



Coos County Extension Family & Community Development NewsTips

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OSU Extension
FCD Faculty

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Having A Snack Attack?

Having a snack attack? With obesity rates going up, some people doubt if we should snack between meals at all. But healthful snacking can be simple and help you eat for lower cancer risk and a healthy weight.

Many people 'graze' throughout the day, eating perhaps six small snack-sized meals instead of three regular meals. If that works for you because of a busy schedule or because you simply don't like larger meals, it can be done healthfully. It depends, of course, on how many calories and what foods you eat. The way you approach snacking can make a difference, too. Here are some strategies.

Eat slowly and savor the taste.....Pay attention to enjoying your snack. Are you snacking while watching TV or reading the newspaper? If so, give yourself time to figure out if only a bite or two will satisfy your craving. The signal of feeling full takes a few minutes to reach the brain.

Don't eat from the package.....First, look at the nutrition label to find out how big the serving size is. How many calories are in a serving? How many servings can you afford to eat based on your activity level? Serve yourself a reasonable portion in a bowl or on a plate. Divide the rest into individual portions and store in small plastic bags. Keep munchies out of sight in cabinets or drawers.

Go for nutritional value.....On packaged items, compare nutrition labels to find lower calorie, fat, sugar and sodium content. Even "health bars" that are marketed as nutritious can have a great deal of fat and sugar. Whole-wheat pretzels and baked chips are better choices than full-fat chips and puffs, but eat them in moderation. Grab a bunch of grapes, a crunchy apple or a cup of whole-grain cereal to satisfy your hunger. Thoughtful snacking on healthful foods like these is easy and satisfying.



Source: American Institute for Cancer Research, Winter 2004

--Low-Carb Food Case Studies--

Why You Shouldn 't Focus On Just One Nutrient

Compare Pasta Sauce:

	Ragu Carb Options	Enrico's*
Calories	80	45
Fat	4.5 g	0
Sodium	540 mg	20 mg
Carbohydrate	7 g	11 g
Protein	2 g	2 g

*No added salt

Compare Ice Cream:

	Carb Smart Vanilla	Low-fat Vanilla*
Calories	130	90
Fat	9 g	1.5 g
Saturated fat	6 g	1 g

*Breyer's

per serving. When it comes to choosing pasta sauce, the focus should be on fat and sodium, not carbohydrate. In our example, the Carb Options sauce has 27 times more sodium than the sauce without added salt. FMI see www.carboptions.com, they have other foods, in this brand, too.

- *Low-Carb Ice Cream* – If you are looking for a way to enjoy your favorite treat with fewer calories, don't fall for low-carb options without investigating the Nutrition Facts label first. In many cases, these products are not the lowest in calories in their class and they are high in saturated fat. Low-fat is usually a better option for lower-calories as in our example above. Of course with these treats, the biggest concern after choosing the lowest-calorie product should be portion control. A half-cup serving should be measured. If it is served in a smaller bowl with fruit it looks like a bigger serving!

The definition of nutrition is, "The process of nourishing or being nourished, especially the process by which a living organism assimilates food and uses it for growth and for replacement of tissues." This sounds simple, but in reality, especially in the U.S., nutrition is a very complicated subject. It is best to think of a diet as you would a budget on a spreadsheet. When you add or take away one item, you affect the bottom line as well as other numbers on that sheet. Popular fad diets would like to have you think that eliminating one of the macronutrients, e.g., carbohydrates, from your diet would help you lose weight. They are right in the fact that

eliminating many of the refined carbohydrates currently consumed by Westernized countries can help lower weight. But instead of replacing these foods with protein and fat, they should be replaced with more healthful, high-fiber foods. There are many carbohydrates, such as fruits, vegetables, beans, whole grains and low-fat dairy products, that actually help you feel more full on fewer calories. Furthermore, the fiber, nutrients and phytochemicals these contain are beneficial. Take a look at many of the new low-carb products that are springing up in grocery stores and restaurants everywhere. Compare them to regular versions and see if they are really lower in

calories, fat, saturated fat and sodium. Here are a few examples we have found and would like to mention for label-reading lessons:

- *Pasta Sauce – Ragu Brand Carb Options* touts, "5 g net carbs per serving, sweetened with Splenda." Initially we thought that pasta sauce being sweetened with Splenda could be a good idea since this sweetener has been used successfully in many other products to lower calories. But the label proved us wrong! Take a look at the box above and you will see that the low-carb option is almost double the calories of a fat-free pasta sauce. The Ragu Carb Options brand has added fat to lower the amount of carbohydrate



Food Labels Under Scrutiny In Fight Against Obesity

Food labels can help consumers choose foods with nutrients that they need for good health. Information on calories per serving is helpful for people who are trying to avoid weight gain. Unfortunately, this information may be misinterpreted if the package or container has more than one serving (such as beverages).

To help tackle the nation's growing obesity epidemic, the Food and Drug Administration's Obesity Working Group has made recommendations to strengthen food labeling. This includes accurately portraying serving sizes.

According to a newly released FDA report, counting calories is critical for achieving and maintaining a healthy weight. The report highlights FDA's strategy for providing accurate, helpful information that consumers can use to make wise choices at home, at supermarkets, and in restaurants.

The report makes several recommendations. One of these is to enhance the food label to display calorie count more prominently and to use more meaningful serving sizes. Increasing type size or adding the number of calories for the whole package might be considered. The public will be given an opportunity to comment on approaches for revision of the "Nutrition Facts Panel".

The FDA would increase its focus on enforcing accurate serving-size declarations on food labels. Manufacturers would be advised if there are apparent errors in serving sizes.

Defining terms such as "low", "reduced", or "free" carbohydrates is another recommendation. This was prompted by consumer interest in low-carbohydrate diets.

Another recommendation is to encourage manufacturers to use dietary guidance statements on labels, such as "To manage your weight, balance the calories you eat with your physical activity; have a carrot, not the carrot cake; or have cherry yogurt, not cherry pie."

Allowing health claims on certain foods that meet FDA's definition of "reduced" or "low" calorie also would be considered. An example might be "Diets low in calories may reduce the risk of obesity, which is associated with Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and certain cancers."

The Obesity Working Group recommended focusing FDA's consumer education strategy on the "Calories Count" message. FDA would work with private- and public-sector partners, including youth-oriented organizations, to give consumers a better understanding of the food label and how to use it to make healthier food choices.

Encouraging the restaurant industry to launch a national, voluntary effort to include nutritional information for consumers at point of sale is another recommendation. Such information would help consumers make healthier and lower calorie choices outside the home, where Americans now spend nearly half their total food budget.

The report also recommends strengthening the coordination of research on obesity and on development of healthier, lower calorie foods with other government agencies and the private sector.



Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 2 crackers (14 g)	
Servings Per Container About 21	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 60	Calories from Fat 15
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 1.5g	2%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 70mg	3%
Total Carbohydrate 10g	3%
Dietary Fiber Less than 1g	3%
Sugars 0g	
Protein 2g	
Vitamin A 0%	Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 0%	Iron 2%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:	
	Calories: 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Sat Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2400mg 2400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g



Source: Carolyn Raab, Extension Food and Nutrition Specialist, Oregon State University, June, 2004.

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<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/coos>

—Food Preservation Workshops—

20 May

Jams & Jellies

1-3 pm Myrtle Point Extension office
6-8 pm Gloria Dei Church Kitchen

17 June

Drying & Freezing

1-3 pm Myrtle Point Extension Office
6-8 pm Gloria Dei Church Kitchen

OSU Extension Family & Food Education community food preservation workshops introduce you to fun and healthy ways to preserve and prepare food for your family. This workshop will be offered at Coos County OSU Extension office in Myrtle Point and in Coos Bay at the Gloria Dei Church. For more information and to pre-register, please contact *Rhonda* at Coos County OSU Extension Service at 541-572-5263 or 1-800-730-4978.