

NUTRITION NEWS & NOTES

Foods That Pack An Energizing Punch

(NAPSA)—Too busy to find something healthy to eat? Before you make another trip to the vending machine, you might wish to consider a smarter snacking option—one that requires no prep time, but can boost your energy level. That's the advice from nutritionists who recommend we take a closer look at convenient snacks to fuel our bodies with energy.

"Often, when people are busy and on-the-go, they end up eating foods that are not nutritious and portions that are too large. The result is that we then end up feeling sluggish," says Leslie Bonci, M.P.H., R.D. "I recommend buying foods that are portion-controlled and that fuel your body with both carbohydrates and protein. This helps make snacking more healthy by controlling the amount of food you are putting in your body."

Bonci, nutritionist for several athletic teams, including the Pittsburgh Steelers, Cincinnati Reds and Toronto Blue Jays, encourages people looking for a quick and nutritious energy boost to try individually wrapped cheese wedges.

"Look for cheese, which provides both calcium and protein, to help fuel your body with energy," she says. "In addition to being an energy source, protein helps build strong muscles, hair and nails. Cheese is a great quick snack and makes a wonderful, healthy platter for a holiday party."

Bonci recommends foil-wrapped Laughing Cow Gourmet Cheese Bites and the Mini Babybel line of all-natural cheeses, which come individually wrapped in red wax. She also has some simple energy-boosting tips that are great for people who have limited time but need maximum energy:

- Get an extra hour of sleep.



Cheese wedges can be a delicious, nutritious way to get an energy boost.

- Stick to an eating schedule; take an energy break every three hours.

- Drink regularly: sparkling water, tea, a splash of juice in seltzer, and tomato or vegetable juice.

- Eat smaller amounts more often.

- Don't rely on caffeine for energy; it is a stimulant. A latte with skim milk and a granola bar is more nutritious and energizing.

- Include some protein at every meal and most snacks, Good choices include milk, yogurt, cheese, eggs, beans, poultry, fish or meat.

Bonci's recommendations also include what she calls "Energy Detractors." By avoiding these pitfalls, you can help maintain a higher energy level from your diet.

- Skipping meals;
- Not getting enough sleep;
- Eating large, infrequent meals;

- Overdoing it on alcohol;
- Eating high-sugar/high-fat snacks; and

- Skipping on fluids.

For more information, visit www.thelaughingcow.com.