

Smart snacking

Consider the snack. For some, it's simply a means to stave off hunger or have some sort of pick-me-up, so anything will do. For others, it's an opportunity to stay energetic and make a smart strategic food choice! Eating regularly not only boosts the metabolism and increases weight loss but it's also an ideal way to manage energy levels and cravings for certain foods. Let no more than four hours pass between meals or snacks. This way, you'll ensure a constant supply of blood glucose to your body and brain.

There's no doubt that our lifestyles are fast paced and unyielding. We know that if we want to thrive we need to build up our resilience so that our bodies and minds keep up with the frantic pace.

There is therefore a growing demand for convenience foods that deliver health benefits whilst simplifying our lives. We are all looking for "on-the-go" options. Many of us have developed a "snack any time, any where" approach to eating. In the past a biscuit, bag of crisps or chocolate would have done nicely but fortunately there are many of us that are now looking for healthier options.

What's in a smart strategic snack?

- ✔ Ideally a snack should meet the following nutritional criteria:
- ✔ About 300-500kJ (70 - 120 calories)
- ✔ About 10g of total fat (although for weight loss closer to 5g is better)
- ✔ As high in fibre as possible
- ✔ Should contain some nutrients (vitamins & minerals)
- ✔ Should be slow releasing (Low Glycaemic Index: <60) & low GL (Glycaemic Load: 5-10)

Portable snack options:

- Fresh fruit is king!
- Dried fruit (no sugar)
- Raw nuts or seeds (keep portions to one handful)
- Crackers such as provita biscuits (buy the individual biscuit packs)
- Tuna in easy to open packet or tin
- Low fat cheese
- Small packets of high fibre cereals such as muesli
- Pretzels, baked
- Popcorn
- Pure fruit bars (Eg: Trufruit)
- Low fat cereal bars



- Fat free drinking yoghurts
- Mini carrots or other crudité's (cherry tomatoes, snap peas, baby corn)
- Sandwiches with lean ham, beef (cut into easy bite size pieces using rye bread)
- Boiled eggs (peeled at home)
- Biltong (ostrich or game is best as it is lower in fat)

Just for a giggle:

Question:

How do you know that peanuts are fattening?

Answer:

Have you ever seen a skinny elephant?

Unsalted, unroasted nuts such as almonds, cashews and walnuts are healthy but they do pack on energy so keep snack portions to a small handful only!

Graze don't gorge

To graze rather than to gorge implies starting to eat early in the day, smaller more frequent meals and not skipping meals. Skipping meals causes your body to slow down your metabolism and encourages your body to store more fat as a survival mechanism! 5 . 6 smaller meals spaced throughout the day will help to boost your metabolic rate as well as manage inappropriate food cravings.

Did you know? Fresh fruit and protein make power snacks.

Protein stabilises blood sugar very effectively and so a perfect energising snack would be a source of carbohydrate and a small portion of low fat protein.

- Boiled egg and a handful of grapes
- Small handful lean biltong and an orange
- Protein bar or shake (a half portion of either would suffice as a snack) whizzed with banana
- Few tablespoons of fat free cottage cheese with kiwi fruit
- A matchbox of low fat cheese and apple
- 2 - 5 slices of lean shaved turkey or ham with fresh fruit of choice
- Low fat fruit yoghurt with fresh strawberries or gooseberries
- Try one or two tablespoons of peanut butter with fresh apple wedges

