

Wellness Topic

Healthy vs. Unhealthy Snacks

What makes a healthy snack?

- A good-for-you snack is one that's high in nutritional value (protein, vitamins, minerals, fiber) but relatively low in calories, total fat, saturated fat (no trans fat), sugar, and sodium. And the most important part of that equation is "high in nutritional value." Nuts, for example, are high in fat and calories, but they are also loaded with nutrients we need, which makes them a healthy choice.
- On the flip side, not-so-healthy snack choices are usually low in nutritional value but high in calories, total fat, saturated fat (and sometimes trans fat), sugars, or sodium.

While fresh veggies and fruits make super-healthy snacks, those items aren't always convenient (or the most popular choices in a typical family).

- The way to get a good idea of what's in a food product is by looking at the first three to five ingredients listed on the package. On the Nutrition Facts label, keep an eye out for the calories, total fat, saturated and trans fat, grams of sugar, and milligrams of sodium and then compare them to other products in that category.

Some common unhealthy snacks are the following;

- Fast Food
- Chips
- Doughnuts
- Fried Food
- Pizza
- Flavored yogurt
- Cookies
- High Sugar Granola Bars
- Ice cream

Healthy snacks to replace the above with;

- Fruits
- Vegetables, (carrots, celery, cucumbers, etc)
- Moderate amount of nuts, (cashews, pecans, almonds, etc)
- Boiled eggs
- Low sugar granola bars
- Beef or turkey Jerky
- Homemade fresh fruit popsicles