

Healthy Snacks

Struggling with the dreaded mid-afternoon crash or feeling "hangry"?

Quick drops in blood sugar triggers stress hormone release and our brain doesn't get energy as effectively. This overrides our ability to manage impulses and control, since the brain is more interested in making quick decisions than long term goals, sensing that it is in a stressed state.

Snacks can make or break a healthy diet (which affects weight, mood, mental clarity, and energy). Starches are converted to sugar rapidly in the blood and cause fluctuations in energy and mood, ultimately contributing to weight gain, diabetes, and heart disease. **Healthy fats, protein, and fibre** promote lasting energy, help build muscle, support nerve function, promote healthy digestive function.

Here are some healthy fat, protein, and fibre-rich snack options to keep you at your best!

The Basics

- Protein: eggs, nuts/seeds, nut butter, hummus, protein powder, cheese, Greek yogurt
- Fibre: vegetables, nuts/seeds, legumes/beans, chia seeds, ground flax seeds, hemp hearts
- Healthy fat: avocado, olive oil, nuts/seeds, nut butter, coconut oil, cold water fatty fish (SMASH: salmon, mackerel, anchovies, sardines, herring)

In the Desk Drawer

- Pumpkin seeds, almonds, walnuts
- Dark chocolate ($\geq 70\%$ cacao)
- Fruit and nut butter (almond, cashew, peanut)
- Snack bars: Kirkland Signature Protein Bars or Quest bars

In the Fridge

- Hummus and veggies (peppers, celery, carrots)
- Greek yogurt and berries
- Avocado and crackers
- Bean dip and veggies
- Snack bar: Darryl's All Natural bars

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Homemade Granola

Dry Ingredients

- 2.5 cups coconut flakes, unsweetened
- 1 cup pumpkin seeds
- 1 cup sunflower seeds (substitute or add other seeds as you wish)
- 1 cup hemp seeds/hearts
- 1.5 cups hazelnuts (substitute or add other nuts as you wish)
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 tbsp cinnamon
- (Add 2TBSP cacao powder if you want it chocolaty!)

Wet Ingredients

- ½ cup coconut oil
- ¼ cup honey (use up to ½ cup if you want a sweeter batch)
- 1 tbsp vanilla

Add-ins (substitute any other dried fruits if you want)

- 1 cup dried cranberries
- 1 cup goji berries
- 1 cup green raisins

Instructions

- Prep time: 10min
- Cook time: 25min
- Preheat the oven to 325 degrees F
- Mix all dry ingredients in an extra large bowl or soup pot.
- In a medium frying pan, melt the coconut oil, honey and vanilla until it start bubbling. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients, and divide onto two baking sheets, into as thin a layer as you can.
- Bake for 20-25 minutes, until golden brown. Remove the pans from the oven after 12 minutes and stir the granola so it cooks evenly (change positions of the pans if one was on top of the other one). Continue baking until golden brown.
- Remove the granola from the oven, and put it back in the extra large bowl or soup pot. Mix in the add-ins, and then spread out the granola back on the baking sheets to let it cool.

Enjoy! It freezes well, so toss the extra amount into the freezer to keep for later!

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Homemade Energy Ball/Bar

Ingredients (makes 16 bites)

- 1 cup packed pitted Medjool dates (12-13 large)
- ¼ cup hulled hemp seed (also known as hemp hearts)
- ¼ cup chia seed
- ¼ cup sesame seed
- ¼ cup cocoa powder
- ½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon fine grain sea salt, or to taste
- ¼ cup raw cacao nibs (or mini dark chocolate chips)

Instructions

- Prep time: 10min
- Chill time: 20min
- Add dates into processor and process until a chunky paste forms.
- Add in the hemp, chia, sesame, cocoa, vanilla, cinnamon, and salt. Process until thoroughly combined. Pulse in the cacao nibs. The dough should be sticky when pressed between your fingers. If it's not sticky enough to shape into balls, add a small amount of water (a teaspoon at a time) and process until it comes together.
- Shape dough into small balls (about 16) and freeze for 20 minutes or so until firm. Store leftovers in the freezer until your next snack attack hits.

Source: <http://ohsheglows.com/2013/07/29/super-seed-chocolate-protein-bites/>