



Healthy Snacks for Athletes

Snacks are an important part of your diet. But you must snack appropriately in order to achieve your health and sports performance goals. Here are some basic tips to get the most out of your snacks:

- Eat every 3 to 4 hours to keep your energy levels stable and your metabolism at its best, though pay attention to hunger cues. A typical day may look like this: Breakfast, Morning Snack, Lunch, Afternoon Snack, Dinner and an *optional* After Dinner Snack depending upon hunger and individual needs.
- Make your snack a Super Snack Combo: A super snack is like a mini-meal with a mixture of good carbohydrates (fruit, vegetable or whole grain), lean protein and healthy fat and helps you stay full longer.
- Try to eat a fruit or a vegetable with every snack.
- Limit caloric beverages and make milk or water the drinks of choice during snack time. Drinking calories, such as milk, fruit juice, or sports drinks, does not make you feel full the same way that food does.

Super Snack Combos

- Trail Mix or “Cereal in a Baggy” (nuts, cereal, dried fruit)
- Lunch meat on crackers
- Cheese and crackers
- Nut butter and whole-grain crackers
- Hard-boiled Eggs on wheat toast
- Ants on a Log: Celery with nut butter and topped with raisins
- Whole grain pretzels dipped in a nut butter or with cheese
- Yogurt mixed with granola and dried/fresh fruit
- Frozen yogurt “squeezers”
- Homemade muffins and milk/cheese
- Tortilla with cheese or hummus
- Graham crackers with a nut butter
- Cottage cheese and fresh fruit
- Apples and cheddar cheese

Healthy Beverages

- Water (plain, seltzer, sparkling)
- Skim or Low-fat (1%) milk
- 100% Fruit Juice
- Milk alternatives (soy, rice, coconut or almond milk)



Lesley Baradel, MBA MS RDN LD
404-664-4344
lesley@balancednutritionatlanta.com

Ann Dunaway Teh, MS RDN LD
678-641-5682
ann@dunawaydietetics.com

Fruits

- Cut or Whole Fruit
- Dried Fruit (examples: raisins, apples, cranberries, pineapple, papaya)
- Fruit Cups (packed in 100% juice)
- Applesauce (unsweetened)

Vegetables

- Cut or whole vegetables (cooked/raw) with hummus, tzatziki sauce, low-fat salad dressings, or bean dip
 - Broccoli, carrots, celery, cucumbers, peppers, string beans, mushrooms, zucchini, edamame, sugar snap peas

Low-Fat Dairy

- Cheese: string cheese, cheese rounds, cheese squares
- Cottage Cheese
- Yogurt
 - Greek or Regular
 - Low-fat or fat-free
 - ≤30g of sugar per 8oz. container



Healthy Grains

Choose 100% whole wheat or whole grain options whenever possible. Look for the word “whole” when describing the grain and make sure it is the first ingredient on the ingredient list. Aim for grains that are 8g or less of sugar per serving, low in saturated fat (less than 10% of calories), and have no trans-fats (if you see any variation of the words “partially hydrogenated” oils on the ingredient list and the nutrition facts panel still states 0 trans-fats, the product still contains trans-fats. Manufacturers are only required to list trans-fats if the product contains 0.5 or more grams of trans-fats per serving).

- Pita wedges or mini-bagels with low-fat cream cheese
- Tortillas or English muffins with hummus or bean dip
- Crackers
- Breakfast Cereals
 - Mix your favorite cereals together with some dried fruit
 - Look for cereals that are ≤8 grams of sugar per serving
- Rice cakes
- Pretzels
- Homemade muffins
- Popcorn (Low-fat, low sodium)
- Baked tortilla chips with salsa or bean dip (Low sodium brands)
- Granola bars, cereal bars, or sports bars
 - 3-7g of protein
 - 2-3g of fiber
 - Less than 5% of Daily Value for saturated fat and sodium