



The UNIVERSITY of  
WEST ALABAMA

College life doesn't exactly lend itself to a traditional healthy lifestyle: long hours, early mornings, caffeine, missed meals and poor food choices can definitely take their toll.

While you can't control the study requirements or your class times, you can at least take charge of what you put in your body. And by planning ahead with snacks and meal substitutes that give your body what it needs, you can keep running full speed throughout your day (and into the night).

Fill your backpack with no-prep, easy-to-pack snacks to avoid those energy dips (and avoid saying things when you're hangry that you'll regret later):

**Nuts and other high-protein snacks** – Protein is great for energy, giving you a boost that lasts longer than sugar or caffeine. And when you can't make time for a full meal, you can substitute a handful of cashews, almonds or a protein bar.

Trail mix offers an alternative to nuts, combining several types of nuts with dried fruit and even chocolate for a quick, delicious lift along with lasting energy.

**Cheese and yogurt** – Obviously a great source of vitamin D, dairy snacks are a great way to satisfy hunger pangs. Lots of the tasty choices in this category – baby cheese wheels, string cheese, yogurt cups, or even liquid yogurt drinks – offer the added benefit of a nostalgic journey straight back to the 7<sup>th</sup> grade cafeteria.

**Fresh Fruit** – When you're craving something sweet, avoid the vending machine and opt for fresh fruit instead. Pack a bag of grapes or berries rather than candy or cookies. Oranges, apples and bananas are also easy-to-eat options that come in their own single-serve packaging.

**Veggies** – Satisfy your need for a crunchy snack with fresh vegetables rather than chips. Single-serving hummus or guac makes simple veggie sticks more interesting. Chop or slice peppers, celery, or carrots (or avoid knives entirely with baby carrots) for dipping and crunching. Your mom will be proud of you.

**Dark chocolate** – If you just can't resist chocolate any longer – and let's be honest, sometimes *only* chocolate will do – make sure you choose dark chocolate. It'll give you the punch of energy you're after, and it's good for your heart, too.

By making more conscientious choices about what you eat and drink, you'll feel better, sleep better, have more energy, improve your get-up-and-go, and maybe even boost your academic performance. It doesn't take much – just a quick trip to the grocery store and a little prep – to make a big difference.