



“Healthy” foods that don’t help with weight loss

Weight loss can be a difficult task. What works well for one person may not work for another. In addition, so many foods on store shelves claim they are “natural,” “reduced calorie” or “light.” Does this mean you should eat them when you’re trying to lose some weight?

Weight-loss or “diet” claims on food aren’t always a sign that you should eat them when you’re hoping to slim down. Some of these foods can be filled with unhealthy additives, sugar or salt. Beware of these “healthy” foods during your next trip to the store:



Low-calorie or light breads

While some lower calorie breads are nutritious, others are not. Some diet breads contain little to no fiber. Because fiber makes you feel full, these diet breads may make you feel hungry soon after eating them. Before buying any “light” or diet breads, check the nutrition label for fiber content. You may be better off eating a “whole grain” type of bread that contains more nutrition and fills you up.

Light yogurt

Yogurt can be a healthy choice, filled with calcium, friendly bacterial cultures and protein. But, many “light” yogurts have low protein and contain additives such as artificial sweeteners, leaving you feeling hungry again before your next meal. For a healthy yogurt, look for one that contains little to no added sugar or sweeteners, and at least 10 grams of protein. Many Greek varieties contain a good amount of protein. Sweeten your yogurt with fresh or frozen fruit.

Light salad dressings

Many salad dressings cut out extra fat from oils, replacing it with sugar, salt and flavorings. But, the healthy fats found in vegetable oils like olive oil don’t have to be avoided completely. In fact, small amounts can help you feel full and are heart-healthy. Add a splash of olive oil and your favorite vinegar to salad for a healthy dressing without unhealthy ingredients. The key is to limit the amount of oil to 1-2 teaspoons at a time.

Granola

This food seems so healthy, packed with whole grain oats, raisins and nuts. But, many granola cereals and snacks contain loads of sugar, making it easy to eat a few hundred calories in one portion. If you enjoy granola, measure out your serving size to see how much you are really eating. And, look for varieties with little to no added sugars and salt.

Sources: Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute on Aging