

## Power snacks

We are all looking for the quick and easy snack that is going to transform our afternoon. What we also need to consider is the long-term impact on our health if the snack we choose is one that is not so good for our bodies. Check out these nutrient dense snacks that you often only need a little bit of in order to get long lasting energy.

### 5 Ingredient Avocado Mousse

#### Ingredients:

- 2 large avocados peeled, pitted, and halved
- 1/3 cup raw honey
- ½ cup raw cacao powder or unsweetened cocoa powder
- ¼ cup coconut milk
- 1/8 teaspoon sea salt

#### Directions:

Add all of the ingredients to a food processor or blender. Process until completely smooth.

Note: You may need to scrape the edges of the food processor and process again to get everything to combine.

Transfer to a sealable container and refrigerate at least 1 hour, or until ready to serve.

This will last 3-5 days in the fridge.

### Fudge Slice

#### Ingredients:

- 65 grams of almonds
- 35 grams of sunflower seeds
- 35 grams of pumpkin seeds
- 125 grams of desiccated coconut
- 85 grams of cacao
- 85 grams of coconut oil
- 85 grams of honey
- Optional: Freeze dried raspberries /pomegranate/goji berries

#### Directions:

Mix together all of the nuts and seeds in a high-speed blender until blended into small pieces.

Mix in melted coconut oil and all other ingredients.

Press into a tray and set in the fridge.

When set cut into smaller pieces and serve.

This can be kept in the fridge for 2 weeks or freezer for 6 months in a well-sealed container.

## Quick nut and date snack

### Ingredients:

3 fresh medool dates

Your favorite nut butter (ABC spread / macadamia nut butter / peanut butter / tahini)

### Directions:

Slice one side of the date and remove the seed.

Get a spoonful of your nut butter and put into the space that the seed was in.

## Zucchini Fritter Stack

### Ingredients:

- 1 medium zucchini grated
- 4 medium eggs
- Pinch of salt
- Ghee / butter for cooking
- Optional: pepper or ginger, (chilli!)
- Optional: add ¼ cup of cooked quinoa into the mix to add some extra protein.

### Directions:

Add all ingredients into a bowl and heat skillet on the stove.

Add a small nob of butter and allow to melt before adding ¼ of a cup of mix to pan.

Allow to cook for a 2-3 minutes until halfway.

Flip over and cook for another 1 minute.

Can be prepared in advance and eaten as a snack. They will last 3-5 days in the fridge.

### Nutrient dense foods:

- Eggs
- Bone broth (chicken/ beef)
- Beetroot
- Green leafy vegetables.
- ABC type spread / tahini
- Avocado
- Cacao
- Herbs and spices
- Ghee/Butter
- Quinoa / amaranth
- Salt (Pink/Himalayan or Celtic)
- Grass fed meat (chicken, beef, lamb, pork, etc.)
- Sprouts
- Fish
- Tofu

If you are eating foods that are high in energy but low in nutrition you end up being 'overfed and undernourished.' This may not seem like a huge issue but next time you are around town see that there are more people that are falling into the obese category.

It can be all too easy to point the finger at the larger population but the truth is some hormonal changes can happen in what you might call skinny people. You might call these the 'skinny-fat person.' What that means is that the ability to maintain blood sugar levels is lost meaning that they become at risk for cardiovascular disease (heart attack, stroke, diabetes to name a few). This is being represented even in elite athletes that are having high sugar gels and drinks to get them through training sessions. This means that you can be ultra-fit and still be having issues in regards to your health.

It does paint a fairly dire picture on what we can do. The good news is that it is as simple now as it has ever been to get things going on the right track. Eating foods that are rich in nutrition means that your body gets the fuel that it needs to heal and grow as well as give you energy that is stable and even all afternoon. With this in mind the following are some examples of what you might call superfoods (high nutrition, high energy).

**Green leafy vegetables:** The cruciferous vegetables get a special mention in this category, they have a beneficial effect when it comes to managing and balancing hormone levels. The sulforaphane in this family is essential for supporting phase 2 liver detoxification pathways. Green leafy vegetables in general are a great source of folate and other B group vitamins that will assist with energy balance as well as disease prevention in areas like cardiovascular disease and cancer.

**Eggs:** Eggs are a complete food package in themselves, easy to grow (just need chooks)! Eating nutrient-packed foods like eggs helps meet the increased nutritional requirements of ageing. Vitamins A, D, E and K are rarely found in food that is so widely available which is unique, these group of vitamins is needed for healthy immune function, vision and healthy skin. Eggs are also dense with minerals and rich in omega-3 fatty acids, particularly the long chain DHA and EPA. Recent research has also shown that consuming eggs does not lead to increase in serum cholesterol levels. #Note that it is vital that you get eggcellent quality eggs, you may not get the above benefits from a \$2 a dozen variety.

**Avocado:** Like anything, avocados should be eaten in moderation. On average, eating half an avocado most days is healthy, and will not make you put on weight. Remember the 'fat' from avocado is very beneficial and essential for our body. Avocados are best known for their content of 'good' oils. That is, they contain a high level of oleic acid (omega-9) a monounsaturated dietary fat. Eating a diet high in monounsaturated oils can assist in decreasing total cholesterol levels, increasing HDL ('good' cholesterol) and decreasing LDL levels ('bad' cholesterol). Oleic acid has also been shown to promote the production of antioxidants and slow the development of heart disease.

**Tahini:** Tahini is made from ground up sesame seeds. Often tahini can be used in a similar way to peanut butter on crackers or toast (the same is true of ABC spread [Almonds, Brazil and Cashew spread]). Tahini is a rich source of many different minerals but is particularly high in calcium. So, for parents that are considering a dairy free diet and are concerned about the lack of calcium in foods tahini is great to know about. Tahini will often come in hulled and unhulled varieties (the

hull is the outside shell of a sesame seed). This make the unhulled version a little more nutrient dense, as well as being a little more bitter to taste.

**Quinoa:** This fabulous grain, pronounced 'keen wa' is perhaps the best kept secret of South America. It was one of the ancient stable foods of the Incas where it was called 'the mother grain.' It is one of the best plant sources of protein, containing the 8 essential amino acids and the protein is easily digested. Quinoa provides a wide range of options into your everyday cooking; quinoa can be substituted for rice in most dishes which means you can pack in some extra fiber. Quinoa is also gluten free which means that it can be used more widely for those with intolerances.

**Beetroot:** Beetroot has a wide range of useful benefits ranging from helping with constipation to helping to clear the blood of toxic build up through to heart health. Beetroots offer a high quantity of antioxidants which help to maintain a healthy and strong body. The purple colour of beetroot has been shown to be linked to how well your brain ages and lack of blue/purple colour fruit and vegetables may be linked to the increase in mental health disorders like dementia and Alzheimer's.

**Cacao:** Cacao is packed full of magnesium and B group vitamins, which is interesting as these are the nutrients your body uses more of when under periods of stress. So really your body is doing a smart thing by looking for food that is going to nourish itself. A square or two a day is all that is needed to get the health benefits. Cacao is a complex food with over 300 compounds and chemicals in each bite! Therefore, to really enjoy and appreciate chocolate you need to take time to taste it. It is great for your mood and relaxing, improves memory and concentration as it is a stimulant, is full of flavonoids and antioxidants that protect our blood and cholesterol and improves blood flow to the heart.

**Honey:** Honey has some aspects that if gathered and spun from your local area will help to reduce your sensitivity to the pollens in that area. This means that it is better to source your honey from a local producer. The soothing consistency of honey makes it ideal to mend and heal the gastric lining. Nutrient density will change with each honey and what is available for the bees at the time, however it is highly rich in minerals and immune enhancing abilities.

**Herbs and spices:** Many people say that the food they eat is getting boring and bland. In this area, there are many combinations that will add a new splash of flavour into your dishes. Herbs and spices are also rich in phytonutrients, these are plant compounds that have a health benefit (curcumin from turmeric, allicin from garlic). These compounds have been shown to have extraordinary health benefits as well as improving the taste of the overall dish. The strength of these phytonutrients is strong so only small amounts are needed to get great results, however a range is best rather than lots of one and they are recommended daily. Some examples of these are garlic, ginger, turmeric, cinnamon, nutmeg, coriander, parsley, cumin, ajwain, mustard seeds, fennel and many more.

**# Note:**

The quality of the ingredients makes a big difference, to give you an example there will be a big difference between an egg that is free range and is outside in the sun eating insects, verses one that is in a cage and fed pellets.