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Choosing Healthy Snacks

BY GREEN SHOOT MEDIA

In the whirlwind of modern living, maintaining a nutritious diet can be a challenge.

However, with a little planning and smart choices, healthy snacking can seamlessly fit into your on-the-go lifestyle. Seek out nourishing snacks that promote mindful eating and keep you energized throughout your day.

Healthy snacking is more than just filling the gap — it's about giving your body the sustenance it needs to thrive. By embracing nourishing options that align with your busy lifestyle, you're making a conscious choice to make your health a high priority, one snack at a time.

Every snack is an opportunity to infuse your day with energy and vitality. Whether you are tackling meetings, juggling errands or simply embracing the day, let your snacks be a source of nourishment that propels



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you forward with strength and wellness.

Smart Snacking

Fresh fruits like apples, bananas and grapes are portable and packed with vitamins, fiber and natural sugars. Pair individual nut butter packets with whole-grain crackers or apple slices for a satisfying blend of protein and healthy fats.

Opt for single-serving containers of Greek yogurt. They're rich in protein, calcium and probiotics. You can turn it into a parfait by adding layers of granola and mixed berries.

Create your own trail mix with a mix of nuts, seeds, dried fruits and a touch of dark chocolate for an energy-boosting combo.

Pre-cut vegetables like carrots, cucumber and bell peppers, paired with a small container of hummus, offer a balanced and crunchy snack. You can also cut celery sticks and fill them with peanut butter which can promote feelings of fullness.

Prepare a batch of hard-boiled eggs for a protein-packed, portable snack that curbs hunger.

Portable and portion-controlled, string cheese offers protein and calcium on the go.

Grab some whole-grain bars that have minimal added sugars and whole-food ingredients for a convenient snack option.

Roasted chickpeas are a great source of fiber and have an impressive nutrient profile. They're filled with vitamins and minerals and are high in folate, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, copper and manganese.

Create turkey roll-ups by laying out a slice of

turkey breast. Layer on top of it your favorite cheese, a pickle, cucumber and a tomato slice. Roll it into a wrap. Snacks like this that are low in carbs and high in protein can improve blood sugar levels and regulate appetite.

Other options can include cheese slices, baked tofu, cottage cheese, roasted watermelon seeds, canned salmon or tuna, chia pudding, edamame, lentil salad, overnight oats and seasoned popcorn.

Preparing Ahead of Time

Spend a few minutes prepping snacks for the week. Wash and cut fruits and vegetables, portion out nuts and assemble snack packs. Invest in reusable containers that keep snacks fresh and prevent squishing. Mason jars, bento boxes and small airtight containers are great options. Carry a reusable water bottle to sip on throughout the day.

Avoid mindless munching by listening to your body and practicing portion control. Tune in to your hunger cues. Snack when you're genuinely hungry, not out of boredom or stress. Even with healthy snacks, portion control is key.





Jenny Ernsberger jernsberger@kpcmedia.com General Manager

Ann Saggars asaggars@kpcmedia.com Print & Design Manager

Stevie Lockridge slockridge@kpcmedia.com Special Sections Graphic Designer

> Sue Carpenter scarpenter@kpcmedia.com Special Sections Editor

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES
Mitch Anderson
Lisa Burnett
Michele Trowbridge
Machele Waid

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Nurture Your Health with Water

BY GREEN SHOOT MEDIA

It's easy to forget one of the simplest yet most vital aspects of self-care: Staying hydrated.

Our bodies demand attention and care and hydration is a significant part of that. Each sip of water nurtures your body's vitality. By integrating simple practices, we embark on a journey toward enhanced well-being — one refreshing gulp at a time.

Water is the elixir of life and its importance cannot be overstated. It maintains bodily functions, facilitating digestion, circulation, temperature regulation and even cognitive performance. Water provides cells with the fluids it needs to keep the body operating smoothly.

Practical Tips

The Mayo Clinic recommends that men drink 15 ½ cups of water per day and that women drink 11 1/2 cups per day. Penn Medicine recommends that you drink between a half ounce and an ounce of water for every pound that you weigh.

Set reminders on your

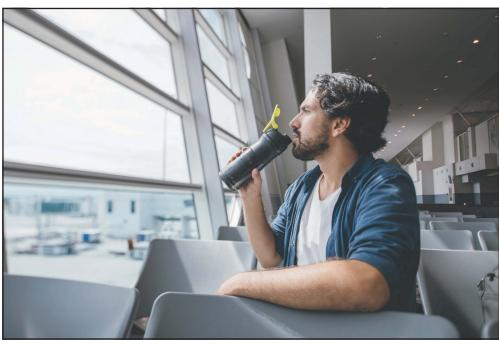
phone or calendar to prompt you to drink throughout the day. Carry a reusable bottle that you keep within arm's reach no matter where you are. If plain water feels bland, infuse it with slices of fruit, vegetables or other flavors. This adds a burst of flavor without any added sugars or artificial ingredients.

Create rituals that incorporate hydration into your routines. Drink a glass of water when you first wake up, before a meal and before bed. This mindful approach ensures consistent intake. If you're worried about whether you are drinking enough, monitor your urine color. Light yellow means you are properly hydrated while dark yellow may signal the need for more fluids.

Benefits

Staying hydrated goes beyond quenching thirst. It offers several health benefits.

Dehvdration can lead to fatigue and decreased energy levels while adequate hydration can keep you feeling vibrant and ready to tackle your day. Drinking



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water supports cognitive function, enhancing your focus, memory and overall mental acuity.

Water aids in digestion, promoting the movement of nutrients and waste through the digestive tract. This can help prevent issues like constipation. Staying hydrated optimizes physical performance by

regulating body temperature and supporting muscle function.

Drinking water even affects how you look and feel. Hydration contributes to healthy, glowing skin. Well-hydrated skin appears more plump and vibrant, minimizing the appearance of fine lines. Lack of water can affect mood and lead to

irritability. Keep drinking lots of water to support emotional well-being and help maintain a positive outlook.

The benefits of hydration are within reach. With every sip you are helping to ensure your body focuses at its best. Stay hydrated, stay healthy and relish in the wellness that flows from within.

Eat More Greens

BY GREEN SHOOT MEDIA

Adding more fruits and vegetables to your diet is a simple and fun way to begin your healthy living process. It's also a little change that will help ease your way into better habits.

Add Fruits and Vegetables

Fruits and vegetables are low in calories and are packed with nutrients, vitamins, mineral and antioxidants that will help your body stay healthy and make you feel good. Helpguide.org says you should be eating is a least five servings of fruit and vegetables per day.

This can be seem like

a lot, but with the proper food prepping you can build upon this maybe eat more than five servings. A serving is half a cup of raw fruits or vegetables or can also be measured at a small apple or banana.

Helpguide.org also shares some tips on ways you can increase your intake:

- Add antioxidant-rich berries to your favorite breakfast cereal.
- Eat a medley of sweet fruit such as oranges, mangoes, pineapples or grapes for dessert.
- Swap your usual rice or pasta side dish for a colorful salad.
 - · Instead of eating

processed snack foods, snack on vegetables such as carrots, snow peas or cherry tomatoes along with a spicy hummus dip or peanut butter.

Ways to Make Vegetables Tasty

Plain salads and steamed vegetables can be torture to eat day in and day out. It can be hard to keep up

a healthy diet if you don't enjoy the foods you are eating. Here's some tips from Helpguide.org on making vegetables tasty for you and

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Wellness Tourism

BY GREEN SHOOT MEDIA

Wellness tourism has emerged as a transformative escape.

Defined as travel with the primary purpose of promoting health and well-being through physical, psychological or spiritual activities, wellness tourism offers a holistic approach to rejuvenation.

Engaging in this mindful form of travel can bring forth a myriad of benefits, fostering a profound sense of balance and renewal.

Wellness tourism transcends the traditional notion of vacations focused solely on leisure and sightseeing. It involves intentional journeys that prioritize self-care, relaxation and personal growth. Wellness tourism experiences are designed to foster a sense of balance and help individuals reconnect with themselves in a serene and nourishing environment.

Examples of Wellness Tourism

Engage in wellness



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retreats set in natural surroundings. These retreats often include activities like yoga, meditation and hiking, allowing participants to reconnect with nature while promoting physical and mental well-being.

Choose accommodations that focus on wellness,

such as spa and wellness resorts. These destinations offer a range of therapeutic treatments, fitness activities and healthy dining options to nourish both body and soul.

Embark on mindfulness and meditation retreats, which provide an opportunity to disconnect from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. These retreats typically focus on cultivating mindfulness practices for stress reduction and mental clarity.

Explore destinations that offer cultural wellness experiences. This could

involve participating in traditional healing practices, learning about local wellness philosophies or engaging in community-based activities that promote a sense of belonging and well-being.

Opt for adventure and active wellness experiences. Activities like hiking, cycling or water sports can be both exhilarating and rejuvenating, providing a unique blend of physical activity and exploration.

Benefits of Wellness Tourism

Wellness tourism allows individuals to step away from the stressors of daily life, providing a mental and emotional reset. Immersing oneself in tranquil environments and engaging in calming activities fosters relaxation and stress reduction.

Spa treatments, fitness activities and nutritious meals contribute to physical well-being. Wellness tourism offers an opportunity to focus

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The link between physical activity and healthy weights

Anyone aspiring to lose weight is likely aware that there are no shortage of approaches promising to bust belly fat and slim waistlines. Weight loss fads come and go, but daily physical activity remains a reliable and effective approach to shedding extra

ounds.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that physical activity provides both short- and long-term benefits. Among the more long-term benefits of regular exercise is the link between physical activity and how it facilitates an individual's ability to maintain a healthy weight. Though people may experience some notable initial weight loss after they begin a fitness regimen, they also can maintain that weight loss if they remain committed to exercise over the long haul.

The CDC notes that more

physical activity increases the number of calories a body uses for energy. If individuals looking to turn over a healthier leaf couple a commitment to exercise with a healthier diet that includes consuming fewer calories, they can create a calorie deficit that ultimately contributes to weight loss.

The link between exercise and long-term weight loss is worth noting, as the

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METRO MEDIA CONNECTION

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the family.

- Add some color to your plain salad or steamed vegetables. Use sun-dried tomatoes, glazed carrots or beets, and some colorful peppers.
- You can also replace lettuce with other greens such as kale, arugula, spinach or Chinese cabbage.

• Satisfy your sweet tooth with carrots, beets, sweet potatoes and bell peppers.

Adding these vegetables will help satisfy your craving of flavor without ruining your healthy diet. Don't be afraid to mix in and try different types of greens to enhance your diet and your taste buds. Vegetables can be just as tasty as any snack you love if you take the time to learn to make them tasty.

Getting Good Sleep

BY GREEN SHOOT MEDIA

Getting good, quality sleep is essential to a healthy life. Not enough sleep can cause many mental and physical issues. Here are some tips to help you get better quality sleep at night.

Make a Sleep Schedule

You should sleep for no more than eight hours each night although the recommended amount for adults is seven hours. Most adults in the United States don't even sleep seven hours. Setting a sleep schedule begins with setting a time to go to bed and setting a time to wake up. Creating a sleep schedule also creates a sleep cycle in your body; being consistent will help your body's sleep cycle line up.

How to Fall asleep

Have you ever tossed and turned in bed struggling to sleep at night? If you don't fall asleep within 20 minutes of lying down in bed, leave your room and do something that relaxes you.

You can read a book, listen to soothing music or sit down and draw. As soon as you feel tired, go back to bed. Repeat this as many times as it takes for you to finally fall asleep. Do not watch television. Although this can be relaxing, it is easier to be tempted to stay up and watch what ever series you may be binging.

Limit Naps

If you ever find yourself tired throughout the day and feel the need to take a

nap, don't. Daytime naps can interfere with your sleep cycle, causing you to be wide awake at night. If you do need to take a nap, lay down for 30 minutes. Avoid napping if it's close to whatever time you are scheduled to go to bed.

Get Your Worries Out

Sometimes your thoughts and stress can keep you up at night. Try and get rid of those thoughts or worries by solving them or writing your feelings down into a journal to get them out of your head.

Find a relaxing activity such as reading, drawing or painting you can do close to when you are scheduled to sleep to help relax you and destress you.

WELLNESS

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on one's health through rejuvenating practices that promote vitality and energy.

Mindfulness practices, meditation and the serenity of wellness retreats contribute to mental clarity. The break from routine allows individuals to gain perspective, reduce mental clutter and enhance overall cognitive well-being.

Wellness tourism encourages a holistic approach to self-care. Participants can engage in activities that nurture their mind, body and spirit simultaneously, fostering a comprehensive sense of well-being.

Traveling with a focus on wellness provides opportunities for personal growth. Whether through mindfulness practices, self-reflection or embracing new cultural perspectives, wellness tourism can be a transformative journey of self-discovery.

Incorporating Wellness into Travel

Look for destinations known for their wellness offerings. Consider places with a variety of activities that align with your personal wellness goals.

Choose accommodations that prioritize wellness, such as eco-friendly resorts, spa retreats or boutique hotels with wellness-focused amenities.

Plan your itinerary with a balance of rejuvenating activities. Incorporate mindfulness practices, physical activities and cultural experiences that align with your wellness objectives.

Use wellness travel as an opportunity to disconnect from digital distractions and reconnect with yourself. Allow the experience to be a respite from the demands of technology and work.

Take time to reflect on your wellness journey. Consider how the experiences and practices can be integrated into your daily life for sustained well-being.



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Social Connections

BY GREEN SHOOT MEDIA

Nurturing meaningful relationships leads to healthier lives.

Human beings are inherently social creatures.

Throughout history, our ability to connect, communicate and form relationships has been essential to our survival and well-being. Today, in an increasingly digital and fast-paced world, the importance of social connections remains crucial.

Social connections enrich our experiences, provide support during challenges and offer a sense of belonging. While the digital age offers new avenues for connection, it is essential to strike a balance between online and offline interactions

As you nurture your social relationships, remember that building meaningful connections is an ongoing journey. It requires active listening, vulnerability and a genuine connection to fostering bonds with others. A socially rich life contributes significantly to mental, emotional and even physical well-being, making it a cornerstone of a happy and fulfilling existence.

Power of Connection

Social connections come in many forms, from family and close friends to colleagues and acquaintances. These relationships provide a sense of belonging, support and meaning in our lives.

Strong social relationships are linked to improved mental health. Interacting with others boosts



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feelings of happiness and reduces stress. Conversations and shared experiences offer opportunities for emotional expression and catharsis.

Social support acts as a buffer against life's challenges, improving our emotional resilience. When we face adversity, knowing we have a support network to rely on can enhance our ability to cope and bounce back from setbacks. It's not just our mental health, an active social life influences our physical health. Studies suggest that those with strong social ties tend to have stronger immune systems, lower blood pressure and better overall health.

Research consistently shows that people with robust social connec-

tions tend to live longer. The sense of purpose and fulfillment derived from relationships can extend our lifespan.

Fostering Connections

Building and maintaining meaningful relationships takes effort and intention.

Engage in active listening with others. Show genuine interest in their thoughts and feelings and ask open-ended questions. It's not about the number of friends or followers, but the quality of the relationships. Invest time and energy in a few close connections rather than spreading yourself thin. Participating in shared activities or hobbies can be an excellent way to connect with others

who have similar interests. Join clubs, classes or online communities related to your passions.

Being vulnerable and sharing your struggles and emotions can deepen connections. It allows others to relate to your experiences and encourages reciprocity. Don't wait for others to initiate contact. Reach out to friends, family or acquaintances and make plans to meet up or have a conversation.

Digital Dilemma

Technology has transformed the way we connect. While it offers opportunities for socialization, it can also pose challenges. Excessive screen time and shallow online interactions can lead to feelings of loneliness and isolation. To maintain a healthy balance, consider these tips:

- Aim for quality screen time. Prioritize meaningful online interactions such as video calls, online community participation or educational webinars over mindless scrolling.
- Set boundaries. Stick to screen time limits and allocate specific periods for digital interactions.
- Disconnect when necessary. Find time to focus on face-to-face interactions. Enjoy the beauty of the offline world.
- Practice mindful consumption. Be mindful of what you consume online. Surround yourself with positivity and avoid engaging in toxic discussions.

WEIGHTS

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CDC notes that research has found the only way to

maintain weight loss is to remain engaged in regular physical activity. Individuals attempting to lose weight for a particular reason, such as an upcoming wedding or a vacation, should know that exercise and a healthy diet can help them accomplish that goal. However, it's highly likely they will regain that weight if they do not



continue to exercise after reaching their target weight loss goal. If the thought of regaining lost pounds is not enough to compel people to maintain their commitment to exercise, and honor all the hard work and determination required to lose the weight, perhaps a rundown of health risks associated with being overweight or obese might provide the motivation necessary to stay the course. According to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, being overweight or obese increases a person's risk for a host of diseases and conditions, including:

Type 2 diabetes

- Hypertension (high blood pressure)
 - Heart disease
 - Stroke
 - Metabolic syndrome
 - Fatty liver diseases
- Certain types of cancer, including cancers of the breast, liver, kidney, pancreas, and ovaries, among others
 - Gout
 - Fertility problems
- Sexual function problems
- Mental health problems Routine physical activity is a great way to help people shed extra pounds so they can reach and maintain a healthy weight.

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All you need for a memorable night out

BY METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

A night out can be a welcome respite from the hustle and bustle of daily life. In fact, taking a break and heading out with friends can give people a sense of belonging and boost those feel-good neurotransmitters that keep us feeling happy.

According to a 2019 study found in PLOS One, an open access mega journal published by the Public Library of Science, social networks can influence health-related behaviors and have a positive impact on stress, attitude and self-assessed health perceptions. Human connection is at the core of what most people need to live healthy, satisfying lives. Therefore, regular nights out can provide a chance to laugh, let off steam and connect with others. Here are some ways to have memorable nights out with others.

Send invitations

It pays to give people ample notice of an upcoming evening out so they can plan their schedules accordingly. Waiting until the last minute to see if people want to hang can diminish turnout. Send a text around a week or two in advance to lock down the date and time. Better yet, make it a regular event, such as the last Thursday of

each month.

Don't hype things up

Labeling a night as the "best night ever" or a "party to remember" can quickly tamp down the fun in a flash. It's best to let the fun develop organically rather than putting a bunch of labels or expectations on the event.

Have an activity in mind

Certainly there are some friend groups that simply go on impromptu bar crawls and make magic along the way. But developing a general framework of what's to transpire can help. Identify an activity and go with it, such as a themed club night to dress up and listen to some different music. There are many options for theme nights, including 70s, 80s or 90s, as well as musical theater or movies, or specific genres of music.

Add a touch of adventure

Experiences with perceived risk or adversity can elevate the sense of enjoyment and camaraderie. While no one is condoning doing something illegal or dangerous, incorporating a bit of adventure into the night can bring about growth and make the experience worth talking about in the future. This may be a reason



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why escape rooms have grown in popularity. One idea is to explore a new city or town and let other tourists suggest places to visit. Don't stay in one place too long so the adventure keeps evolving.

Leave the driving to someone else

Adults may want to imbibe during a night out, and the safest way to avoid driving under the influence is to let a rideshare service or taxi transport participants where they need to go. Plus, cramming into a car together and heading to another destination can be part of the fun itself. According to Thought Catalog, a community storytelling outlet, driving can create stress and put a cap on the amount of fun you can have.

These are just a few components that can add up to a memorable night out with friends.

Your smile is often the first thing people notice

BY GREEN SHOOT MEDIA

Bad habits, however, can encourage the erosion of your enamel, undoing the good work of daily dental hygiene and regular visits to the dentist.

What It Is

Enamel acts as a protective coat for sensitive layers inside the tooth. Dental erosion is the loss of this of enamel caused by acids. Teeth begin to yellow when they succumb to this erosion: The white outer coating wears down and dentine — which is more pale — starts showing through.

The Causes

Tooth enamel briefly softens every time you ingest something acidic. Saliva then works to balance the mouth's acid content, eventually returning everything to a normal state. This happens with soft drinks, fruit juices, kombucha, teas, coffees and alcoholic drinks, among many other things. People dealing with reflux, morning sickness or bulimia may also have erosion issues because of the acid our stomachs. Those suffering from constant dry mouth are also at an increased risk.

Erosion happens when acidic intake is so often that the mouth doesn't have time to rebalance itself. The enamel begins to wear away.

What To Do

Cutting down on acidic things is the best advice, but coffee drinkers might revolt. So carefully avoid leaving acidic drinks in your mouth too long, or swishing them around. Instead, if possible, use a straw so that the liquid is quickly transported past the teeth toward the back of

your mouth. Drink water instead of juice or soft drinks. Avoid chewing vitamin C tab- lets. Eat fruit with meals instead of as a stand-alone snack. Finishing meals with milk or cheese will also help balance acids.

If you can't brush right

away, chew sugar-free gum since that will jumpstart the production of saliva.

Treatment Programs

Your dentist will monitor erosion issues during regular checkups, providing advice and solutions before any damage becomes permanent. Doctors can help with man- aging vomiting or

reflux. There are vitamin C supplements that are meant to be swallowed hole, rather than chewed. Typically, the tooth's lost surface will be replaced by fillings. In the most extreme cases, damaged teeth may need to be replaced with crowns or veneers. Contact a dental professional if you are growing concerned.



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