

## health note

## Surprisingly Unhealthy Foods

You try to be good, skipping the candy and soda and bringing home juice and whole-grain granola bars instead. Believe it or not, sometimes you'd be just as well off with the "unhealthy" snack.

Here's some interesting food advice from dietitian Susan Burke March, M.S., R.D., author of *Making Weight Control Second Nature: Living Thin Naturally* (Mansion Grove House, 2009) and resident online nutrition expert for [HealthyWage.com](http://HealthyWage.com).



- **Yogurt** – Plain, low-fat or nonfat yogurt packs calcium, vitamin D, magnesium and protein, but many manufacturers load it with added sugar, "granola" and nuts. Yogurt should have just two ingredients: milk and live cultures.
- **Tortilla and taco shells** – Many brands are made with hydrogenated fat or trans fat (hydrogenated oils). Seek out whole-wheat tortilla and taco shells made with canola or other vegetable oils.
- **Instant oatmeal** – The "maple" or other flavors in these instant cereals can have more than 12 grams of sugar per serving.

Buy whole oats, microwave with water for a minute, stir in a quarter-cup of raisins and cook for one more minute.

- **Granola** – Most packaged granolas list the serving size as a quarter-cup, with about 160 calories per serving. No one is satisfied with just a quarter-cup of cereal and will pour their usual cup, for a total of 640 calories, plus milk!
- **"Miracle" juices** – Fruit juices offer no fiber, but plenty of excess calories. Eat whole fruit for more energy and fiber.
- **"Energy" bars** – Most bars are high in calories, making them more akin to candy bars than nutritious snacks. For sustainable energy, grab a cup of 100-calorie yogurt and stir in a cup of crunchy low-sugar cereal.
- **Microwave popcorn** – Additives make this high in fat calories, and microwave popcorn is often loaded with hydrogenated fat. It's healthier to use an air-popper.
- **Rice cakes** – Rice cakes offer little nutritional value and little fiber; they're often high in sodium and sugar. Try slicing whole-wheat pita into quarters, spray with cooking spray and toast.

– Christina Elston

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