



Don't Be Fooled By "Healthy" Foods

Prepared By Amber O'Neal

While on a quest for weight loss, we often search for every small advantage we can find. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but sometimes it leads us to make emotional food choices rather than choosing healthy foods based on proven facts. Emotionally, the following list of foods may sound like great options, but read on to find out why they may fool you:

- Fat-free cookies/cakes: Usually have nearly as many calories as their full-fat counterparts. Calories do count.
- Sugar-free cookies/candy: Just as many calories as the regular foods, just no sucrose (table sugar)
- Wheat bread/crackers: "Wheat" means refined white flour (with little fiber) unless it's preceded by the word "whole".
- Fruit drinks, beverages, punch: Little fruit juice. Basically frozen sweetened water.
- Trail mix: Its "high energy" comes from concentrated calories, largely fat.
- All-fruit jam: No more nutritious than regular jam. Sugar is sugar.
- Reduced-fat peanut butter: Nearly as many calories as the regular stuff (the fat is replaced by corn syrup solids).
- Granola bars: Nutritionally more like candy bars than whole grains.
- Spinach Pasta: Very little spinach and no nutritional advantages.
- Chicken hot dogs: Only a little better than pork/beef dogs, unless labeled "reduced-fat".
- Frozen yogurts: Usually lots of added sugar; some have 9 grams of fat per cup. Compare labels.
- Bran muffins: May contain no whole-wheat flour, but lots of eggs, butter, oil, sugar, and other sweeteners. A large one may have as much fat as a Big Mac and more than 500 calories.
- Banana chips: More like potato chips than bananas or dried fruit. Lots of fat, calories, and usually sugar.
- Fast-food chicken or fish sandwiches: Usually breaded and deep-fried. Nearly as many calories and as much fat as a Whopper.

These tips were brought to you by Amber O'Neal, Certified Personal Trainer and Owner of Café Physique, a fitness and nutrition company specializing in studio and in-home personal training, yoga & pilates and nutrition counseling in Metro Atlanta. For more information, please visit

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