

Energy Bars - Are They For You?

There are many energy bars on supermarket and convenience store shelves. They are sold as a snack for most everyone too busy to eat. But are they for you?

Before buying an energy bar, ask yourself these questions:

1. Are you watching your calories and fat?

If you said, “yes,” read the “Nutrition Facts” label. The larger the bar, the more calories you will get. As far as fat goes, look for about 5 grams or less per bar.

2. Do you need what the bar is “selling?”

Some energy bars have extra vitamins or minerals (sometimes they are labeled “fortified”). If you want to, choose an energy bar with no more than 100% of each vitamin or mineral in the bar. Check the “Nutrition Facts” label for this information. What if the bar has herbs or other ingredients? Usually there isn’t enough in the bar to be good or bad for you.

3. Are they worth the price?

Energy bars are expensive. For example, you can buy 8 cereal bars for the cost of one energy bar! If you are looking for quick snacks for during the day, consider foods are part of your regular, daily diet like breakfast cereal in a bag, pretzels, yogurt, crackers and cheese, raisins and nuts or fresh fruit.

References: 1. Kendall, Pat. “Are Energy Bars All They’re Cracked Up to Be?,” Colorado State University Cooperative Extension,
<http://www.colostate.edu/Depts/CoopExt/PUBS/COLUMNNN/n991103.html>

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