# Are snacks becoming the new meals?

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## Featured topic

More Americans are skipping traditional breakfasts, lunches, and dinners in favor of smaller bites throughout the day. In fact, 56% of Americans say they regularly or occasionally replace meals with snacks. But can a handful of snacks really provide the nutrition your body needs?

We explore the growing trend of "snack meals" and what it takes to make them work for your health. Learn why protein, fiber, fruits and vegetables, healthy fats, and mindful eating all play an important role when snacks become your main source of fuel. Discover how to make every bite count.

Want healthy snack recipes that balance protein, fiber, and healthy fats? Find out how these foods can help.

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## Transcript

**Narrator**: What if your next meal wasn't a meal at all? For some people, a handful of snacks is becoming the new way to eat.

**Speaker 1:** So I use snacking as a meal replacement throughout the day.


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**Speaker 2:** I'm definitely a little bit guilty of snacking too much and then being like, oh, I didn't eat a meal.

**Speaker 3:** If I need something on the go, I do have snacks handy.

**Speaker 4:** I snack for most of the food that I consume.

**Narrator**: And it's not just about convenience. Busy schedules, changing lifestyles and a love of variety are helping blur the line between a snack and a full meal. But can a snack actually count as a meal? Maybe. Like any meal, you'll need to choose the right mix of healthy foods. And that might not always be the case for most snackers.

**Speaker 5:** Fruits, nuts. And then occasionally I have ice cream.

**Speaker 6:** Usually pickles or yogurt, but not together.

**Speaker 2:** The blue corn chips. Those are really good. But if I'm just sitting around, I like anything sweet. Literally anything sweet, I'm down for it.

**Narrator**: Be intentional if you're swapping a meal for snacks. It's important to make sure your snacks provide balanced nutrition over the course of the day. Get enough protein. Aim to include a meaningful protein source in your snacks several times throughout the day.

**Speaker 5:** Also, eat quite a bit of mixed nuts.

**Speaker 6:** Probably like a charcuterie board.

**Speaker 3:** Some of my favorite things to snack on is a string cheese. It's just quick and easy. I'm working on trying to get more protein in my life, so that's my go to.

**Narrator**: Eat enough fruits, vegetables and fiber. When you graze, it's easy to eat plenty of packaged foods but miss the nutrients and fiber found in whole foods.

**Speaker 2:** Fruits, fruits. I love fruit.

**Speaker 7:** I don't really get fresh fruit, so I do frozen fruit.


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**Narrator**: Don't neglect healthy fats. Be careful not to snack on entirely fat free foods if that leaves you hungry or short on energy.

**Speaker 6:** During work, I eat pistachios.

**Speaker 8:** I like to snack on almonds. I love almonds and nuts. So I snack on almonds usually in the morning.

**Narrator**: Practice intentional snacking. Plan ahead, prepare nutritious options and pay attention to your body's hunger and fullness cues. Because snacking isn't just about satisfying a craving, it's about giving your body the nourishment it needs. Be mindful of the recommended calories for your age, height and weight.

So maybe the future of eating isn't about three square meals a day. Maybe it's about making every bite count—from snack to supper, the rules are changing. The question is, what's on your plate or in your snack bowl?

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