

Ditch the Chips! // Top 10 Tips for Healthy Road Trips



Where is your next road trip destination? Wherever you are headed, ditch the chips and follow these tips to stay healthy on the road!

Summer time is often filled with road trips. Living in Utah, there are often wide and vast stretches of highway between destinations, and most breaks include gas stations and tourist attractions that are known to stock sugary drinks, candies, sweets and salty snacks. It's not always easy to eat healthy foods while on the road, or any vacation for that matter, but it can be done.

Here are some ideas of how to be healthy on road trips and vacations:

1. Pack a small cooler with easy-to-eat healthy snacks (and wet wipes and garbage bags for easy clean up) such as:

- Apples (Be aware of Agriculture check points that won't allow fruit to pass through the border into California or other locations. Buy fruit after passing through.)
- String cheese and whole-grain crackers
- Pre-packaged yogurt tubes
- Trail mix and dried fruit
- Hummus and pre-cut veggies, like carrots, radishes, snap peas, bell peppers and hummus
- Celery and small individual-sized containers of peanut butter (check the peanut butter aisle for the small 1-2 tablespoon packages); pretzels also can be dipped in peanut butter for an easy snack
- Whole-grain bread and peanut butter and jam or cheese and lunchmeat

2. Take refillable water bottles to save cooler space and to avoid purchasing sugary beverages. They can also help you save money on buying beverages. Refill each time you stop for gas and restroom breaks.

3. When eating out, seek healthier options on menus, such as fruit cups or slices, milk, wraps, salads, rice and veggie bowls and whole-grain options of breads, tortillas and rice.

4. Use a navigation app on your smartphone to look for restaurants near you beyond the ones connected to the gas station when stopping to refuel. Consider non-burger fast food restaurants for variety and possibly healthier options, such as:

- Sandwich restaurants where you could split a larger sandwich with a family member and load up on those veggies options.
- Chinese food places often have more choices of veggies than other fast food restaurants.
- Mexican food where you can look for beans, rice and veggie options, but remember to eat less of the high-fat fried foods.
- Pita and wrap restaurants also offer fresh veggie options,

but beware of high-calorie sauces.

5. Make farmers markets a destination around meal times. This is a great way to literally taste some of the local foods and culture. Most markets have more than just produce, so enjoy many other vendors selling fresh breads, homemade tamales, side salads and more. Plus, you'll get to move and stretch your legs after all that driving.

6. Visit grocery stores or local bakeries at your destination to buy meals and/or replenish your healthy snack cooler. Consider whole-grain muffins, fruit and small milk containers for breakfast or instant oatmeal packets you can make by using hot water from gas stations or hotel room coffee makers.

7. Plan moving time. Search for places along the way to discover by walking, hiking, biking or swimming adventures to break up driving time and get your body moving. It might take a little extra time, but together with choosing varieties of fruits and veggies, moving your body will help you feel more energized, help you sleep better and help keep you "regular," if you know what I mean.

8. Make gas and restroom breaks a physical activity break—walk, run, do some yoga, stretches or dance. You could even have races with the family. Consider ordering your meals take-out and head to a picnic spot at a local park to enjoy fresh air and more opportunities to get up and move your body.

9. Save treats for the events and special destinations of your trip. This will save your car from sugary, sticky spills and melts, and also help reduce calories consumed.

10. Plan non-food activities in the car to pass time and to avoid the snacking-from-boredom syndrome. Listen to audio-books the whole car can enjoy, make videos of the family rocking out to a favorite song, sketch Picasso-like portraits of each other without looking at the paper, play "I Spy," bingo or read books and articles about the history of places

you're heading to visit.

This article was written by Melanie Jewkes



Melanie Jewkes works part time in Salt Lake County and has worked for USU for 6 years. The best part of her job is learning and relearning some of the things that matter most—loving and caring for marriage and family, living within your means, and growing, cooking and eating delicious, nutritious food. She is married with two adorable children and lives in Taylorsville.
