

# Healthy Options For Airport Food

by Laura Carson Miller

Whether you find yourself constantly traveling for work, or just take a single vacation each year, being hungry at the airport can sabotage your healthy eating habits and cause you to scramble for the nearest cinnamon roll stand. Don't let your diet fall by the wayside when traveling. With proper planning you can avoid derailing your diet with airport food. Here are seven tips to help you make healthy choices at the airport food court.



We've enlisted the help of Tanya Zuckerbrot, MS, RD, a nutritionist and author of the *F-Factor Diet*, to offer expert advice on finding the best food choices, pre- and post-flight. "Airports in particular can be a diet disaster," Tanya tells us. "Cinnamon buns, buttery pretzels, and bags of chips and candy -- even items that seem healthy, such as sandwiches found at Au Bon Pain -- are often loaded with high-fat condiments like mayonnaise and garnishes like bacon, which can pack as much as 700 to 800 calories and more than 20 grams of fat per sandwich!" Here are Tanya's tips for purchasing healthier options on the go:



## Beware of hidden ingredients

Stay away from any airport sandwiches laden with heavy mayonnaise or bacon. Also avoid tuna and egg salads, as these are often very high in fat due to the mayo. If available, opt for sandwiches with veggies and lean protein such as turkey or chicken with little to no mayonnaise.



## Safe picks

Some airport delis or restaurants offer grilled chicken or a garden salad with dressing on the side, both of which are generally good picks.



## The quick snack

Yogurts can often be purchased at airport food stands. Choose low-fat, reduced-sugar versions. To add some crunch and fiber, bring individual portions of F-Factor Skinnys cereal ( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup) and sprinkle on yogurt.



## Fruit never fails

Fresh fruit or fruit salads sold at many stands are always a good, low-fat bet. If you're in a rush to make a flight, grab a fruit cup, banana or apple to take on the plane.

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## Go Nuts - carefully!

Many airport stores sell large bags of nuts mixed with dried fruit. While nuts in moderation are great sources of heart-healthy fat, one serving may range from 130 to 160 calories and 13 grams of fat. Additionally, many bags contain as many as 10 servings! If you tend to go overboard with portions, you would probably be better off bringing your own nuts in pre-measured amounts. A serving of nuts is about 1 ounce (23 almonds, 49 pistachios, or 30 peanuts).



## Curb your hunger

If healthy food is nowhere in sight and your stomach is growling, grab a tall skim latte. The milk has some protein and calcium and may be enough to fill you up.



## Be prepared

Some portable snack options include: raw nuts (but keep the portions to about  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup), soy nuts, fresh fruit, mini carrots and bottled water. For a budget-friendly option, pack snacks in your carry-on and bring an empty water bottle to fill up after going through airport security.



*Knowing what to look for and what to avoid will help you eat healthy at the airport. While packing your own snacks might require a little extra effort, you'll know exactly what you're eating and can keep your diet from being sabotaged by airport food.*