

# Eat Smart:

## Enjoy Healthier Snacks at Work

**Julie Garden-Robinson, Ph.D., R.D., L.R.D.,** Food and Nutrition Specialist  
**Shannon Medenwald,** Program Assistant (former)



Are you tempted by bowls of candy and trays of cookies at work? Say no to secondhand sweets, and think twice about the food you offer at meetings and around the office. Keep yourself and your co-workers energized with healthier snacks.

### Choose Wisely

Are you eating enough fruits, vegetables and whole grains? Use snacks to fill nutrition gaps. Eating small, frequent, healthy meals or snacks will keep your energy up and make you less likely to overeat at your next meal.

### Ask Yourself Some Questions

	Yes	No	Doesn't apply
Do you provide yourself with healthier options at work, such as yogurt in the work refrigerator or a package of trail mix in your desk? <i>Smaller, frequent meals can help prevent overeating later in the day.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When you bring snacks for your co-workers, do you bring fruits, vegetables or items that are lower in saturated and trans fat, sodium, added sugars and/or calories? <i>You can get the most nutrition for your money if you compare Nutrition Facts labels on food packages.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you keep yourself well-hydrated at work, with water as your main beverage? <i>Staying well-hydrated helps you think more clearly and may help prevent overeating.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you measure out a serving from the food package? <i>If you eat crackers directly from the food package, you are likely to eat more than a serving.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Could you swap the contents of the candy dish with healthier options (such as single-serving packets of dried fruit or nuts or fresh, whole fruit)? <i>Consider single-serving packets of dried fruit or nuts or fresh, whole fruit.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you occasionally have a sweet treat, such as a chocolate kiss or snack-size candy bar? <i>That's OK! All foods in moderation can fit in a healthy diet.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Set a goal:

**Choose wisely at the vending machine.**

Candy bars are tempting, but you have healthier options. Look for snacks with fewer calories, lower sodium, less fat and no trans fats. Some better choices include 100-calorie packs, baked chips, granola bars, dried fruits, crisps and pretzels. If the vending machine doesn't offer some of these items, ask your employer to provide some healthier options.

## Inspire Your Snacks with Variety

### Grain Group

- Whole-grain minimuffins or minibagels
- Whole-grain crackers or pretzels
- Air-popped popcorn
- Baked tortilla chips

### Vegetable Group

- Baby carrots, cherry tomatoes, cauliflower and broccoli florets, celery sticks

### Fruit Group

- Grapes, cherries, strawberries, melon chunks (honeydew, watermelon, cantaloupe)
- Whole fresh fruits, such as apples, nectarines, plums, kiwifruit, apricots and oranges
- Prepackaged fruit cups or dried fruits

### Dairy Group

- String cheese
- Low-fat or fat-free yogurt

### Protein Foods Group

- Bean dip (Mix equal parts of black beans and your favorite salsa for a quick, protein-rich dip)
- Lightly salted or unsalted nuts

## Snack Ideas

- Hummus and whole-wheat pita bread
- Vegetables, such as carrots or broccoli spears, with low-fat or fat-free ranch dip
- Baked tortilla chips with black bean and corn salsa
- Dried fruit, such as dried cranberries, and lightly salted nuts, such as almonds
- Low-fat yogurt with sliced fresh fruit

**Food safety note:** Be sure to keep perishable foods, such as dips and cut-up fruits and vegetables, refrigerated. They should spend no more than two hours at room temperature. If a refrigerator is not available, bring nonperishable foods, such as dried fruits, nuts and cereal-based snacks.



### How do you manage special nutrition needs (allergies, diabetes) at meetings?

If you are ordering or bringing the snacks, be sure to find out about special nutrition concerns ahead of time. Provide a variety of healthful foods so people have options. Cut foods in snack-size portions, too.

For more information about nutrition, visit [www.ag.ndsu.edu/food](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/food)

NDSU Extension does not endorse commercial products or companies even though reference may be made to tradenames, trademarks or service names.

County commissions, North Dakota State University and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. NDSU does not discriminate in its programs and activities on the basis of age, color, gender expression/identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, participation in lawful off-campus activity, physical or mental disability, pregnancy, public assistance status, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, spousal relationship to current employee, or veteran status, as applicable. Direct inquiries to Vice Provost for Title IX/ADA Coordinator, 100, 701-231-7708, [ndsu.eoaa@ndsu.edu](mailto:ndsu.eoaa@ndsu.edu). This publication will be made available in alternative formats for people with disabilities upon request, 701-231-7881. web-12-21; web-1-26