

FOOD

Healthy and Portable High-Protein Snacks

Whether it's fueling up before hitting the gym or taking a midday snack break to avoid the 2 p.m. lull, high-protein snacks are the tastiest way to keep on going. Protein snacks are the perfect way to fill up just enough, and give us longer-lasting energy than the usual, carb-heavy options. Here are 31 of our favorite protein-packed snacks!

KIND Bar

We're not huge supporters of prepackaged bars, but we make an exception for KIND bars. Their classic varieties are a great source of protein thanks to their all-nut base (with around 5 grams per bar), but for an even higher dose of the good stuff, try KIND Plus varieties.

Easy Oatmeal Raisin Cookies

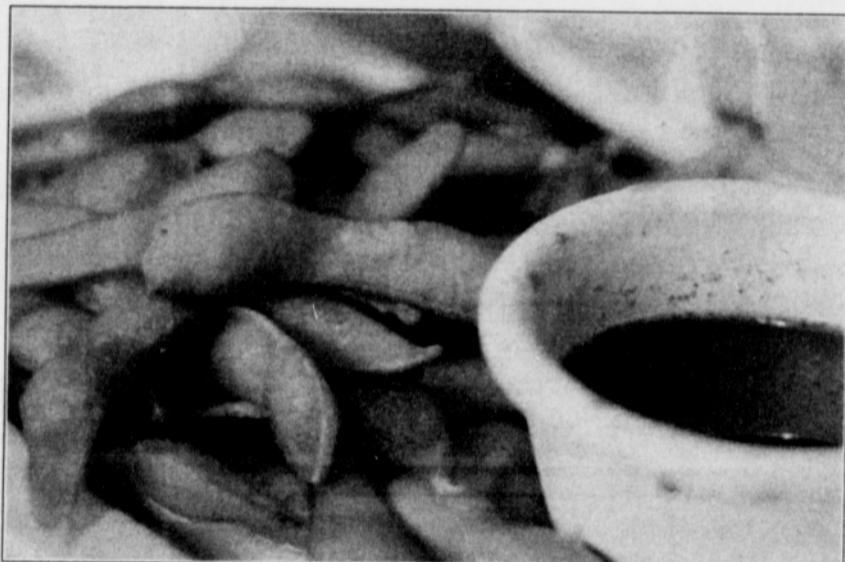
Flash back to elementary school snack time with this sweet (but still healthy!) treat. In a microwave-safe bowl (or mug), mix 1/4 cup oats, 1 teaspoon brown sugar, 1 tablespoon flour (of your choice), 1 egg white, 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract, 1/4 teaspoon baking powder, 1 teaspoon cinnamon, and 1 tablespoon raisins. Flatten mixture into bottom of bowl and microwave on high for 45 seconds. Cool, pop it out of the bowl, and enjoy!

Tofu Sticks

This soybean-based protein bomb isn't just for stir-fry. When sliced into sticks and baked, firm (and smoked) tofu can make a great snack food—especially if it's served with a side of homemade tomato or teriyaki dipping sauce.

Edamame Poppers

The only thing more fun than how much protein you can get from a serving of edamame (one cup offers about 17 grams of protein!) is getting to eat these little beans out of their bright green pods. Buy them fresh and steam for about 6 minutes, or use the pre-cooked frozen variety and briefly microwave to defrost (about 2 minutes) before chowing down.



Hummus Dippers

How's this for an unconventional use of a travel coffee mug? Put 2 tablespoons of your favorite hummus in the bottom of the container, stick a handful of vegetable sticks (carrots, celery, and snow peas are a great mix) vertically in the hummus, screw on the top, and throw in a purse or gym bag for an easy, on-the-go, super-healthy snack.

Soy Milk Smoothie

Time to take a break from the moo-juice. While cow's milk does have its nutritional benefits (calcium and vitamin A, to name a few), soy milk wins in other categories (vitamin D and iron), and they're nearly comparable in terms of protein. Try blending 1 cup of your favorite flavor of soy milk with 1 cup of frozen blueberries or raspberries (for added fiber and antioxidants).

Portable Cheese Platter

Who doesn't love a classy cheese plate? Make yourself a mini plate with a cheese stick (or 2 slices of cheese), 2 whole-grain crackers, and a few roasted almonds.

Banana Nutter

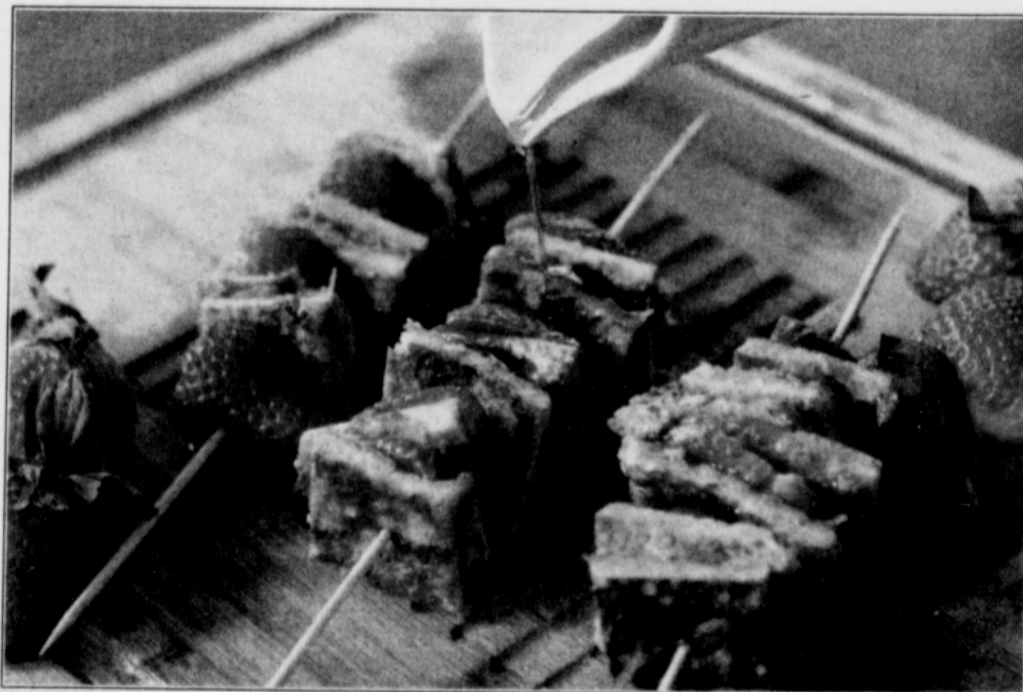
Few pairings are more comforting than a classic peanut butter with banana. Simply top a rice cake (brown rice for extra fiber points!) or whole-grain toast with 2 tablespoons of your favorite nut butter and half a sliced banana. Sprinkle with cinnamon for some extra healthy benefits!

Almond Butter Toast Sticks

Here's another one to fit in that travel mug or mason jar. Toast (or bake) 2 slices of whole-grain bread, and cut into 1/2-inch strips. Place 2 tablespoons of almond butter (or another nut butter) in the bottom of a container with a top, stick the toast sticks in vertically, and sprinkle with cinnamon. Screw on the top and head out the door!

Silver Dollar Protein Pancakes

Mix 4 egg whites, 1/2 cup rolled oats, 1/2 cup low-fat cottage cheese, 1/8 teaspoon baking powder, and 1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract. Cook on a preheated griddle (medium-low heat) until the mixture bubbles, flip, and cook for another 60



seconds. Top with fresh berries or sliced banana.

Chocolate Milk

No, we're not going back to preschool. But chocolate milk is actually a great source of high-quality protein (especially post-workout). Try keeping a single-serving, shelf-stable box in your gym bag or backpack for snack attack emergencies—just try to find one that's also low in sugar!

"Get Greek" Berry Parfait

Imagine sitting on a Greek isle with this snack in hand. Top 1/2 cup plain Greek yogurt with 1/2 cup fresh berries and 1 tablespoon sliced roasted almonds. Now soak in that (imaginary) view and enjoy.

A Little Lentil

We know what you're thinking: "Lentils? As a snack?!" Yes! Don't worry, we're not talking about a bowl of the bland ol' things. Lentils are great protein-packed legumes that are easy to turn into super, shelf-stable salads. One cup has a whopping 22 grams of protein in just 300 calories! Not sure where to start? Try this lentil tabbouleh or this simple veggie and lentil mix.

Grape-and-Cheese Sticks

Dice a half-inch thick slice of cheddar cheese into squares (you should end up with about 6 small pieces) and rinse 6 grapes. On 6 toothpicks, stack the grape and cheese, and enjoy! Just 1 ounce of sharp cheddar offers 8 grams of protein, and the contrast with sweet grapes is super sophisticated (and delicious).

Perfect Little Parfait

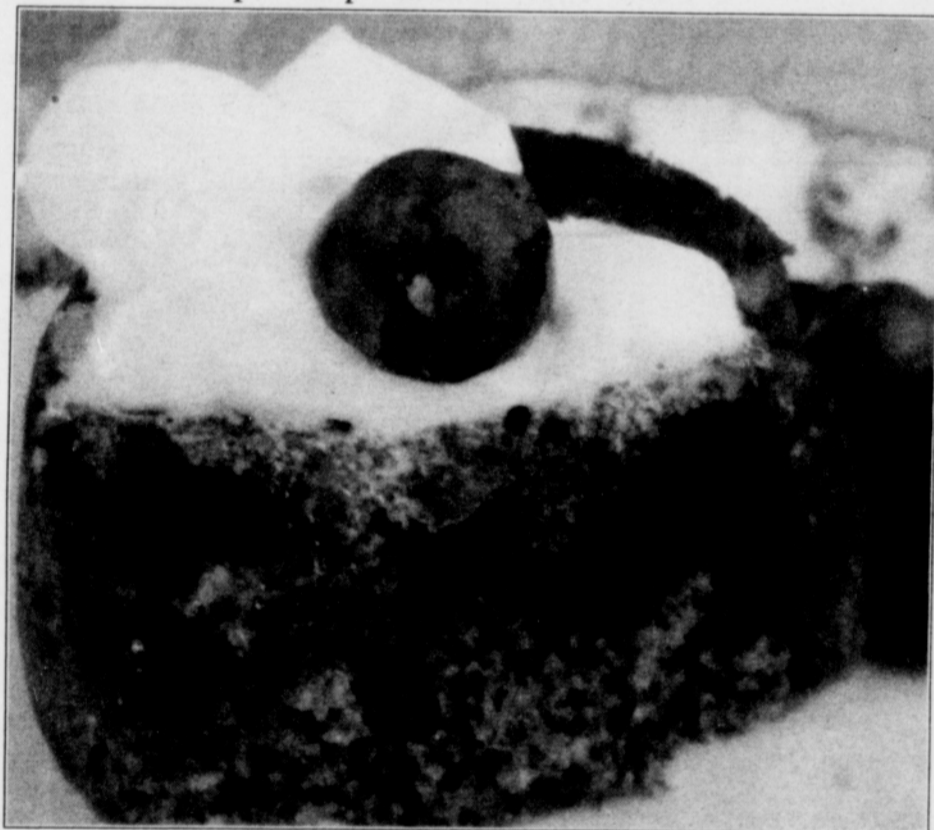
Top 1/2 cup nonfat Greek yogurt with a handful of fruit (fresh or frozen) and a drizzle of honey. Add 2 tablespoons of toasted oats for a protein-packed crunch!

Mini Black-Bean Mash Taco

When it's time to get spicy, try this easy snack fix. Heat 1/2 cup of black beans in the microwave with 1 tablespoon of salsa. Mash with a fork and fold it inside a small (4 to 6-inch) flour tortilla. Store in a small Tupperware container for easy transport.

Gobble, Gobble

Re-visit Thanksgiving with this festive favorite. Slice one piece of whole-grain bread in half, lengthwise, and top with 2 slices of roasted turkey, 1 slice of Swiss cheese, 1 lettuce leaf, 1 slice of tomato, 1 teaspoon of mustard, and 1 teaspoon of dried cranberries. This comforting combination is protein-packed!



Blueberry Flax Microwave Muffins

Making muffins from scratch each morning is easier than you might think. Mix 1/4 cup quick-cooking oats, 1/4 cup fresh or frozen blueberries, 1 teaspoon of baking powder, 2 tablespoons ground flax, 2 teaspoons of cinnamon, 1 teaspoon of olive oil, 2 egg whites, and a sprinkle of sugar (or other natural sweetener) in a microwave-safe Tupperware con-

tainer. Cook on high for 50 to 60 seconds. Let it cool, throw a top on it, and enjoy whenever the hunger pangs hit.

Protein Bar

This one might sound obvious, but hear us out: It's all about finding the right bar. That means one that isn't weighed down with not-so-good extras like sugar and unpronounceable ingredients (some options can even be as bad as candy bars!). Do some research to figure which type is right for you: There are high-protein and low-carb bars; meal replacement and energy bars; etc.

Overnight Choco-Oats

This is the ultimate pre-packaged snack. In a container with a secure lid, mix 1/2 cup oats, 1 cup non-dairy milk, 3 tablespoons chocolate protein powder, and a handful of walnuts until well combined. Let sit in fridge overnight (or up to a few days). Need some extra sweetness? Add 1/2 a banana, mashed!

Recovery Rice Crispies

News Flash: Protein powder ain't just for shakes! Try these super-sweet protein-packed treats—Recovery Rice Crispies—from trainer Rog Law.