



Portable Snacking Tips and Ideas

Remember the 'Healthy' with the 'To-Go'

-- By Laura Bofinger, Staff Writer

Eating is no longer an activity only experienced around the table with friends and family. Quick, how many times this past week have you eaten on the run? No place is safe either – the car, your desk, maybe even the shower! Our time is strapped and we need food that's easy to grab 'n' go. And during this mad-chaos of finding food on our way out the door, one detail is easy to forget – making sure that the choices we make are healthy.

Unfortunately, it's mostly the bad stuff that falls into the "fast" and "easy" categories – chips, candy bars, sodas, etc. Well, what if we took some time and ingenuity to make our own healthy snacks portable and easy for on-the-go eating?

I'm talking about things that can fit into the top drawer at work (not jelly beans or Kisses!) or snacks prepared ahead of time that can be popped into a lunch bag. Yes, some of these items WILL require some thinking ahead. Some might even require refrigeration or special containers. But they are fast, simple, and easy. Most take less than 5 minutes to prepare. You'll also be thankful that you've saved yourself the cash that normally goes to vending machines or convenience stores. Your body will be grateful as well. The benefits of health outweigh the costs.

Check out these suggestions.

- Celery sticks with peanut butter and several raisins on top
- Rice cakes with peanut butter (good for getting a protein punch)
- Low-fat cheese cubes
- Hardboiled eggs
- Deviled egg (wrapped in plastic wrap)
- Fruit yogurt cup (add in some fresh fruits or nuts for a boost)
- Trail mix
- Nuts or nut mix (stick to just a handful)
- Vegetable sticks with a little packet of dip (lowfat salad dressing packets found in salad bars work as easy-to-pack dip)
- Broccoli or cauliflower bites
- Half of a turkey or tuna sandwich on whole-wheat bread
- Cucumber slices (lightly salted or with nonfat Italian dressing)
- Yogurt and granola
- Leftover chicken or turkey slices (great to eat cold)
- Healthy fiber-rich or grain cereal (great to eat dry from a baggie)
- Pickles (wrapped in foil or plastic wrap)
- Box of raisins or other dried fruit
- Half a large whole wheat bagel with light cream cheese
- Apples, bananas, strawberries (any fruit works, these are naturally portable)
- Mixed berries (these freeze well in plastic bags)
- Whole-wheat crackers and low-fat string cheese
- Grapes in a baggie
- Fruit smoothie in a thermos
- Tuna and cottage cheese in mini-containers

The trick here is to be prepared and get creative! Get your fresh fruits and vegetables on the weekend in preparation for the week's snacking. Keep small-sized plastic containers for packing up small portions. Take note of the healthy foods you need to keep stocked in the house for future quick and healthy snack preparation. These will become automatic items for your grocery list. You may find that you start to replace a few nonessential, calorie-wasting items with your new healthy snack list.