

Snack Attack - All You Need To Know About Snacking



Habitual. Spontaneous. Stressed. Compulsive. Emotional. Indifferent. Serial.

Whichever 'type of snacker' you may label yourself as, it all comes down to your mindset. We all know that snacking on junk food is "bad". Yet now that it is so prolific, we've reached a level of complete insensitivity to *what* we are actually snacking on and *how much* of it is actually going in.

And we've become totally okay with it regardless of the health consequences. All common sense has been left by the wayside and many justifications enable us to continue this behaviour.

Day. After. Day.

And just like that, it's become part of our lifestyle.

So, how did this actually stick on as a habit through the generations?

Why did our grandparents and parents start snacking?

More money to conveniently afford the treats that they had very rarely in the past, albeit only if they made it themselves from scratch.

Logistically, it would have been hard to overdo snacking back in the day because of the amount of resources and time it took to produce the snack and then have to share it amongst everyone.

Why did we start snacking?

- *Attempting to fill a gap left from eating too much starch and fat, leaving us malnourished and constantly exhausted*
- *Sheer availability of junk*
- *Stressful personal/professional situations*
- *Apathy towards our bodies for the sake of stimulating pleasure sensors in the brain*
- *To 'help' ourselves deal with any and every type of emotion we experience*
- *To feel better*
- *To kill time*
- *To socialize*
- *Just coz...?*

The sheer number of justifications that we have come up with to enable our snacking, make it clear why this has become a crutch for so many of us just to make it through the day. For us, it goes beyond remaining a simple habit like it has been for generations past. Instead, it seems, snacking poses as the solution to a myriad of day to day problems. And we are all clutching at it, rather tightly.

So... snacking is banned forever?

No. This isn't to say that life should be lived without ever eating snacks. The point for us to take away here is that- we overdid it. Really. We overdid it to such an extent, that we came up with

labels for the different types of snackers that we are.

So, this is our chance to turn our lifestyle around and unpin the snacking label that has been holding each one of us back thus far. Whether it be fried junk or nuts, sweets or fruit, juice or alcohol, remind yourself that there is a limit on anything you consider a snack. There is no need to fear hunger and stuff oneself with snacks. You can literally make an appropriate meal appear in front of you, in as little as an hour these days... no foraging required!

What we are snacking on and how much of it we are eating, really does matter. There is no such thing as a "safe snack". Overdoing any snack or food, regardless of the health claims bolstering it, will lead to negative health consequences.

Case in point: Those of us and our grandparents/parents who never went overboard with junk, ate a limited amount of snacks regularly or sparingly and followed an otherwise active or moderately active lifestyle, remain 'in shape'.

Those of us and our grandparents/parents who overdid snacks regularly, celebrated with food every chance we got, accompanied by either an active or mostly sedentary lifestyle, have found ourselves 'out of shape'.

How does one actually snack without overdoing it and still stay fit?

Snack like our grandparents did-

Step 1: Eat snacks/treats only on occasion. Put it on the calendar.

Step 2: Don't fear hunger and reach for a snack. Hunger will come and go.

Step 3: Share one snack portion with as many people as possible and avoid eating more than one entire portion. Share what's left with friends and family.

Step 4: If possible, make snacks at home with the family and repeat step 2

Step 5: If you achieve step 3, then there will be no need to store any snacks/treats at home.

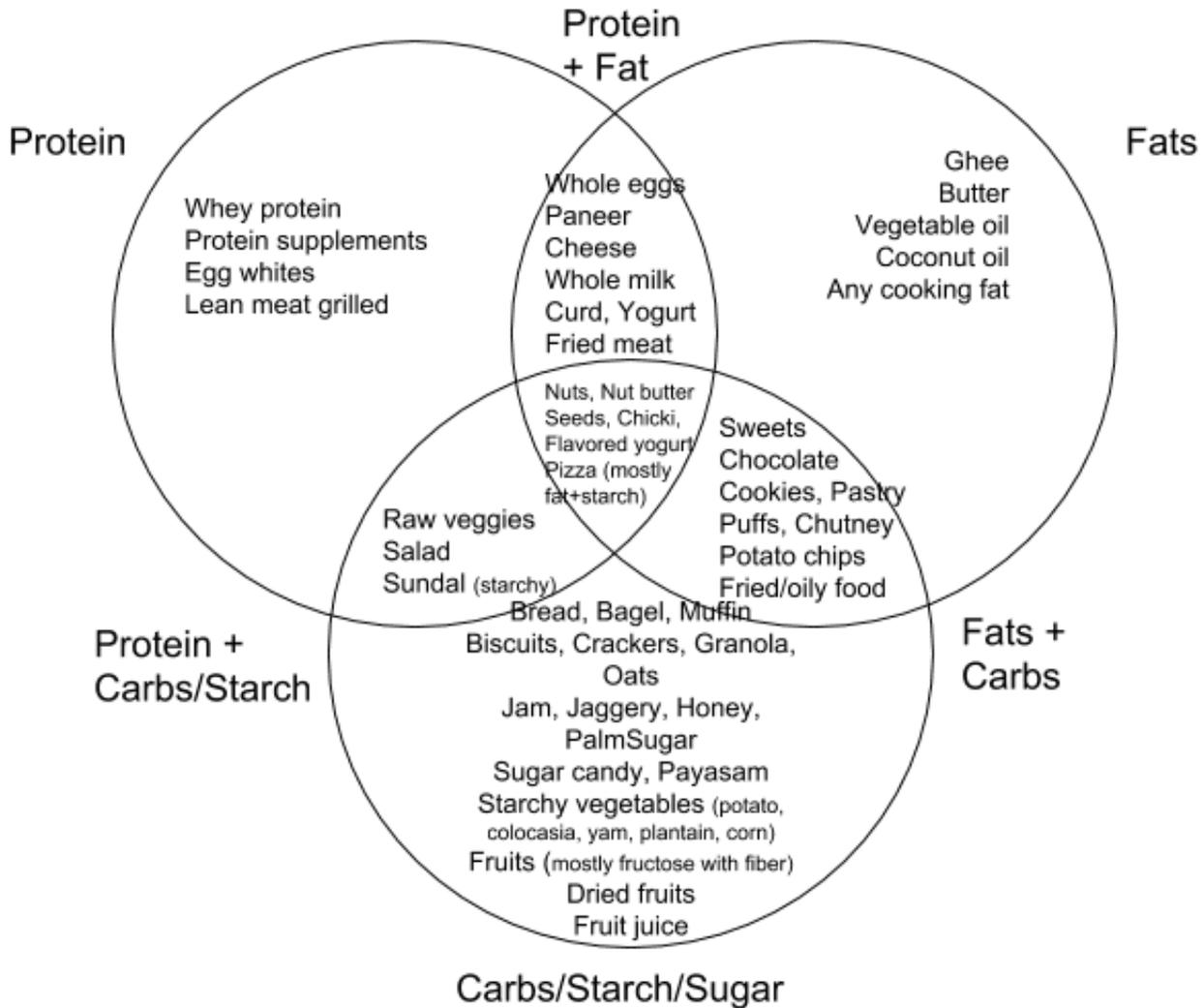
Give this a try, for a week... then for a month... and then some, and you will realise that snacking never *needed* to be part of your lifestyle to begin with.

What can we snack on and how much?

Any food, be it protein, carbs or fats consumed in excess of your body's nutritional needs will be deposited and stored as fat in the body. Most snacks, which typically contain enormous amounts of

starch and fat will end up as fat deposits in the body when overeaten. Whenever you do snack, keep it a rare occurrence, remember never to fill yourself with just snacks (instead of filling yourself with vegetables and protein) and opt for the foods that stack higher nutrient-wise.

It just comes down to making the right choices on *what* and *how much*. Below are foods that we commonly snack on. This is how they stack up:



Now that you know everything you need to know about snacking, be more mindful! Choose when, what and how much you snack based on your goals. That's it!