

Rethink Snacking: Defend Your Day With Walnuts

(NAPSA)—Ninety percent of American adults snack daily and could be gaining valuable nutrition. A paper published in the British Journal of Nutrition found that smaller nutritious meals eaten throughout the day contribute significantly to the nutrient quality of the diet. The key is making snacking choices that are not “empty calories” but healthful options, providing important vitamins and minerals.

Your body constantly defends against attacks from pollutants, free radicals and diseases, making it essential to fuel your body with nutrient-dense foods. According to celebrated cookbook author Mollie Katzen, “Wise snacking is essential to good health, since snacking can help keep our bodies ready to tackle anything.” California Walnuts are a natural defender of the human body, and research funded by the California Walnut Commission suggests that they may promote heart health and help protect against cognitive decline and some types of cancer. Walnuts are an excellent way to keep your body fueled.

Great snacking tips from Katzen:

- Plan Ahead:** Don't get caught ravenous. Keep walnuts on hand; they make a great portable snack.

- Measure Snack Portions:** Measure a portion of your snack first and then put away the rest so you're not tempted to overeat. Just a handful of walnuts (about one ounce) offers 2.5g of omega-3, along with protein, fiber and antioxidants.

- Make Sure Your Snack is Balanced:** A balanced mini-meal should keep you satisfied; whole-food ingredients will fuel your body and defend your health. Try these vegan, gluten-free Blue-



California Walnuts—natural defenders of the human body.

berry-Walnut Snack Bars, a favorite from Katzen.

Chewy Blueberry-Walnut Snack Bars

Nonstick spray

1 cup dried blueberries

3 cups additional dried fruit (mixed, per your taste)

1½ cups walnuts, chopped

¼ cup rice flour

¼ teaspoon salt

¼ cup agave nectar (or to taste)

¾ cup mashed silken tofu, soft or firm

Preheat the oven to 350°F (325°F for a glass pan). Lightly spray an 8-inch-square pan with nonstick spray and line with parchment paper. Chop dried fruit into bite-sized pieces and place in a medium bowl; add the walnuts. Sprinkle in the rice flour and salt, toss until combined. Spray a ¼-cup measure with nonstick spray before measuring the agave nectar (so it slides out easily!) then pour the nectar into the fruit and walnut mixture. Add the mashed tofu and mix with a spoon or your hands until everything is thoroughly combined. Spread the mixture into the prepared pan and bake in the center of the

oven for 30 to 40 minutes or until brown around the edges and the top is dry to the touch. You can remove the pan from the oven at this point or, for a chewier result, turn off the oven and leave the pan in there for up to 40 minutes longer. Cool the pan for about 20 minutes before cutting the mixture into about a dozen small bars. Transfer bars to a cooling rack and let them sit an hour. (They'll become chewy while “airing out” on the rack.) Store bars in a cookie tin at room temperature. If you'll be keeping them for more than a few days, seal them in a heavy plastic bag and store in the refrigerator or freezer. Enjoy at any temperature. (They're even good frozen.)

Yield: A dozen medium-small bars

Nutrition information per serving: Calories 280; Total Fat 10g; Saturated Fat 1g; Mono Fat 1g; Poly Fat 7g; Cholesterol 0mg; Sodium 110mg; Carbohydrates 43g; Fiber 6g; Protein 4g

Recipe Courtesy of Mollie Katzen for the California Walnut Commission.

For more great recipes, walnut research and health tips, visit www.walnuts.org.

