

Leyla Weighs In: Planning to prevent hunger pangs



Yes, you've had a longer day at work than usual and can hardly scare up the motivation to do anything about dinner except take out or delivery. And even though you know the toll it takes health-wise to eat fast food, you go for it anyway because it's too late to start cooking or you're just too tired.

Or more often, you're looking for a reward after such a hard day.

But it's precisely these kinds of days where a little planning ahead can really pay off. I always tell my clients, "Don't let yourself get too hungry between meals". For example, if you've eaten lunch at noon and it's now past 6 pm and you're still at work, you're likely feeling hunger pangs. If you wait much longer, they'll become hangry pangs—you are now so hungry and irritable that all bets are off—you're bee lining for your favorite takeout as soon as you leave work.

There's a solution.

Pack a snack. Do this every day. Even if you won't *need* a snack that day, take it along as a *hunger management strategy*. You need to nibble on a little something to tide you over to dinnertime, or even lunch time if that's the case. A handful of nuts are a portable snack and a good punch of protein and fat to quell hunger so you

can address dinner rationally when you get home. Allergic to nuts? Take along a hardboiled egg, a couple ounces of cheese or the leftovers of one of your meals, like a piece of roast chicken, a couple of tablespoons of chicken or shrimp salad, or an avocado (cut it open and eat it with a spoon!).

This bit of planning can help save you from those “must get takeout NOW” decisions stemming from extreme hunger.

To your health!

Leyla Muedin, MS, RD, CDN