

Achieve

A Newsletter
for AvMed
Members

▶ YOUR HEALTHIEST LIFE WITH COPD

Healthy eating tips for better breathing

The foods you eat can affect how well you breathe. Here's how good nutrition and getting the right amount of calories each day can help you feel better.

Calories count. With chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), you may burn up to 10 times more calories just to breathe. You may need to eat more to avoid weight loss, which can leave you feeling weak and tired. Your doctor or a dietitian can help you set calorie goals and keep a healthy weight.

Focus on nutrients. Filling your plate with a variety of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and lean proteins

is the best way to cover all your nutritional bases. If you're struggling to finish a full meal, supplements can help fill in the gaps. Talk to your doctor before taking one though — many can interfere with medications.

Keep an eye on carbs. The body uses oxygen to break down food into fuel. It then releases carbon dioxide as a waste product. Carbs tend to create more carbon dioxide as they're digested. Your doctor or a registered dietitian can help

you find the right balance of carbohydrates to make it easier to breathe.

Watch the bloat factor. Eating big meals does more than leave you feeling sluggish — it can make it harder to breathe. A full stomach doesn't give your lungs much room to expand. Some people with COPD find it helpful to eat five or six smaller meals each day. You may also want to go easy on foods that give you gas or make you feel too full.





Managing COPD in heat and humidity

Summer heat and humidity can make breathing with COPD harder.

“During extreme weather, there’s an increased flare of underlying lung disease, hospitalizations, and mortality related to COPD,” says Kapil Patel, M.D. He’s an associate professor of medicine at the University of South Florida in Tampa.

Hot, humid weather can irritate airways. And heat tends to make pollution worse, which can also trigger a COPD flare-up. Here are Dr. Patel’s tips to breathe easier this summer:

Stay cool: “If you feel that air-conditioning and a fan inside your home allows you to be more functional with less symptoms, then stay there,” says Dr. Patel. Or go to cooler public centers, such as the local library or park district.

Keep moving: On hot days, find ways to be active indoors. That might

be in your home or at a local gym. Going to an indoor mall or large store is also a great option.

Avoid midday sun: If staying in doesn’t work for you, get outside in the early morning or evening when it’s cooler.

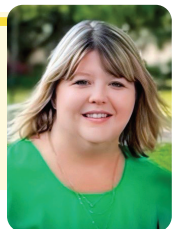
Stay hydrated: Drink fluids like water regularly throughout the day. Dr. Patel notes that this will help with dry mouth too, which can occur due to mouth breathing.

Go to that summer BBQ: You don’t have to sacrifice fun times on hot days. Bring a portable fan to stay cool and hydrate with cold beverages. Consider using your nebulizer beforehand so that your airways are as open as possible, says Dr. Patel. Then, go have fun in the sun.

Case Manager Spotlight

Donna Lynn has been with AvMed for almost two years and a Registered Nurse for 22 years.

“My favorite thing about being a case manager is meeting our members where they are in life and being a part of their journey of managing their condition and achieving their health goals.”





Healthy Eating Made Simple

Elizabeth Ferrer, R.D., AvMed's Registered Dietitian, shares her favorite tips for happier, healthier meals — without feeling deprived.

What to snack on?

Fiber and protein are the keys to a satisfying snack. These nutrients help keep you full. And, when paired with carbs — like fruit or crackers — they lessen the impact on blood sugar.

Look for packaged snacks that are lower in salt and added sugar. Trail mix, peanut butter crackers, or a granola bar are healthier options with protein and fiber.

Or try one of these simple, DIY snacks:

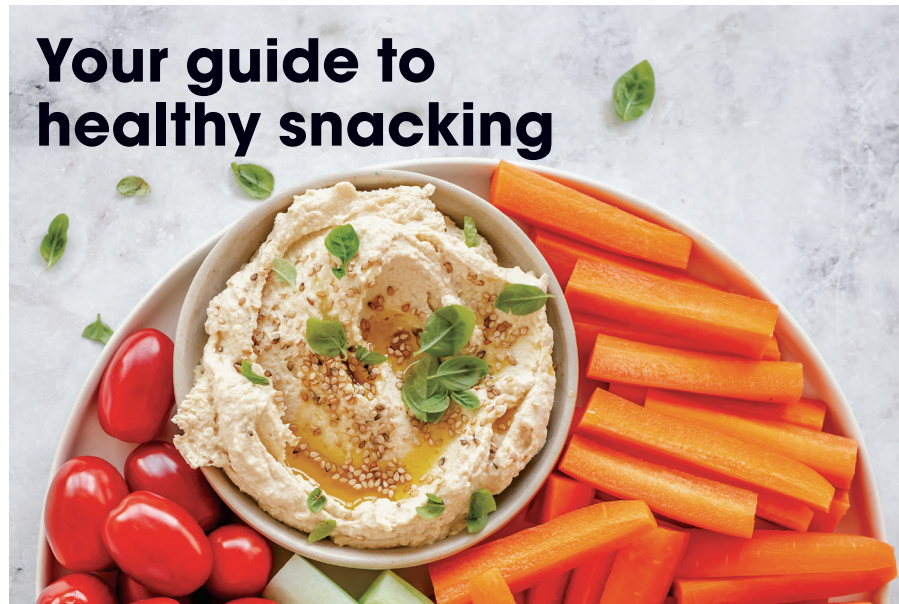
**½ cup cottage cheese
+ ½ cup sliced peaches
(120 calories)**

**¼ cup hummus
+ ½ cup baby carrots
(125 calories)**

**1 tbsp nut butter
+ 1 apple (200 calories)**

Unencrypted email makes it easier to communicate with your case manager!

To opt in, scan the QR code with your phone. Log in or register to the member portal and select "Set My Preferences."



Your guide to healthy snacking

You know you need three square meals a day — but what about snacks? The truth is snacks are not a mandatory part of a healthy diet.

In fact, if you're trying to lose weight, cutting out snacks can be a good place to start. But if you tend to get a bit hungry between meals, add a small snack (100 to 200 calories) so you're not starving (and prone to overeating) when your next meal comes around.

If you're trying to gain weight or are struggling to eat enough calories (for example, if you have COPD), adding high-calorie snacks (300 to 500 calories) like nuts, avocado, and Greek yogurt can help you meet your goals.

Snacks can also help if you have diabetes. Blood sugar-lowering medicines can cause hypoglycemia if you go too long without eating. Small snacks can help keep your blood sugar in range.

Recipe



Chocolate Peanut Butter “Nice Cream”

Serves 2 | Prep time: 5 minutes

Frozen bananas blend into an ice cream-like treat with no added sugar or dairy.

Ingredients

2 ripe bananas, frozen
2 tbsp no-salt-added peanut butter
1 tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder

Nutrition Info

Calories 171 | Fat 9g (Sat Fat 2g) | Cholesterol 0mg | Sodium 5mg
| Carbs 19g | Fiber 3g | Sugar 12g (inc. 0g Added Sugar) | Protein
5g | Vit D 0µg | Calcium 15mg | Iron 1mg | Potassium 340mg

Directions

Break the frozen banana into small pieces. Add to a food processor or blender with the peanut butter and cocoa powder. Blend until smooth. Serve immediately or freeze for later.

TIP:

Got bananas that are past their prime? Bananas get sweeter and softer as they ripen, so those brown, overripe bananas are perfect for this recipe. Peel them and break them into small pieces, then stash them in the freezer for later.