

# Late-Night Eating

## 1. ***HALT before you snack.***

Before you decide to snack late at night, ask yourself “Am I physically Hungry?” If so, you should directly proceed to tip #2. On the other hand, if you just ate dinner and you are not physically hungry, ask yourself “what is really going on that is making my desire to snack so high right now?” Is it simply out of Habit? Is it that you’re feeling Anxious, Angry or over-whelmed, Lonely or depressed, Tired or bored? If you eat for any of these non-hunger reasons, try taking a break to soothe yourself or rest.

## 2. ***Choose smart, and portion it out.***

Unfortunately, in the wee hours of the morning, you are often at the mercy of vending machines, pizza delivery, or 24-hour convenience store snacks. Even though there are nutritious options available at LaVerde’s, we tend to make the worst choices when we are over-tired and overly hungry. Many of these “convenience” snacks are high in fat and sugar and low in nutrition; munching on them all night can often contribute to feeling bad physically and emotionally.

Instead, think meal foods rather than snack foods. Your late-night eating is more like a “midnight mini-meal” (with a definite start and finish), rather than endless grazing.

Another benefit of meal foods vs. traditional snack foods is that they tend to have some protein in them. Protein is helpful for feeling satiated (full and satisfied), so you’ll be less likely to raid the kitchen or vending machine again an hour after eating.

Try these midnight mini-meal ideas:

- A small box of whole grain cereal with fat free or 1% low fat milk
- A carton of low fat yogurt sprinkled with high fiber cereal
- A small dish of low fat cottage cheese and canned or fresh fruit
- String cheese and a piece of fresh fruit or a few whole grain crackers
- A small cup of edamame (boiled soybeans)
- A handful or “snack pack” of your favorite nuts
- A small whole wheat pita spread with hummus
- ½ of a turkey sandwich
- A small can or packet of tuna with a few whole grain crackers
- A few rice cakes spread with natural peanut butter
- Apple slices or celery sticks with natural peanut butter

- English muffin pizza with whole grain English muffin, canned tomato sauce and low-fat mozzarella cheese
- Low-fat, small frozen dinner (look for low sodium and whole grain options)
- Canned tomato or broth-based soup, or dehydrated bean soup.
- A small tortilla filled with salsa and a little low fat grated cheese and/or mashed beans
- If you are choosing a sports bar or shake, look for one that is lower in sugar and higher in protein and fiber

### **3. Stock up.**

In the early part of the semester, you may have more time to grocery shop than around midterms and finals. In those first few grocery trips of the year, stock up on foods that won't spoil quickly, such as canned foods, nuts and nut butters, soups, and frozen items. This will save you time and money later.