

From the Nutritionist

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Healthy Choices in Grab and Go

When you think of eating a healthful meal, you may picture yourself sitting down at your parents' kitchen table, a health-conscious restaurant, or The Bistro dining hall. You may know that taking a break from a busy schedule to enjoy a meal is good for your body and your mind, so you might not think that a healthful meal could include grabbing some convenience foods and eating on the go. Yet, many of us find ourselves pressed for time and needing to eat on the run at least once in a while.

If you do find yourself needing to grab some food and go, try to make it as nutritious as possible. Typical snack foods like chips, cookies and candy bars may fill you up, but won't give you lasting energy. The same holds true for typical fast foods, like burgers, fries and soda. These are fine occasionally but shouldn't be a regular part of anyone's diet. Instead, focus on the food groups. Vegetables, fruits, lean proteins, dairy foods and whole grains will give you energy and nutrients your body needs. Choosing foods from 2 or 3 food groups is a great way to get an energizing snack. For meals, see if you can eat foods from 4 or even all 5 food groups.

Whether you're looking for a full meal or small snack, ASC has healthy choices for you in our Grab-and-Go areas. Here are some top picks for nutrient-rich foods from each food group:

- Whole grains: whole wheat bread, quinoa, oatmeal, popcorn
- Vegetables: salads, cut up veggies like carrots, celery or broccoli
- Fruit: fruit salad or whole fruit like apples, oranges, bananas
- Protein: lean meats, tuna, hard boiled eggs, peanut butter, hummus
- Dairy: low fat or fat free milk, yogurt, or string cheese

While you can get some of these foods by themselves, like hard boiled eggs and peanut butter, ASC also has many options that combine several food groups together. Some nutritious and delicious Grab-and-Go options to try are: the ALT (avocado, lettuce and tomato sandwich), the Fiesta Quinoa Salad, the Carrot and Hummus Bowl, and the Apple and Peanut Butter Bowl.

Grab-and-Go foods can be found at most ASC retail locations: The Bookmark, Dragon's Court, The Dragon's Den, Fuel and Hilltop.

Andrea Hart, registered dietitian nutritionist and New York state-certified dietitian/nutritionist, is available for free, confidential, one-on-one counseling and as a speaker or facilitator for campus groups, panels or classes.