

## 9 Heart Healthy Snacks



These snacks get our hearts pumping, literally and figuratively. They're delicious alternatives to the ho-hum bag of chips or candy bar. Skip the drive-through or the candy aisle

and load up on some heart-healthy snacks that will not only maintain your cardiovascular health, but may help you drop a few pounds as well.

### 1. Vegetables dipped in hummus.

Fresh vegetables are low in calories and have many antioxidants, and many have no fat with plenty of fiber to satiate you. Fiber has also been shown to lower cholesterol. Hummus, made from chick peas, is a great alternative protein without saturated fat.

### 2. Fruit skewered on a stick with a little dark chocolate for dipping.

Fruit has a variety of antioxidants to fight cancer and heart disease. Dark chocolate has a high concentration of flavinols, a type of antioxidant, to fight heart disease.

### 3. Half of a cantaloupe filled with fat free cottage cheese, a dash of cinnamon and some berries.

The cantaloupe and berries have antioxidants, and the fat-free cottage cheese fulfills a serving of dairy without the saturated fat.

### 4. Fat-free yogurt with fruit and a sprinkle of nuts.

Get another serving of dairy without saturated fat as well as antioxidants from fruit and unsaturated fat from the nuts.

### 5. Homemade soup.

Start with a vegetable base. You can buy a frozen vegetable base or containers of vegetable base to load up on antioxidants and fiber. Make sure its low in sodium. Then dump in a bag of frozen or mixed vegetables. Mix in a couple of cups of beans. Make sure to rinse the beans to remove sodium. Season with fresh herbs

### 6. Pureed prunes — sneak them into your brownies.

Pureed fruit will make the chocolate taste more chocolaty, plus you've added in something that use less oil or less butter and you've added antioxidants because of the pureed fruit. Also fruit has fiber to lower your cholesterol.

### 7. Silken tofu or soy milk — substitute for regular milk in recipes.

"It can add heart healthy protein, yet cut down on heart-clogging calories of the other oils you might have used."

### 8. Applesauce or apple butter — use in place of oil for muffins.

"Apple butter is one of best ingredients you can add to moisture and pleasant fruit flavor that won't combat your other ingredients.

### 9. Nuts and small chunks of fruit — sprinkle on top of muffins.

If you substitute applesauce for the oil you'll be making a muffin low in fat, chock-full of antioxidants from fruit, fiber from nuts, and heart-healthy protein from the nuts.