

Healthy Snack & Meal Ideas for Teenagers *by Mary Saphyakhajon, MD, MS*

Instead of chips and dip...

Sun-dried tomato and garlic white bean dip

- One 15 ounce can of cannellini beans (also known as white beans, preferably no salt added or low sodium)
- One clove of garlic, peeled
- 2 tablespoons of oil-packed sundried tomatoes, drained
- 1 tablespoon of extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 tablespoon of lemon juice (optional)

In a food processor, combine beans, garlic and tomatoes until smooth. With food processor running, slowly add olive oil and then lemon juice. Add dash of salt and black pepper to taste. Serve with fresh crisp vegetables (carrots, celery, cucumber, tomatoes, radishes, broccoli, green beans), whole grain crackers or whole wheat pita crisps (see recipe below).

Not a fan of sundried tomatoes? Try other these other combinations for variety (omit garlic and sundried tomatoes). White beans are a perfect canvas for bold flavors.

- Rosemary and garlic: Add one tablespoon of fresh rosemary leaves and one clove of peeled garlic.
- Roasted red pepper: Add ¼ cup of roasted red pepper (pre-packaged in a jar) or roast your own! (Place 1 red bell pepper in oven at 400 degrees until outside is charred, approximately 20-25 minutes. Let cool, then peel charred skin and cut into strips.)
- Green onion and olive: Blend beans, lemon juice and olive oil. Add ¼ cup of chopped green onions and ¼ cup of olives and stir.

Whole wheat pita crisps

- Whole wheat pita bread, cut into quarters
- Olive oil

Lightly brush olive oil onto both sides of the pita bread. Place in oven for approximately 15 minutes at 350 degrees, or until lightly browned.

Instead of French fries...

Crispy Parmesan Zucchini and Green Bean Sticks (with marinara dipping sauce)

- 3 medium size zucchinis (cut in half, then quartered lengthwise)
- ¼ pound of green beans
- ¼ cup of all purpose flour
- 1 cup breadcrumbs
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- ¼ cup shredded parmesan cheese
- 1 tablespoon of olive oil

Mix breadcrumbs, parmesan cheese and flour in a large sealable bag. Dip zucchini sticks into egg wash, then place into bag and shake until coated. Shake off excess breadcrumb mixture and then repeat with green beans. Place zucchini and green beans on a baking tray and drizzle olive oil on top. Bake at 400 degrees for 20-25 minutes, until golden brown. Serve with your favorite marinara sauce on the side.

Instead of frozen pizzas...

Roasted Vegetable Whole Wheat Pita Pizzas

- 4 whole wheat pita bread
- ¾ cup of marinara sauce or tomato sauce
- 1 cup of roasted vegetables (see below for easy recipe)
- ¾ cup of low fat/reduced fat mozzarella cheese

For each pita bread: Spread 2 tablespoons of marinara or tomato sauce on one side of the pita bread. Arrange 1/3 of roasted vegetables over marinara sauce layer. Sprinkle approximately 2 tablespoons of mozzarella cheese over vegetable layer. Bake in 400 degree oven for 10-15 minutes, until cheese is melted.

Roasted Vegetable Medley

- 1 cup of mushrooms, sliced
- 1 medium eggplant, sliced into ½ inch rounds and then into quarters
- 1 medium zucchini, sliced lengthwise in half and then into ¼ inch slices
- ½ onion, sliced
- 1 bell pepper (red, orange or yellow), cut into quarters and then ¼ inch slices
- 1 tablespoon of olive oil
- 1 teaspoon of thyme, rosemary or oregano
- 1 teaspoon of salt

Mix ingredients in a large bowl until combined. Place on baking tray and bake in 375 degree oven for approximately 30 minutes. Stir vegetables after approximately 15 minutes in the oven.

*Other uses for Roasted Vegetable Medley:

- Pasta: Serve with whole wheat pasta and marinara sauce.
- Fajitas: Place vegetable filling in whole wheat or whole grain tortillas.
- Sandwiches: Place vegetable filling in between two slices of whole grain bread and 1 tablespoon of low fat mozzarella cheese. Warm in oven until cheese melts and bread is lightly toasted.

Instead of candy...

Fruit and Yogurt parfaits

- 2/3 cup of nonfat plain yogurt (Greek yogurt or plain)
- ¼ cup of fruit compote (see below for recipe)
- 1 tablespoon of chopped roasted almonds

Place 1/3 cup of yogurt in a glass. Add half of the fruit compote on top of the yogurt. Place another 1/3 cup of yogurt, then add the remainder of the fruit compote. Finish by sprinkling roasted almonds on top.

Fruit compote

- 2 cup of your choice of frozen fruit (strawberries, raspberries, mangos, pineapple or blueberries)
- ¼ cup of honey
- ½ cup of water

Bring fruit and water to a boil over medium heat. Decrease to low heat and let simmer approximately 10 minutes, until liquid has reduced by half. Once liquid has reduced, add honey and mix well. Remove from heat and let cool.

“Make Your Own” Trail mix

- 1 cup of variety of nuts (preferably almonds, pecans, almonds)
- 1 cup of dried fruit (diced apricots or apples, raisins, cranberries, blueberries, cherries)
- 1/3 cup of dark chocolate chips

Mix ingredients well. Appropriate serving portion: 1/3 cup.