

# Healthy snacking at work

## An expert's insight

Working, whether at work or from home, presents many opportunities to snack. Charlie Beestone, Registered Nutritionist at Teladoc Health, gives us the lowdown on healthy snacking while working.

The increase in remote and hybrid working over the past 3-4 years has presented new challenges to many of us regarding nutrition. We have the stresses and pressures of our normal working life but against the backdrop of a completely different food environment. It's likely no great surprise that many of us find ourselves walking to the kitchen cupboards during working hours and often eating without really paying attention to what we're doing! This 'mindless eating' can lead to poor nutrition choices, increasing the likelihood of low energy and mood, weight gain, and lifestyle diseases related to nutrition.

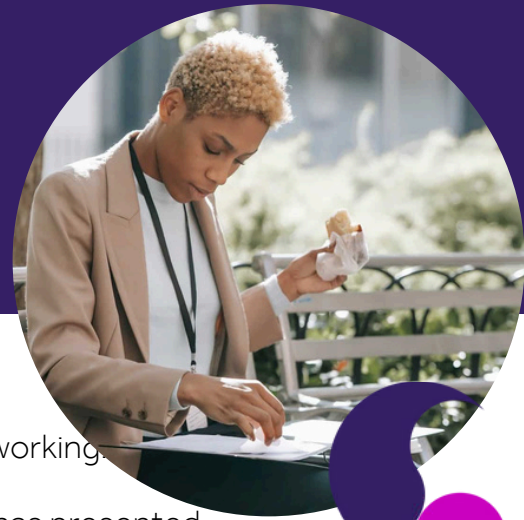
## So how can we make healthier snacking choices at home?

### Permission to eat

It's worth noting that no food is healthy or unhealthy, depending on context. A healthy diet does not involve over-restriction of foods or food groups. When we 'ban' certain foods, we often crave food more – it's the nutrition equivalent of telling your brain not to think of a pink elephant – that's exactly what it does! To gain control of our snacking behaviours, it's more helpful to learn to include these foods in a controlled, mindful way – than banning them.

### Why might we snack?

One useful reflection for those of us who struggle with snacking is, 'Why am I having this snack?' There are positive reasons why we might snack (to stop feeling hungry, to eat more plants, to get a wide variety of nutrients, and to feel satisfied). However, we often snack more because of 'low energy,' boredom, and stress. A useful exercise to practice is creating a pause before you decide on food and then asking, 'How am I feeling? What's going on today that might make me feel like this? What snack am I going to have? Does this align with my health and nutrition goals? If I'm feeling tired/stressed/bored – what can I do instead of using food that will help me cope with these uncomfortable feelings?' From here, we can then make choices that serve us better.



## How to make better snacking choices

Before we start focusing on our snacking choices, we need to change two things. The first is to look at our meals - are they filling us up? Often, people who think they struggle with snacking actually struggle with hunger due to very small breakfast and lunch meals. Increasing the size of these meals can help curb unwanted snacking.

The other consideration is to change our food environment - if we have fruit and water available to us, we'll eat and drink them! If we have fruit hidden away and work next to a biscuit jar, we're more likely to try to fill it up on biscuits!

## Balanced snacking choices

Snack choices should be balanced and look very similar to our meals. Having a source of protein (e.g. cold meat, yoghurt, eggs, chickpeas) will help maintain muscle mass and keep us full. Having 1-2 portions of fruit and veg will help provide colour and increase fibre intake.

Healthy fats such as hummus, avocado, and nuts will help with nutrient absorption and cholesterol levels. Then a small portion of crisps or chocolate can help provide satisfaction and pleasure!

## Fact:

People with high blood sugar levels are more likely to experience cognitive decline

Source:  
The Good Body

**"Your diet is a bank account. Good food choices are good investments."**

Bethenny Frankel



Eating a healthy diet can help reduce your risk of chronic diseases, such as heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and some types of cancer. Nutrient-rich foods protect your body.