

This Quiz Will Save Your Waist

Discover what prompts you to pig out—like stress or skimpy meals—and how to clean up your act.

By JACQUELINE ANDRIAKOS



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Late-Night Snacks Nutritionists Eat

These low-cal eats will hold you over until the a.m.



COTTAGE CHEESE WITH FRUIT

Kary Woodruff, RD, suggests a high-protein half cup of cottage cheese and berries if you're hungry before bed.



TRISCUITS AND GRAPES

"Three high-fiber crackers and a handful of grapes will be enough to quiet the stomach growling," says Georgia Kostas, RD.



MILK

A 12-ounce glass of milk is another filling, high-protein choice, says Woodruff.

Q/1

I mainly overdo it on junk food when...

- (A) I'm in certain specific situations, like being at the movies or the airport.
- (B) I'm starving!
- (C) I'm having one of those days.
- (D) I'm hanging out with bad eaters.

Q/2

My preferred snack is...

- (A) The go-to I always eat.
- (B) High in carbs to get my energy up fast.
- (C) The one that reminds me of my childhood or the best day ever.
- (D) Whatever is right there—from doughnuts at work to my kids' cheesy crackers.

Q/3

I find myself hankering for munchies...

- (A) At the same time every day—like right after my morning meeting or when I'm home watching Netflix.
- (B) An hour after a meal; my stomach is already growling.
- (C) When something awesome happens or I'm stressed-out.
- (D) When I see a food spread at work or communal bar snacks.

Q/4

If I'm snacking, it might look something like this:

- (A) I'm having my usual midafternoon trail mix pick-me-up.

- (B) I'm wolfing down whatever—even an apple will do at this point.
- (C) I've got a spoon in the ice cream carton after a crappy night.
- (D) Someone left cookies on the counter, and I grabbed 'em!

Q/5

How do you feel after you finish your snack?

- (A) I don't really notice.
- (B) Energized. I was going to collapse if I didn't get a quick nibble.
- (C) Happy, then guilty. I don't know if I really needed the treat.
- (D) Stuffed. I wasn't even hungry, to be honest.

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If You Got Mostly...



A's

You snack out of habit.

When Dallas-based nutritionist Georgia Kostas, RD, worked in a heart clinic, she had a diet soda at 4 p.m. each day like clockwork. "But when I went into private practice and my days changed, I realized I was just having the 4 o'clock treat because I was used to it. In a new setting, I switched to water," she says. Maybe you always have an after-dinner snack, or you get the same biscotti and caramel latte whenever you're shopping. "You may be snacking because you've programmed yourself to grab food at specific times or in certain scenarios," says Kostas.

FIX IT: Be mindful. "Ask yourself whether you're truly hungry for that snack, why you went to get it in the first place, and how it tastes, and chew slowly and take pauses as you eat," advises Kostas. The goal is to prevent autopilot noshing.



Have a healthy snack on hand and you'll sidestep those office doughnuts.



B's

Your meals aren't cutting it.

Snacking frequently because you're truly hungry is a clue that your meals aren't giving you lasting fullness and energy, notes Kostas. Your calories may be falling short, she says, "or you may not be getting the right balance of protein, healthy carbs with fiber, and good fats, which keeps you full and your blood sugar stable."

FIX IT: The tried-and-true plate method works, says Kostas: "A fourth of your plate should be protein, a fourth should be a healthy starch, like whole grains, and the other half should be vegetables." Include a small serving of healthy monounsaturated fat, like a quarter of an avocado, to stay full for up to five hours.

C's

You're an emotional snacker.

You tend to reach for snacks that feel comforting or satisfy a strong craving, says Lisa Drayer, RD, author of *The Beauty Diet*. And your needs are fueled by emotions (boredom, anxiety, loneliness, even total joy). "Calorie counts and fat grams may get ignored," she says, "and taste, texture, and other factors often take center stage."

FIX IT: Worry less about the snacking and focus on the core emotion, says Kostas. "Ask yourself, 'How am I feeling? What is it that I really need right now?'" Then choose a solution that shifts the focus away from food as a remedy. "Maybe you're ecstatic because you aced your job interview and want a reward; treat yourself to a manicure or favorite barre class instead of the fro-yo."



D's

You snack because it's there.

Always grabbing the free samples at Trader Joe's? Sounds like you munch out whenever food is around. That's one of the most common reasons people snack, according to a 2014 study in *Appetite*. "It has to do with visibility and convenience," explains Drayer.

FIX IT: The easiest solution? Don't keep treats out on the counters. Also, arm yourself with the right types of snacks, says Kary Woodruff, RD, assistant professor lecturer at the University of Utah. Tuck low-sugar protein bars or individual packets of nuts in your bag and desk drawer for when you're genuinely hungry. If you're just feeling the urge to nibble, pivot to a lighter pick, like a flavored rice cake, air-popped popcorn, or fresh veggies.

CHOCOLATE.
PEANUT BUTTER.
PROTEIN.
ZERO DOUBT.

OWN IT

