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Five Healthy Snacks That Actually Taste Good!

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When I pictured the day that my cat could come to work with me, a state-wide quarantine was not exactly what I had in mind. While my cat is enjoying my laptop as a source of heat and a prime spot for head scratches, I'm trying to function with my normal life turned upside down. I'm sure many of you are struggling as well.

I've enjoyed sidewalk messages, window quotes, countless red hearts and white ribbons, and tiny (in-vehicle) parades. While staying inside has been a struggle, it's also amazing to watch how a community can come together as one. I would love nothing more than to see these morale boosting activities continue as we struggle with quite difficult times.

A thought I've had often during this time is, "How can I help to do my part?" As a dietitian, my part is to help share knowledge about health and wellness. Today, I would love to share some snack ideas that promote fullness while also strengthening our immune system from, not only this current COVID-19 pandemic, but also other foreign invaders that may try to weaken it. Give the following ideas a try and then share with Henry Ford what you think and how you might improve upon them!

1) *Graham cracker with spread and fruit*

- 1 sheet graham cracker
- 2 tbsp sun butter spread (found near the peanut butter in most local grocery stores)
- 1/2 cup cut fruit (strawberries, blueberries, kiwi, etc.)

The graham cracker will provide the carbohydrate needed (the gas to help us go!) while the sun butter spread serves as a protein and fat to help keep us full. The berries on top are full of fiber (which also help with fullness), vitamin C and vitamin E - important micronutrients to help our bodies run efficiently and protect our immunity.

2) *Cowboy salsa*

2 cans Mexi-corn (drained)	3 ripe (soft/not mushy) avocados (diced)
2 cans black beans (drained and rinsed)	½ cup vegetable oil
6 green onions (diced)	½ cup white vinegar
1 red onion (diced)	1 dry packet Hidden Valley Ranch Fiesta
3 fresh tomatoes (diced)	Baked multi-grain scoops for dipping

If graham crackers are not your thing, try a staff favorite - cowboy salsa with multi-grain tortilla chips. The second you taste this snack you will start wondering how on Earth this is considered healthy. It's

delicious and incredibly nutritious! We have our carbs from the chips and black beans – which plays a dual role as our protein also. Avocados provide us with healthy fat that helps us to stay full and protects heart health. Also, loads of wonderful, colorful vegetables provide us with fiber and provide additional protections against illness.

3) *Waffle with yogurt and fruit*

- 1 toasted whole grain waffle (think Eggo waffles)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of low-fat yogurt
- 1 peach

Let's talk about a snack that you can feed your kids quickly, for example when there just is not any time between conference calls - one that you can also enjoy! Toast the waffle and top with low-fat vanilla yogurt and cut-up peaches. No time to cut the peach? Put the peach on the side and have them eat it whole! The waffle provides energy, the yogurt is our protein and that peach gives us a little variety with vitamins and minerals.

4) *Fruit smoothie*

- 3/4 -1 cup milk (or juice)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup low-fat yogurt (vanilla is fine)
- 1 cup of frozen fruits (try a mixed berry assortment or try something new, like mango!)

To increase veggie consumption, you can put in about a half cup of spinach or kale. It's up to you if you tell your kids or not! For children, it is not recommended to have more than 4 oz of juice per day - just be mindful of that serving if juice is the base you choose. Also, if you have chia seeds, feel free to put in about 1 tbsp for a little bit of extra fiber. We have our carb from the milk and fruit and protein from our yogurt. Fruits/sneaky spinach provides us the micronutrients for immunity.

5) *Trail mix*

- 8 cups of Cheerios (or Chex cereal)
- 4 cups of raisins (or any dried fruit)
- 2 cups of M&Ms (or chocolate chips)
- 4 cups of almonds (try different nuts and seeds!)
- 6 cups of pretzel Goldfish (any pretzel shape will do)

This one takes some prep time up front. This recipe is in bulk so it can last a few days. It's also very versatile, so you can change the ingredients to suit any taste buds or allergies. Just make sure the ingredients you use are similar to what is listed.

The serving size for this snack is $\frac{1}{4}$ cup. Pre-bagging it may take some time, but when it's finally snack time, it's the perfect grab and go snack! We have our carb, protein and some vitamins present. Can you figure out what each food gives us from this snack?

Stay safe and snack on! And if you have any lazy animal coworkers like I do, tell them to find another computer to lay on!