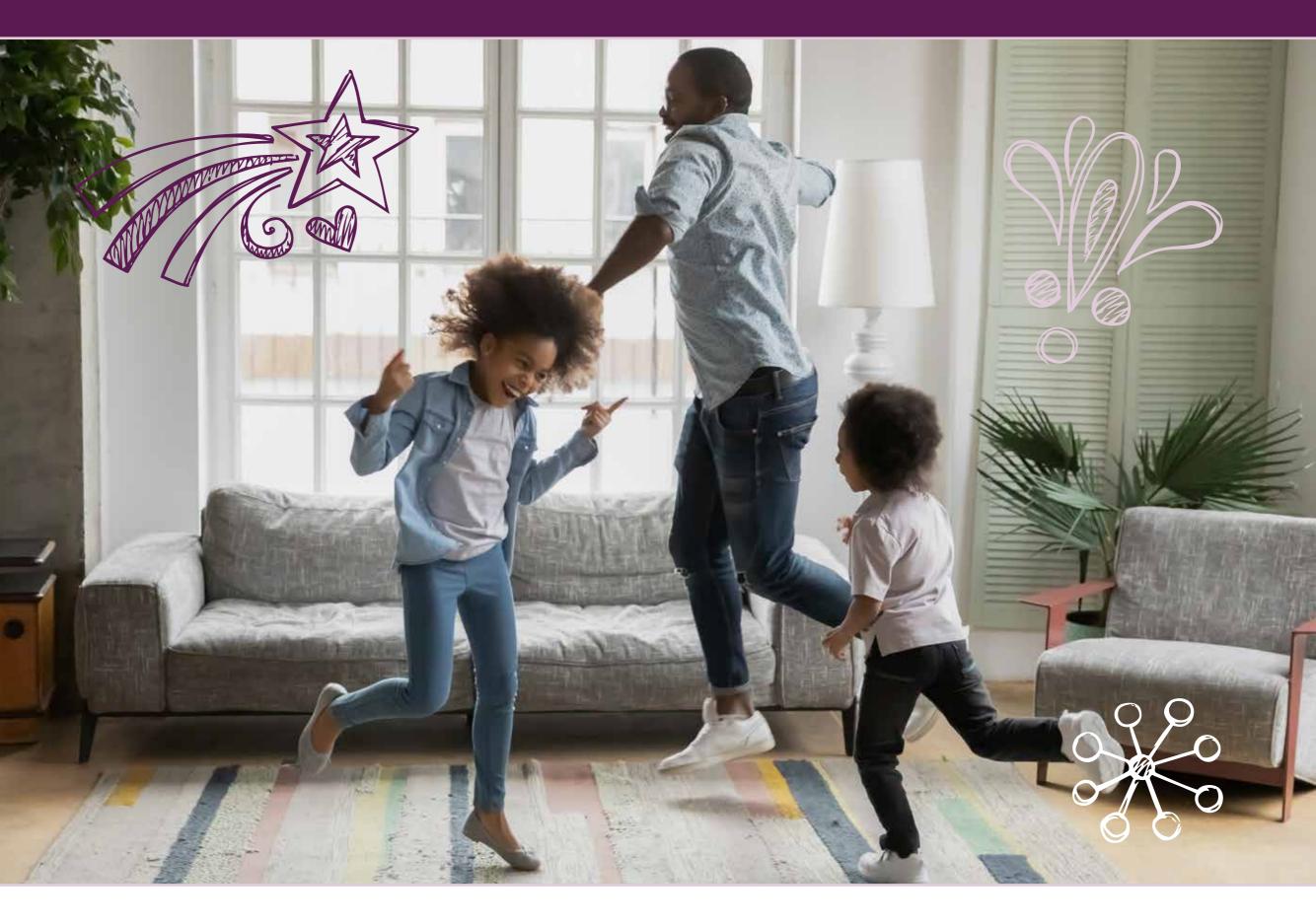
## GREAT SNACKS TO FUEL YOUR AFTERNOON

2 pm-itis. Midday slump. Gotta-nap-now feeling. It's that sluggish wave that hits halfway between lunch and dinner that has you reaching for a mini bag of pretzels or a candy bar. It's better to ditch those mindless treats and opt instead for energy-boosting snacks to help you power through and finish your day strong. These high-protein, lower-carb and all-around healthy snack ideas pack a punch of flavor and offer the pick-me-up you need right about now.

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Core and slice an apple crosswise, spread with nut butter and add toppings like mini chocolate chips, coconut shreds or nuts.



Stir together 3 tablespoons of chia seeds, 1 cup of nut or fatfree milk, ½ teaspoon vanilla and maple syrup to taste. Refrigerate at least 2 hours. Scoop out ½ cup, top with berries and pistachios or stir in cocoa powder, coconut and fresh pineapple chunks.



Drain and cook canned chickpeas in a sauté pan with a little oil until crispy, then toss with a Cajun or Everything Bagel spice blend.



Slice cucumbers ¼ inch thick and add tuna, seafood or egg salad, grated onion and a grape tomato half. Or top with light cream cheese, smoked salmon, onion and capers.



Thinly slice beets, carrots, radishes or sweet potatoes, coat with oil or cooking spray, and season with salt and pepper. Spread in a single layer on a parchment-lined sheet pan. Bake 10 to 12 minutes at 425° or until crisp, turning them halfway.



Peel a banana, cut in half and dip in 50/50 lemon juice and water to prevent browning. Dip each banana half in melted dark chocolate, roll in dried fruits, nuts or coconut, then place on a parchment-lined sheet pan until the chocolate hardens. Store in the freezer.



Layer Greek yogurt, a drizzle of honey or agave and fresh or frozen blueberries, cherries, raspberries or strawberries.





Whisk matcha powder into nut or low-fat milk, adding honey to sweeten. Enjoy with a square of dark chocolate.



Choose a flavored tortilla, then add hummus, low-fat cream cheese or mashedup beans. Add red pepper slices, baby spinach, diced tomatoes, cucumbers or red onions. Roll up and slice in 1-inch pieces.



Slice Medjool dates in half and stuff with nut butter or light cream cheese. Sprinkle on chopped pistachios.



Toast a grainy slice of bread, then top with nonfat Greek yogurt, lemon or lime zest and fresh herbs. Add very thinly sliced tomatoes or cucumbers and sprinkle on sesame seeds.



Mix nonfat plain yogurt, agave or honey, berries, chocolate chips and a pinch of salt. Spread on a parchment-lined baking sheet and freeze. Break into pieces and store in a container or zip-close bag in the freezer.



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