



## BRAIN TRUST: WHY YOU NEED HEALTHY STUDY SNACKS FOR FINALS

Selene Angier | Textbooks.com | Published May 5, 2017

You're in the library plowing through the 50 pages of macroeconomics reading, memorizing your 200 biology flash cards, and oh, what's next on the list? Oh, yeah, that lit paper on Tolkien. After five hours of non-stop hard work, you're losing focus and you're losing steam. Sounds like you need some healthy study snacks to get back on track.

We talked to Janel Funk, a Boston-based registered dietician, about her favorite easy brain food picks. The nutrition expert, who works with college students at The Boston Conservatory at Berklee College of Music, recommends easy snacks you can eat on the go that combine protein, complex carbs, and good fats. (Yes, some fat is good – read on for why.)

**1. Trail mix with dried fruit, nuts, and dark chocolate chips** “The dried fruit provides energy, while the fat and protein in the nuts gives sustained energy and satiety,” says Funk.

**2. Greek yogurt with berries** “The high protein content in the Greek yogurt keeps blood sugar stable,” she continues, “while the fiber in the berries keeps you fuller between meals.”

**3. String cheese and fresh fruit** “Portable and delicious, this snack combination combines filling fiber and satiating protein.”

And what is it about these healthy study snacks that makes them good choices? It's the balanced triple threat of carbs, protein, and good fat. Like good study partners they each have a role and work well together.

### CARBS for fuel and - het hem - your brain

Our bodies require carbohydrates for energy and optimal brain function, according to [One Green Planet](#). Despite the great sugar and carb witch hunt in last 10 years, carbs are especially important when you're studying for finals and need to be alert, and might not be getting regular night's sleep. Ever stay up late and then the next day, your body is in a feeding frenzy for pizza, French fries, and pasta (all in one sitting)? Your body wants energy. Choose complex carbs (over refined sugar and flours) then add veggies for fiber, vitamins, and anti-oxidants to combat free radicals.

### PROTEIN for satiety and cell repair

The protein in your study snacks will help you feel fuller longer and will help [keep your blood sugar from spiking](#). That nosedive you felt an hour after downing a sleeve of Oreos and a half bag of barbecue potato chips? That's the sugar crash. Keep things balanced with high protein options (and eliminate refined carbs). Protein also helps repair cells and muscle, according to [WebMD](#), and if you manage stress with sweat-inducing cardio or lifting sessions, then you need protein.

### FAT for satiety, energy, and happiness (yup, happiness)

It's the F word in the eating world, and only it's good friend the carb knows what the words “underappreciated” and “vilified” mean. Ignore that when it comes to healthy snacking. Good fats help you feel full, give you energy, and, let's face it, make stuff taste good. And, as the experts at Eat This, Not That will have you know, [fat makes you happy](#).

So, the next time you're shopping for healthy study snacks put good-fat options like avocados, olives, nuts, and dark chocolate on the list. They might just be your study snack lifesaver when you're putting the finishing touches on that soon-to-be-A paper about everyone's favorite lifesaver, Gandalf.

Want more ideas for healthy study snacks? Check out Janel's site [EatWellwithJanel.com](#) or connect with her on [Facebook](#).