



by Kathleen Hunter, BA, MA, MEd

How to avoid unhealthy snacks

Here are a number of simple things you can do to get your snacking **ON TRACK**.

You'll be surprised how easy it is to change those old behaviors and replace them with newer, healthier ones.

1. Start by making a list of healthy snack items: search the web for "healthy snacks" or get out that calorie/fat/sodium index and write down a number of choices for low-calorie, low-fat, and low-sodium snacks. Yes, believe it or not, there are a number of them. The longer the list, the better your chances are of choosing a "healthy snack" when temptation rolls around.
2. Post this list on the inside of your kitchen cabinet door so you can reference it when you are hungry.
3. Get proactive and finally throw out all of that offending food you have around the house, don't save it for the kids or for company or for your partner. Just remove the temptation and replace the bad food with healthy alternatives: cheese sticks, low-calorie crackers, fruit, veggies, low-fat yogurt, low-calorie jello/pudding, etc. All your available choices will then fall under the "good-for-you" category.
4. Drink coffee, decaf, tea, seltzer or flavored (low-calorie) water with your healthy snack. Many find that a tall cup of Java works as a great appetite suppressant – just make sure it's not one of those drinks with a fancy name.
5. Get active: Do anything that doesn't involve sitting down. Clean your closet, iron, do yoga stretches, put on make-up, fix your hair, shave your legs, dust or walk around the block. Physical activity not only gets you away from the snack stash, but it burns calories as well.
6. Keep a journal of your struggles by stating your problem, writing down possible solutions, and then writing about the outcomes you might expect from change. It is surprising how often people can solve difficult problems just by writing things out on a piece of paper and reviewing what's there.
7. Contemplate the following: If you cut 300 calories from your daily diet, how many calories would you cut each year? What is the equivalent in pounds? How much would you save at the grocery store each week? Each year? Hint: For an estimate, figure out what percentage 300 is of your total daily calorie intake and subtract that percentage from your weekly grocery bill. Multiply by 52 and imagine what you could buy!
8. Now it's time to get your snacking on track! •



about kathleen...

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