

d-Friendly Snacks

Introducing ... the dLife Healthy, Low Carb Snack List!

Snacks can be a double-edged sword for people with diabetes. They may help stave off hunger and overeating, while keeping blood sugar levels from dropping too low. But serious snack attacks can also derail your best efforts to eat healthy and manage your weight. Read on for the best in d-friendly snacking and sweet treats.

MOZZARELLA STRING CHEESE is the new Snickers(R) bar. Talk about a perfect, portable snack. How do you eat your string cheese? Do you peel it carefully with your fingers or your teeth? Or do you just chomp, chomp, chomp 'til it's gone?

CARBS: less than 1g

POPCORN is a whole grain -- did you know? Popcorn delivers a nice dose of fiber and is a versatile snack. You can stick to butter, sprinkle with grated parmesan or Brewer's yeast, or make a sweet treat by drizzling with sugar-free chocolate syrup.

CARBS: 12g in 2 cups

COTTAGE CHEESE & BERRIES will make you feel healthier just by having a dish in front of you. You get all the benefits of dairy protein and fat, plus a good dose of antioxidants. What could be better?

Hint: If cottage cheese has always seemed a little icky to you, try sprinkling cinnamon and sugar substitute on top and sticking it in the oven for a few minutes, berries and all.

CARBS: 15g in 1/2 cup cottage cheese and 1/2 cup blueberries

WHOLE WHEAT CRACKERS & NATURAL PEANUT BUTTER are perfect for a salty, crunchy fix. Plus, you get protein, fiber, and good-for-you unsaturated fats.

CARBS: 15g in 3 Triscuits(R) with 2 tbsp peanut butter

HARD-BOILED EGG. The incredible edible is truly a perfect food -- with a nutrient list that reads like the side of a multivitamin label. It's also oh-so-satisfying.

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CARBS: less than 1g (and more than 6g of protein!)

EDAMAME (a.k.a., green soybeans) are a diabetes super-snack. Buy them frozen in the pod, boil for five minutes, and voila! Pick up the pods and suck out the tender beans.

CARBS: 15g per cup (and 8 grams of fiber!)

A PEAR (with a handful of almonds) has the added snack benefit of slowing you down a bit. It's hard to inhale a fruit you have to take bites of while navigating around seeds and a stem. And though they're easy to overeat, nuts have to be chewed pretty thoroughly. Eat your almonds one at a time, chew slowly, and savor their buttery goodness.

CARBS: 16g in small Asian pear & 12 almonds

SUGAR-FREE JELLO is arguably the most satisfying zero-carb sweet treat out there. Although it may not win in the nutrients contest, it can at least do a good job making your nails stronger.

CARBS: 4g in a cup of sugar-free jello with 4 tbsp whipped topping

HUMMUS & VEGGIES are the healthy replacements these days for potato chips and sour cream dip. This Middle Eastern puree is made from chickpeas (a.k.a. garbanzo beans) and garlic. It's high in protein and fiber and many other nutrients and, without a doubt, classifies as a diabetes superfood. Add some carrots and celery for dipping, and you know you're doing a good thing for your body.

CARBS: 15g in 5 tbsp of hummus with 4 baby carrots and 4 small celery stalks

PLAIN YOGURT, to some, is a nectar from the gods. To others, it's as gross as curdled milk. If you're in the latter group, why not take baby steps? First, use plain yogurt to make salad dressings and in baked goods. Eventually, graduate to eating it with sugar substitute and berries or crushed nuts. The health benefits are stellar -- from the calcium to the friendly bacteria -- so it's worth a bit of effort.

CARBS: 12g in 6 ounces of plain yogurt (and 3g in 12 almonds)

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SUGAR-FREE PUDDING is one of the more decadent treats available, and with a dollop of whipped cream can stand in for someone's beloved chocolate mousse dessert. Swirl a couple of flavors together for that extra *je ne sais quoi*.

CARBS: 12g in 1/2 cup

You didn't really think chocolate would be on this list, did you? Yes, authentic, **DARK CHOCOLATE** (the higher the percentage of cocoa, the better) has been shown to possibly improve health, by way of its plant chemicals. And three dark chocolate truffles will cost you only 15 grams of carbs. However, they also come with 220 calories and 13 grams of saturated fat. By anyone's standards, that's a little over the top.

So take a more moderate approach: Have just one dark chocolate truffle, and enjoy every second of it.

SOURCES:

1. dLife Food Finder. <http://www.dlife.com/diabetes/diabetic-recipes/foodFinder.html> (accessed 5/18/09). 2. USDA Nutrient Database. <http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp/search> (accessed 5/18/09). 3. Daily Plate. <http://www.dailyplate.com> (accessed 5/17/09).

