One apple sliced and thinly covered with peanut butter
- One slice of whole wheat/brown bread OR three Provititas OR two Ryvita thinly spread with peanut butter, low fat hummus, soft margarine, mashed avocado pear, low fat cheese spread or a small block of low fat cheese or cottage cheese with sliced tomato
- Two cups of air-popped popcorn with a pinch of grated parmesan cheese
- Raw vegetables (e.g. carrot and celery sticks) with cherry tomatoes dipped in low fat hummus, tzatziki or plain, low fat yoghurt
- One cup of low fat/lite vegetable soup or one egg (boiled to your liking) with a slice of whole wheat/brown bread cut into dippers (with/without thinly spread soft margarine)
- One medium baked potato (easily microwaved in 5 minutes) filled with a tablespoon of low fat/fat free cottage cheese
- Fruit smoothie: ½ small banana, ½ cup fresh strawberries and 1 cup low fat/fat-free plain yoghurt. Add ice and blend till the consistency is smooth

*Many people snack continuously due to boredom, stress or anger so remember to ask yourself if you are really hungry before you eat something!*

**Written by Lauren Pietersen, Registered Dietitian, the Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa.**

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