

Trail Mix

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Snacks are foods eaten outside of a structured meal. They provide, on average, about one-fourth of daily calories. Many times, snacks don't contribute the most nutritious part of our daily food intake.

Trail mixes provide a healthy and convenient snack mix. When you make your own trail mix, you can control the ingredients for the most nutrition.

Make your own trail mixes by combining nuts; dried fruit; cereals and small crackers.

Here are some tips for making healthy trail mixes:

- Limit the serving size to about 1/4 cup to keep calories at a reasonable amount.
- Use unsalted versions of nuts.
- Choose cereals and crackers that are whole grain, and lower in sugar and salt.
- Limit the amount of added candy. Consider using "mini" versions of candy, such as mini chocolate chips, to distribute a smaller amount of candy throughout the mix.



Here's a trail mix recipe to get you started.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup almonds
- 1/2 cup chocolate chips or M&M's
- 1 cup dried fruit
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 1 cup oatmeal squares

Directions:

1. Measure ingredients and put in a large zip-close bag.
2. Shake to mix.
3. Portion into single-serving zip-close bags.

Makes 16 servings; Serving size: 1/4 cup

Per serving: 140 calories, 20 g carbohydrate, 6 g fat, 3 g protein

Source: Courtesy of North Dakota State University Extension Service at www.ndsu.edu/eatamart

(Photo by Alice Henneman)