

Gestational Diabetes: Planning Your Snacks

It is important to make smart food choices to manage gestational diabetes. This will help you keep your blood glucose (blood sugar) levels stable. Healthy snacks that will give you energy and help curb your hunger should have these ingredients:

- › Fiber-rich carbohydrates
- › Protein
- › Healthy fats

If you have any questions,
please talk with your
dietitian or physician.

Benefits of snacking

Eating healthy snacks keeps your blood glucose levels from falling too low or going too high. Snack portion sizes and balanced food groups make a big difference. **Aim for 1 to 2 servings of fiber-rich carbohydrates at each snack.**

Snacking can prevent overeating at your next meal.

Snacking is key to meeting your nutritional needs during pregnancy. Most women need at least 70 to 100 grams (g) of protein every day. **Plan a snack that includes at least 10 g of protein.**

Include healthy fats such as avocado, nuts, chia seeds and flax seeds. Fats help healthy brain and eye development in babies.

Snack ideas by nutrition need

Protein-rich snacks:

- › Hard-boiled eggs
- › Greek yogurt (unsweetened)
- › Cottage cheese
- › Hummus with vegetables, rice crisps or whole grain crackers
- › Protein shake (without added sugar)
- › Edamame

Healthy fats to add to snacks:

- › Nuts such as almonds, walnuts and pecans
- › Avocado or guacamole
- › Nut butters such as peanut butter and almond butter (good to pair with fruit)

Fiber-rich snacks:

- › Vegetables such as carrots, cucumbers or bell peppers paired with hummus, guacamole, cottage cheese or cream cheese
- › Medium-sized apple with nut butter
- › Chia pudding (made with unsweetened almond milk)
- › Berries such as strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, or blackberries paired with a handful of nuts
- › Whole grains such as rice cakes, wheat crackers, a slice of whole grain toast or oatmeal with sprinkle of chia seeds

Stay hydrated

- › Drink water throughout the day, along with your snacks.
- › Try unsweetened herbal tea, sparkling water, or beverages sweetened with sugar substitutes like stevia or monk fruit.

Snack ideas by flavor

Cater your snacks to meet your cravings.

If you want something sweet, try these:

- › Greek yogurt with less than 5 g sugar per serving
- › Smoothie: 1/2 cup milk, 1 cup frozen berries and a handful of spinach
- › 1/2 banana with 1 tablespoon peanut butter
- › 1/2 cup cottage cheese with fruit
- › Protein/energy bar with less than 5 g sugar
- › Apple with 1 tablespoon almond butter
- › Cocoa-roasted almonds
- › Homemade energy bites made with nut butter, chia seeds, flax seeds and protein powder
- › Celery with peanut butter and raisins
- › Whole wheat muffins (low-sugar)
- › Chia pudding made with a protein shake and sugar-free whipped cream
- › 1/2 cup low-fat ricotta cheese with sliced strawberries and cacao chips
- › Small piece of fruit with 2 tablespoons nuts

If you want something savory, try these:

- › Air-popped popcorn
- › Trail mix
- › String cheese and whole grain crackers
- › Hard-boiled egg and 1 slice sprouted grain bread
- › Nuts
- › Edamame
- › Whole grain or seed-based crackers with 1/4 avocado
- › Vegetables and hummus
- › Freeze-dried chickpeas

Bedtime snack ideas

These snacks are fiber-rich carbohydrates with protein and healthy fats:

- › 25 roasted chickpeas
- › 11 green pea crisps
- › 3 woven wheat crackers with 1 ounce cheddar cheese
- › 1/4 cup cashews
- › 1/2 slice whole grain bread with 1 tablespoon peanut butter
- › 1/4 cup hummus with cucumber slices
- › 1 cup air-popped popcorn with 1 tablespoon slivered almonds
- › 1/2 cup 2% cottage cheese with 7 nut-based crackers
- › 3/4 cup edamame
- › 1 whole wheat wrap with 1 ounce melted cheddar cheese
- › 5 black bean tortilla chips with 1/4 cup guacamole

Snacks to limit or avoid

These snacks are not healthy choices:

- › Foods made with refined sugars such as candies, baked goods and breads made with white flour
- › Processed snacks such as chips, cookies and crackers (these are often found in the middle aisles of the grocery store)
- › Sugary beverages such as soda, fruit juice (even 100% juices), hydration beverages (Gatorade®, Powerade®) and sweetened teas
- › Large portions of carbohydrates that are eaten alone without a balanced source of protein or fat

If you have any questions or would like personalized snack ideas, ask your dietitian.

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