

## Healthy snack ideas

Eating small, healthy snacks between meals can help to maintain energy levels, reduce cravings for sweet foods and boost your intake of nutrients helpful for fertility. This is especially important if you have long gaps between meals. Always try to include some complex carbohydrate e.g. oatcakes, rice cakes, Ryvita, vegetable sticks or a piece of fruit AND some healthy protein or fat e.g. nuts, seeds, hummus, natural yoghurt for slow release energy that keeps you fuller for longer.

Some of our favourite snack ideas and tips:

- **Piece of fruit and palmful of nuts / seeds.** Have unsalted unroasted nuts to hand if you get caught out, such as in the car, at your work desk or in your bag. Be aware that a portion is a palmful – 6 – 8 nuts for most of us. Beware of snacking from the bag; ideally take out one portion and put the bag away to avoid overeating.
- **1 - 2 rice cakes or oat cakes with nut butter.** Try almond or cashew nut butter. If using peanut butter, make sure you buy one without added sugar or any other ingredients. Nut butter is a great staple for the work desk as it does not need to be refrigerated. Oat cakes are another good option as they are wrapped in small packets of 6 or 7, meaning they will stay fresher for longer.
- **Savoury seeds.** Gently toast 2 tbsp. pumpkin seeds in a frying pan over a low heat for 2 - 3 minutes. Add 1 tsp soya sauce or Tamari for last minute of cooking. Remove from heat, leave to dry and keep in an airtight container. Great as part of a snack or to sprinkle on salads or soups.
- **Toasted nuts.** Gently toast 2 tbsp. cashew nuts in a frying pan over a low heat for 3 – 4 minutes. Add pinch of sea salt, pepper, chilli flakes or cinnamon for a tasty treat-like evening snack.
- **Natural yoghurt with berries or chopped fruit and sprinkle cinnamon.** A sustaining snack that can work as a late evening treat also. Chose full fat natural yoghurt e.g. Glenisk organic. For work, bring a large 500g pot of yoghurt and a punnet of berries at the start of the week if you have a refrigerator. Then you have your snack sorted for a few days.
- **Vegetable sticks with hummus or tahini.** This is a great way to boost your vegetable intake. If you are struggling to reach 5 portions of veg per day, commit to one vegetable snack per day. Try carrots, peppers, celery, cucumber or sugar snap peas.
- **1 hard-boiled egg mashed onto a corn cake.** Hardboiled eggs will keep in the fridge for a couple of days so you can do some ahead of time for a quick snack or as part of your lunch.
- **Cup of vegetable and lentil soup.** Whether shop bought or homemade, this makes a very quick and nutritious snack.
- **Avocado toast.** ½ avocado mashed with a squeeze of lemon juice and a pinch of sea salt spread onto a small slice of rye or spelt bread and topped with sliced tomato. A great source of essential fats and makes a good breakfast option too.
- **2 oatcakes with a shop-bought mackerel or salmon paté.** A quick and simple way to boost your omega 3 intake, particularly if others in the household are not a fan of fish.

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