



MAKING SMART FOOD CHOICES ON THE GO

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Let's be real, life can be hard. Between juggling school, family, friends, romantic relationships, the latest episode of the Bachelor and deciding on what to wear to Coachella it seems that we are bombarded with hundreds of choices that we are required to make daily. Because of that, deciding on what to eat for lunch often becomes the least of our concerns. A lot of the time we end up making poor food choices simply because we are pressed for time or something more exciting than deciding between the soup or the salad captures our attention.

With this quick guide I will share with you 5 tips to making smart lunchtime food choices even when you're on the go! Lunch is a super important meal that often times goes forgotten, however, it is what keeps us going throughout the course of our day. Your lunchtime meal can either make or break how productive you are for the remainder of your day. Learning how to navigate food options when you are on the go can be a challenge, however, with the tips below you can successfully make choices that will contribute to your optimal health and wellness.

MAKING YOUR LUNCHTIME WORK FOR YOU

1. Food = Energy!

Make sure you are eating enough! Good nutrition fuels our brains so it's important to get enough of it. A well-balanced meal consists of vegetables, fruits, protein, grains, and dairy so make sure your meal consists of something from each of these food groups (or at least MOST of these food groups) to ensure a good balance amongst the food on your plate and adequate fuel for your body's needs

2. Quality Over Quantity

What you put into your body matters! Eating a quality lunch prevents mid day snacking on empty calories or a 3pm crash. A quality lunch is balanced and is low in fried or processed foods that often contain excess fats, added sugars, excess salt, and harmful chemicals that can

be damaging to our bodies and can promote chronic disease. Instead of the burger and fries opt for a fresh salad or a grilled option instead of a fried option. You will feel a difference in your body once you start making these small but crucial changes. Your goal should be to choose whole foods like fruits and vegetables because these items are packed with beneficial vitamins and minerals. An example of some smart choices from some of our favorite lunchtime spots are listed below:



Lemonade

Pineapple Chicken
Greenbean

Pair with brown rice



The Habit

Super Food Salad with
Grilled Chicken

With kale pesto vinaigrette



Panda Express

Beef and Broccoli

Pair with brown rice

3. Plan Ahead

If at all possible, plan ahead! If you know where you are going to be around lunchtime plan where you'll stop to grab a bite to eat and preview their menu if it is someplace that is unfamiliar. Have an idea in your head of what would be a smart choice that would keep you charged up for the remainder of your day. In addition to planning ahead, bringing snacks is helpful to keep you satiated between meals so that you don't get hangry. Some clutch options packed with protein and fiber to keep you full are:

- Homemade trail mix
- Hummus + veggies (carrot sticks or celery)
- An apple + peanut butter
- A hardboiled egg + some cucumber slices with hot sauce
- A handful of pumpkin seeds + a stick of beef jerky
- Low fat Greek yogurt + berries
- Air popped popcorn

4. Break Up to Make Up

A lunchtime break helps you gear up for the second half of the day and offers a nice and often much needed opportunity to catch your breath. Even if you don't have a whole lot of time, take a few minutes to tune in to your needs and be mindful about the intentions that you have for the

rest of the day. This break and opportunity to refocus will put you in a more calm state that will allow you to make better food choices.

5. Drink Up!

Staying hydrated is something we don't often think about, especially when we are on the go, but drinking good ol' H₂O keeps the systems in our body working optimally. It helps with digestion, which when impacted can weigh us down and leave us feeling sluggish and bloated. Dehydration can cause moodiness, lack of concentration, fatigue, and light headedness so when you have a lot on your plate, staying hydrated is one way to help ensure that you get it all done.

The short of it is that making smart food choices can be easy as long as you stay mindful and opt for balance. It's definitely okay to indulge here and there, however, your primary focus should be consuming whole foods like fruits and vegetables that are rich in phytonutrients and lean meats that are rich in protein and good fats. With the proper nutrients fueling both your body and brain, you are sure to ace your midterms and also look great at Coachella so it's a win win!