WHAT ARE HEALTHY SNACKS?

The best snacks are no different from the best meals as they are made up of whole, fresh foods. This includes whole fruit, vegetables, peanut butter and almond butter (with no added sugar), low-sugar or no sugar added yogurt, nuts, whole grains, fish and small portions of lean meats and dairy products. Essentially, anything that has been minimally processed and if it has a list of ingredients, that list should ideally be narrow and includes foods you have heard of.

WHAT ARE SOME GOOD CHOICES?

To keep the record straight, calories are not a bad thing. It is simply just a word that means energy, which our bodies require in order to function. Fruits, vegetables, legumes and whole grains not only contain calories such as proteins, fats, and carbohydrates that our bodies use for energy, but they also include essential vitamins, minerals, and fiber, all of which ensure our bodies are functioning in the healthiest state. Eating an appropriate amount of these healthy calories allows our bodies to run efficiently by providing immediate energy, and by storing fuel (which will be used by the brain during those late nights at the library, for example). The problem we face as busy students is not the calories themselves, but rather how many calories and the quality of those calories that we are ingesting.

EMPTY CALORIES VS. WHOLE CALORIES

It is important to remember that excess calories can lead to unhealthy weight gain. It is much easier to gain weight when eating empty calories however, such as packaged foods filled with added sugars and white flour (cakes, cookies, sodas, chips, muffins etc.) than when eating whole, fresh foods such as the ones mentioned above. Typically, empty calories are not filling because they lack the essential nutrients our bodies require to function properly (most processed foods are purposely stripped of their nutrients, so they last longer on the shelves). When we are eating whole nutritious foods on the other hand, we tend to fill up much faster and avoid overeating.
USC has an incredible array of healthy food options on campus. Here are just some of the healthy snack options available on campus:

**SEED’S MARKETPLACE**

- Chobani plain Greek yogurt – no sugar added
- Sabra roasted red pepper hummus with pretzels
- Bhuja crunchy seasoned peas
- Mixed pistachios (flavored with lemon juice, paprika, cayenne pepper, garlic, jalapeño pepper and sea salt)
- Jalapeño pistachios
- Raw almonds
- Trail mix with pumpkin seeds, cashews, peanuts, sunflower seeds, cranberries, and chocolate chips
- Large selection of sushi
- Wide variety of salads such as the Farro Salad, the Salmon Salad, Sesame Seaweed Salad, Market Veggie Salad, Gratitude Protein Bowl, Spicy Tempeh Salad and the Mexican Burrito Bowl (most of these are great as a full meal)
- Cooked Edamame
- Rice Cakes
- Simple Mills Almond Flour Crackers
- Somersaults sunflower seed crunchy bites
- Honest Tea – great alternative to sodas because they are low in sugar and made with real tea
- The Moroccan Mint Green Tea has 9g of sugar for the entire 16-ounce bottle. As a comparison, a 20-ounce Coke has 65g of sugar and a Monster Energy drink has 54g of sugar per 16 ounces!!
- Coconut water
STARBUCKS
• Protein Box: includes two hard-boiled eggs, multigrain muesli bread, a small packet of honey peanut butter, sliced apples and grapes, and two slices of white-cheddar cheese
• Protein Box: PB&J with fruit and veggies
• Turkey jerky
• Hippeas organic chickpea puffs
• Bananas, apples and oranges
• Packets of almonds and mixed nuts

LITERATEA
• Bananas, apples and oranges
• Non-Dairy Coconut Chobani (11g of sugar versus Yoplait which has 20g of sugar)
• Sushi rolls
• Trader Joe’s: (Trader Joe’s is not part of USC Hospitality so Dining Dollar are not accepted here)
• Hummus and carrots
• Individual plain Greek yogurt
• Individual Icelandic Skyr (Iceland’s version of Greek yogurt) – (~7g of sugar)
• Nuts such as almonds, cashews, walnuts, peanuts and pecans.
• No sugar added peanut butter and almond butter (great with sliced apples or on TJ’s whole wheat crackers)
• Roasted butternut squash, red quinoa and wheatberry salad
• Classic Greek salad
• Southwest salad
• Mexicali salad
• Broccoli + kale salad with white chicken meat

TIPS FOR MAINTAINING A HEALTHY DIET
• Drink plenty of water, and often! Pick up a reusable water bottle and keep refilling it throughout the day. The next time you think you’re hungry, try drinking a glass of water first. Often times when you think you’re hungry, you are actually thirsty!
• Pick up some nuts at either Seed’s to keep with you throughout the day. Nuts are a great source of healthy fats which keep you sated longer, and they won’t go bad or get smashed in your bag.
•Limit your ultra-processed food consumption (cookies, cakes, fried foods, soft drinks, energy drinks etc.).
• When eating salads, be careful not to drench your greens with unhealthy salad dressings such as ranch or Caesar. Keep the dressing on the side and add minimally or, go European style and top your salad with olive oil, balsamic vinegar, lemon juice and a little salt and pepper.
• Find yourself eating unintentionally? Pop in a piece of sugar free gum or make a cup of coffee or tea to prevent over-snacking.
• Think about your schedule the night before and plan accordingly – pack nuts, veggies, fruit, and a sandwich with whole grain bread and a lean meat such as turkey.