



DRUG & GIFT SHOP
444 So. Flower, Ste 100
Los Angeles, Ca 90071
213-612-4300
www.uptowndrugs.com

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Snack Your Way To A Better Diet

You're most likely snacking more these days—and probably not on carrots and celery sticks. Americans' snack intake has increased steadily over the last three decades. Today, three out of four adults eat at least one snack every day. Since many of those snacks are high-calorie, high-fat foods, nutrition experts are concerned that snacking may be canceling out other improvements in American eating habits, such as lower intakes of high-fat dairy and red meat, according to an analysis of U.S. Department of Agriculture data reported in the *Journal of Preventive Medicine*.

WEIGHT AND APPETITE

Is the rise in snacking contributing to the soaring rate of obesity in the U.S., or is eating many "mini-meals" a day a good way to control your weight? There's research supporting both ideas. One theory is that snacking throughout the day may keep you from getting too hungry and eating more than necessary at meals. And some studies support the notion that snacking results in lower calorie intake at the next full meal.

But other studies show that many lean and obese people who snack end up consuming as many calories at the next meal as people who don't snack—and sometimes more. So frequent snacking makes sense as a weight-loss strategy only if you stay within your total daily calorie allowance. "Think of snacks as part of your whole meal plan, not add-ons," says Connie Diekman, a registered dietician and spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association.

For people with small appetites, who have trouble getting all the nutrients they need, frequent snacks can help maintain a balanced diet. The after-school snack of childhood serves an important purpose: children eat smaller amounts at meals, so they need to refuel more

often. The technique of smaller portions and more-frequent meals can also work for adults who experience waning appetites and those who find it difficult to prepare and eat large meals.



SMART SNACKING

Here are some tips for enjoying snacks while maintaining a healthful eating strategy:

- 🍏 **Be prepared.** Snacking is often spontaneous, spurred by a sudden craving. If you keep healthy foods on hand, you'll be more likely to choose wisely when a snack attack strikes. Aim for a variety of healthy options, like fresh and dried fruits and vegetables and whole-grain products.
- 🍏 **Price matters.** It's often true that healthy food costs more than junk, and that does influence choices. In one study researchers stocked vending machines with low-fat snacks like raisins and rice cakes, along with fattier fare such as potato chips and cookies. When they reduced the prices of the low-fat options, sales rose: slashing prices 50 percent created a 93 percent increase in low-fat snack sales. Cut your food costs by shopping for fresh produce in season, stocking up when healthy items are on sale, and bringing snacks rather than buying at fast food and convenience stores or vending machines.
- 🍏 **Choose real food.** "People may think of snacks as consisting only of 'snack foods' like chips," says Diekman. Instead, choose real rather than processed foods, and try healthier alternatives to what you're craving: a baked potato rather than potato chips or low-fat or nonfat yogurt instead of ice cream.

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Let's Talk

By: Dr. Christine Gonzalez,
Integrative Pharmacist

Probiotics are the Good Guys

Seen the latest commercial or advertisement for Dannon Activia? This is a great example of the increasing trend in functional foods to hit the market place. It

has brought the health benefits of probiotics to everyone's attention. Most importantly, these include protecting your gut and supporting your immune system. At Uptown, we believe many patients will benefit from a quality probiotic supplement. And of course, we have done our research to find high-quality brands for you. So if you are taking a course of antibiotics, experiencing frequent urinary tract or yeast infections, or battling indigestion, keep on reading...

Simply put, probiotics are the "good bacteria". They are part of the normal gut flora that helps to maintain balance in your gastrointestinal (GI) tract. Acidophilus is the most well known. When not kept in check, "bad bacteria" (or yeast such as Candida) can overgrow and cause infections or digestive problems. Life in modern society constantly exposes us to large amounts of stress, toxins, and medications that can compromise our healthy gut flora. You may be surprised to hear that it can take up to three months for normal gut flora to recover after a single course of antibiotics! Many antibiotic side-effects are actually caused by this imbalance.

The way probiotics work is by competing for attachment sites in the GI tract. They basically keep the bad guys from taking over. Other actions include production of digestive enzymes, vitamins B and K, and compounds that stop the growth of disease-causing organisms. But how do

probiotics help your immune system? About 60-70% of your immune system cells are associated with your GI tract, so it makes sense that a healthy gut keeps you healthy. As an added bonus, some patients have reported a decrease in colds, flus, and even cold-sore breakouts when taking a regular probiotic supplement.

Since it may be difficult to get the health benefits from food sources alone, a probiotic supplement may be necessary. These provide higher dosages in capsules, powders, and drinks. At Uptown, we carry high-quality brands such as Vinco and Florajen in easy to swallow capsules (most people need only 1-2 per day). So if you are taking antibiotics, frustrated with urinary tract or yeast infections, or have bothersome indigestion, feel free to ask us how a probiotics may benefit you. As the staff Integrative Pharmacist, I am always available for questions or support. At Uptown, our mission is to provide our customers with solutions for improving their health.

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Thoughts

- Before you criticize someone, you should walk a mile in their shoes. That way, when you criticize them, you're a mile away and you have their shoes.
- If at first you don't succeed, skydiving is not for you.
- Never test the depth of the water with both feet.
- There are two theories to arguing with women. Neither one works.
- Experience is something you don't get until just after you need it.
- A closed mouth gathers no foot.





Hints from JoAnn

- Wilting Vegetables. Remove brown edges of vegetables and sprinkle with water. Wrap in a towel and pop into the refrigerator for about an hour. Or, dip quickly in hot water, then ice water with a small amount of cider vinegar added.
- Stopping Boil-Overs. Spaghetti will not boil over or stick together if you add a small piece of butter or a few teaspoons of oil to the water. The same holds true for rice.
- Soft Butter. Soften butter by grating it. Or, heat a small pan and place it upside down over the butter dish for several minutes.
- Un-molding Gelatin. Rinse the mold pan in cold water and coat with salad oil. The oil will give the gelatin a nice luster and it will easily fall out of the mold.
- Ice Cream Saver. Buy bulk quantities of ice cream and pack in small margarine containers. These provide

individual servings and save freezer space.

- Lemon Juice Tip. When a small amount of lemon juice is needed, insert a skewer into the lemon rind and squeeze juice out. The lemon will stay fresher longer than if it were cut.
- Rid Yourself of Excess Fat. Remove fat from stews or soups by refrigerating and eliminating fat as it rises and hardens on the surface. Or add lettuce leaves to the pot--the fat will cling to them. Discard lettuce before serving.
- Tasty Carrots. Adding sugar and horseradish to cooked carrots improves their flavor.
- Chip Tip. Top casseroles with potato chip crumbs. They can also be added to salads immediately before serving.
- Separated Eggs. Use a small funnel to easily separate the egg white from the yolk. The yolk will remain in the funnel while the white will fall through.
- Perfect Noodles. When cooking noodles, bring required amount of water to a boil, add noodles, turn heat off and allow to stand for 30 minutes. This prevents over boiling and the chore of stirring. Noodles won't stick to the pan with this method.

How to Sell a Car by Owner

When you're getting a new car, you can often get more money for your old car by selling it yourself than by trading it in. Or perhaps you simply have a car that you're not using anymore, so it makes sense to sell it and get some extra cash rather than just letting it sit around. No matter what the circumstances, it's not too difficult to sell a car if you take the time to do it correctly. This means setting a fair price, advertising efficiently and being ready to negotiate.

Step One

Set a fair price for your car. When you sell a car as an owner, you will be competing with other owners as well as dealerships. You can make your car more attractive by making sure that it's priced fairly and reasonably. Check its resale value on the Kelly Blue Book site, then check sales sites such as Autotrader and Autobytel to see what similar vehicles are selling for in your area. Use all these figures to set your own price, and leave a little room for negotiation.

Step Two

Detail your car or have it done professionally. First impressions are important, and can mean the difference between impressing a potential buyer and turning him off. A clean, shiny car gives the impression that it has been well cared for, which will make it more attractive to buyers.

Step Three

Gather all of your maintenance and repair receipts and put them in a handy place, such as the glove compartment, so you can easily show them to potential buyers. Being able to

show that the car has had regular oil changes and other services will prove to the buyer that it has been cared for properly. Showing repair receipts will back up any claims, such as "This car has brand new brakes" or "The transmission was just repaired last fall."

Step Four

Write ad text that emphasizes your car's best points, and take some flattering photographs. Imagine everything you'd want to hear as a buyer, and work that into the ad. Are you the original owner of this car? Does it still have some time left on its warranty? Did you change its oil every three months like clockwork? All of these are selling points that should be included in the ad text.

Step Five

Place the ad on websites like Auto Trader and Autobytel. You may also wish to advertise in your local newspaper or car sales publication.

Step Six

Take the car for a test drive. When a potential buyer comes out to look at your car, try to convince her to take a test drive. This is a ploy used with great success at dealerships. When a potential buyer actually drives the car, she starts to feel a sense of ownership, which makes it easier to close the sale.

Step Seven

Be open to negotiation. People want to feel like they're getting a bargain, especially when they're purchasing a car. If you've built some wiggle room into your price, you'll be able to do a little back and forth to close the sale.

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🍏 Beware of low-fat pretenders. Low-fat or fat-free snacks may be high in calories, sugar, and sodium. Be sure to read the ingredient lists and nutrition facts on snack foods.

🍏 Pick one: quality or quantity. If you know you can't stop with just a little chocolate or a few chips, choose a snack like air-popped popcorn that offers more mouthfuls for the calories.

🍏 Control portions. Keep calories in check by measuring out a snack serving rather than eating out of the package. Avoid supersize anything, and split portions with others or doggy-bag the extra.

🍏 Eat for pleasure. Whenever you eat a snack or meal, take the time to really enjoy the food you've chosen—be it celery sticks or a chocolate bar—rather than eating on the run. When you have the urge to snack, stop to consider whether you're really hungry or just bored, stressed, or eating out of habit.

🍏 Keep track. A written record of what you eat every day will help you pinpoint where your calories are coming from and adjust accordingly if necessary. That's also a good way to find out if you're eating enough from every food group.

The mini-meal approach

Combine foods from different food groups in your snacks: Try snacking on low-fat yogurt with some whole-grain cereal and a banana mixed in. And consider what you will eat—or have eaten—throughout the day; then use snacks to fill the gaps of healthful foods you're missing.

Use some of these mini-meal menus from the American Dietetic Association as inspiration:

🍏 Raisin bagel with fat-free cream cheese and an orange.

🍏 Baked tortilla chips with salsa and green and red pepper slices.

🍏 Tortilla wrap containing sliced lean turkey, lettuce, tomatoes, and fat-free mayonnaise.

Don't toss unused prescriptions down the toilet

They could seep into drinking water and harm the environment. To safely dispose of prescription medications: Remove the pills or liquid from the original container, and mix them with used coffee grounds, cat litter or another undesirable substance to prevent a child or pet from ingesting them. Put the combination in a nondescript, impermeable container, such as a jar or sealable bag, and seal it. Throw the container in the trash. Alternative: Go to a pharmaceutical take-back site, which allows consumers to return drugs for safe disposal. Search for these locations at <http://earth911.com>.

Schedule Your Flu Shots

Beginning the end of September, Uptown Drug will begin administering flu shots to its patrons. Don't wait until it is too late!



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