



FCS Spring Newsletter

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Wharton County

Snacking Your Way to Good Health

It's a new year, and many people have goals to make this one healthy! Snacks are a big part of a healthy eating plan, and if you choose wisely, snacks can help you reach your health goals.

"Too often, people grab calorie-dense snacks, such as chips or a cookie, because they are hungry between meals," says Texas A&M AgriLife Extension agent Bethany Jackson. However, if you plan ahead, you can have a variety of healthy and nutritious snacks ready to grab and go. Choosing healthy snacks from the grains, fruit, vegetables, dairy, and protein food groups can boost your energy between meals and keep your hunger in check so you don't overeat at meal time. In fact, you can think of snacks as "mini-meals" and view them as opportunities to eat more fruits, vegetables, and calcium-rich dairy foods, which are often under-consumed by Americans.

It's no secret that many people are trying to lose weight. Therefore, there are a few tips you should follow when choosing to include snacks into your day. First, most people do not need more than one or two snacks per day. You should never snack if

you are not hungry, and always avoid the urge to eat if you are bored, stressed, worried, or angry. Next, if you do choose to include snacks in your day, keep snacks to less than 200 calories, and be sure that you do not exceed the total number of calories you need. To help you control snack portions, measure out your foods, or choose foods that are pre-portioned, such as yogurt or canned fruit. Some stores even offer snacks that are pre-packaged in 100-calorie portions.



Many foods make great snacks! Some snacks may just be a single food, such as an apple or popcorn, while others maybe a combination of foods from several food groups, such as fat-free yogurt with fresh berries. Whatever snack you choose, be sure that you choose foods low in

solid fat, salt, and added sugar, but high in nutrients and fiber. When planning your snacks, you'll need to consider whether you need access to a refrigerator to safely store your snack foods. Here are a few ideas for healthy snacks:

Whole wheat crackers and low fat cheese;

Fresh vegetables, such as cucumbers and cherry tomatoes, with low-fat salad dressing;

Fruits canned in their own juice, such as pineapple or pears;

"Grab and Go" fresh fruits, such as bananas, apples, and peaches;

Nuts, such as almonds or walnuts;

Granola bars;

Low-fat popcorn;

Peanut butter and celery sticks; and

Bell peppers and hummus.

Whichever snack you choose, remember to keep it healthy and low in calories!

Egg Handling and Safety Tips at Easter

There are some important safe handling methods to remember this time of year when you're decorating, cooking or hiding Easter eggs since eggs are handled a great deal more than usual around Easter. Remember to:

- ☼ Wash your hands thoroughly with hot soapy water and rinse them before handling the eggs when cooking, cooling, dyeing and hiding them.
- ☼ Be sure and inspect the eggs before purchasing them, making sure they are not dirty or cracked. Dangerous bacteria may enter a cracked egg.
- ☼ Store eggs in their original cartons in the refrigerator rather than the refrigerator door.
- ☼ If you're have an Easter egg hunt, consider hiding places carefully. Avoid areas where the eggs might come into contact with pets, wild animals, birds, reptiles, insects or lawn chemicals.
- ☼ Make sure you find all the eggs you've hidden and then refrigerate them promptly. Discard cracked eggs.
- ☼ As long as the eggs are NOT out of refrigeration over two hours,

they will be safe to eat. Do not eat eggs that have been out of refrigeration more than two hours. Refrigerate hard-cooked eggs in their shells and use them within 1 week. If you are planning to use colored eggs as decorations, where the eggs will be out of refrigeration for many hours or several days, discard them after they have served their decorative purpose.

Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Poultry & Egg Division

Spring Monthly Observances:

- *March-National Nutrition Month*
- *March 24-American Diabetes Alert Day*
- *April-Alcohol Awareness Month*
- *April 7-World Health Day*
- *May-National Physical Fitness and Sports Month*
- *May 6-National Bike to School Day*

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
Wharton County
Bethany Jackson, CEA-FCS

315 E. Milam, Ste. 112
Wharton, TX, 77488

Phone: 979-532-3310

Fax: 979-532-8863

E-mail: bethany.jackson@ag.tamu.edu



Strawberry Walnut Salad

This Strawberry Walnut Salad is perfect for Spring and very versatile! You may add chicken, use pecans instead of walnuts, or use gorgonzola in place of feta.

Strawberry Walnut Salad

1/2 c. walnuts

4 c. fresh spinach, roughly chopped

1 1/2 c. fresh strawberries, sliced

3 T honey

2 T spicy brown mustard

1/4 c. balsamic vinegar

1/4 t sea salt

1/4 c. crumbled feta

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Place walnuts on a rimmed baking sheet and bake until fragrant and toasted, about 8 minutes. Transfer to plate to cool.

Toss the spinach with the strawberries in a large bowl. In a small bowl, whisk together the honey, mustard, vinegar, and salt. Drizzle 3/4 of the dressing over the salad and sprinkle the walnuts on top. Serve sprinkled with cheese and with the remaining dressing on the side.

www.doctoroz.com/recipe



Prom Time is Almost Here-Does Your Teen Want to Tan?

Prom Time Is Almost Here—Does Your Teen Want a Tan?

Prom time is almost here, and that means thousands of teens are hitting the tanning salons to get that perfect tan for that important night. But before your teen gets a tan, consider this: tanning isn't as healthy as it looks.

Tanning beds have been marketed as a 'safe' alternative to sunbathing outdoors; however, tanning is actually an unhealthy habit. In spite of popular beliefs, tanning salons may not be a good alternative to tanning in the sun, say experts from the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas. Research from the American Cancer Society indicates:

Women who visit a tanning salon at least once a month have a 55 percent greater risk of developing melanoma—the most serious type of skin cancer—than women who don't go to tanning salons.

For women age 20–29, the risk of developing melanoma is two and a half times greater if they visit tanning salons at least once a month than for women who don't go to tanning salons.

Do you still think it's okay for your son or daughter to visit a tanning salon or to lay outside to get that "perfect tan"? Tanning, whether outdoors or indoors, is caused by UV-A (ultraviolet-A) radiation. This radiation causes damage at an even deeper level than a sunburn and changes underlying skin structure in a way that can lead to skin cancer at a later time. Since UV-A damages the skin at a deeper level, it took scientists longer to determine that it did cause changes that could be precancerous. That is why tanning beds were once marketed as being safe—science had not caught up to them.

Current figures from the American Cancer Society show twice as many cases of melanoma in Americans than were reported 30 years ago, and the numbers are still going up. Researchers are looking for a science-based alternative way to tan safely. In the meantime, tanning salons advertise a "base tan" that can offer protection from sunburns, and young women seem to be buying it. A recent study showed that by age 19, nearly half (47 percent) of white women had used a tanning booth three or more times.

"There's a whole tanning industry that's trying to promote ultraviolet exposure as a good thing, and that's a problem," says Dr. Martin Weinstock, chair

of the American Cancer Society's skin cancer advisory group. The problem is because the radiation that causes tanning also causes deep skin changes that can lead to skin cancer.

A tan is a sign of skin that has been injured. And this kind of injury accumulates, so every suntan further damages the skin. In addition, tans speed up the aging process and increase the risk of skin cancer. You don't wish old-looking skin on your son or daughter at a younger age. If you were a "sun worshiper" in your younger days, think about how your skin might look better if you hadn't tanned. You have influence over your children's behaviors. You could also be saving your child from developing some kind of skin cancer in the future. This year alone, about 2,200 people will die of nonmelanoma skin cancer, and 7,400 will die of melanoma. One day, your child could be a part of these statistics.

If your son or daughter would like a little more color in their skin, promote a safer alternative and try one of the many self-tanning lotions on the market. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas encourage you to take charge of your child's health now, which will lead to a healthier tomorrow.

Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners courts of Texas Cooperating