

Yummy Foods to Help You Lose Weight

Even though it sounds too good to be true, delicious foods can help you lose weight. Weight loss is dependent on simple math and a commitment to lose weight. Eating fewer calories and adding more physical activity on a daily basis are the keys to success. In addition, watch your portion sizes and eat a diet high in whole grains, fruit, veggies, non-fat or low-fat (1%) dairy products and lean meat, fish, poultry and eggs.

Make sure you drink enough water and watch your intake of foods and beverages high in sugar and fat, along with limiting soda, iced teas, sports drinks, etc. Eating enough high fiber foods will fill you up and curb your craving for more food. Keep a food diary of everything you eat or drink and then review it weekly. Staying aware of how much and how often you eat is critical in keeping your calories under control.

Below is a short list of suggested foods from Extension educators from Rutgers Cooperative Extension. Pick these foods up on your next trip to the grocery store.

1. **Beans** - Inexpensive, filling, and versatile, beans are a great source of protein. Beans are also high in fiber and slow to digest, which may stop you from eating more.
2. **Soup** - Start a meal with a cup of soup, and you may end up eating less. Choose broth-based soups that are chunky or pureed. Choose a soup that is 100-150 calories per serving. Skip creamed soups or any additions such as sour cream or croutons.
3. **Dark Chocolate** - Pick a square or two of 80% dark chocolate. In one study, chocolate lovers who were given dark chocolate ate 15% less pizza than those who had eaten milk chocolate.
4. **Pureed Vegetables** - Add more veggies to your diet and cut back on the calories you're eating. When Penn State researchers added pureed cauliflower and zucchini to mac and cheese, people seemed to like the dish just as much as the regular version and they ate 200-350 fewer calories.
5. **Eggs and Sausage** - A protein-rich breakfast may help you resist snack attacks throughout the day. A study of obese women who started the day with 35 grams of protein found that they felt more full right away. The women ate a 350-calorie breakfast that included eggs and a beef sausage patty. The effect of the high-protein breakfast was that women munched less on fatty, sugary foods.
6. **Nuts** - For a great snack on the run, take a small handful of almonds, walnuts, or pecans. Research shows that when people munch on nuts, they automatically eat less at later meals.

7. **Apples** - Skip the apple juice and the applesauce and opt instead for a crunchy apple. Whole fruit blunts appetite in a way that fruit juices and sauces don't. Raw fruit has more fiber and chewing sends signals to your brain that you've eaten something substantial.
8. **Yogurt** - Whether you prefer Greek yogurt or other types, it can be good for your waistline and your bones. A Harvard study followed more than 120,000 people and of all the foods that were tracked, yogurt was the most closely linked to weight loss.
9. **Grapefruit** - Researchers at Scripps Clinic in San Diego found that when obese people ate half a grapefruit or drank ½ cup of grapefruit juice before each meal, they dropped an average of 3 ½ pounds over 12 weeks. Grapefruit doesn't have any proven "fat-burning" properties but its' tart taste and fiber content may have helped people feel full. Make sure to ask your pharmacist or doctor if grapefruit in any form is OK for you to consume due to its' negative interactions with certain medications.

Load your shopping cart with lots of healthy foods. Plan to eat smaller portions, increase your physical activity, and take small steps each day to lose weight by making better food and beverage choices in 2016.