

FUEL FOR YOUR YOGA

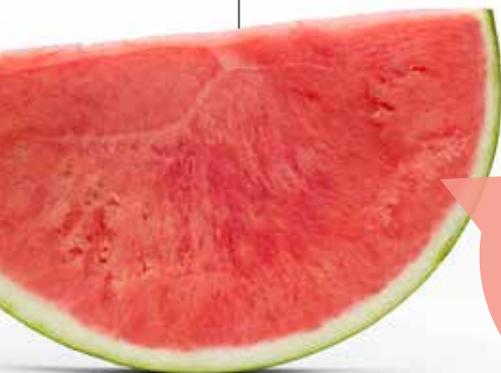
practice

By Barbara Seelig-Brown



GeniusMinus/Adobestock (yoga mat); hanohki/Thinkstock (watermelon); popovaphoto/Thinkstock (oats); Pavlo_K/Thinkstock (banana); chrisbrignell/Thinkstock (hummus); anna1311/Thinkstock (apple); pixelliebe/Thinkstock (avocado)

HERE ARE SOME
GREAT OPTIONS FOR
PRE-PRACTICE FUEL:



MELONS

are great for hydration. Cut melon into bite-sized pieces and place in a container to take on the go.



OATMEAL AND YOGURT

are perfect together. I love the higher protein yogurt choices such as Greek yogurts.

BANANAS

are high in potassium and may prevent cramping.



What you eat before and after you practice yoga is just as important as the practice itself. Depending on the time of day that you practice yoga, your food choices will vary. Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy go hand-in-hand with physical activity. In fact, I have heard people say that when they are actively participating in an exercise program they are more inclined to eat better or “healthier.” When your activity level is up, you may need to revise your meal plan because of the increased activity. Skipping meals is not recommended. Be cognizant of your personal needs as well as your individualized meal plan.

For a person with diabetes, checking blood glucose levels before and after exercise is a good idea, especially when you are beginning a new type of exercise. Stress can increase blood glucose, but if you

are relaxed, your blood glucose may be lower. Since yoga is all about breathing, relaxing, and stretching, you should feel a calming effect, which may reduce blood glucose levels. Many diabetes educators recommend keeping fast-acting glucose tablets on hand when exercising to avoid activity-related hypoglycemia.

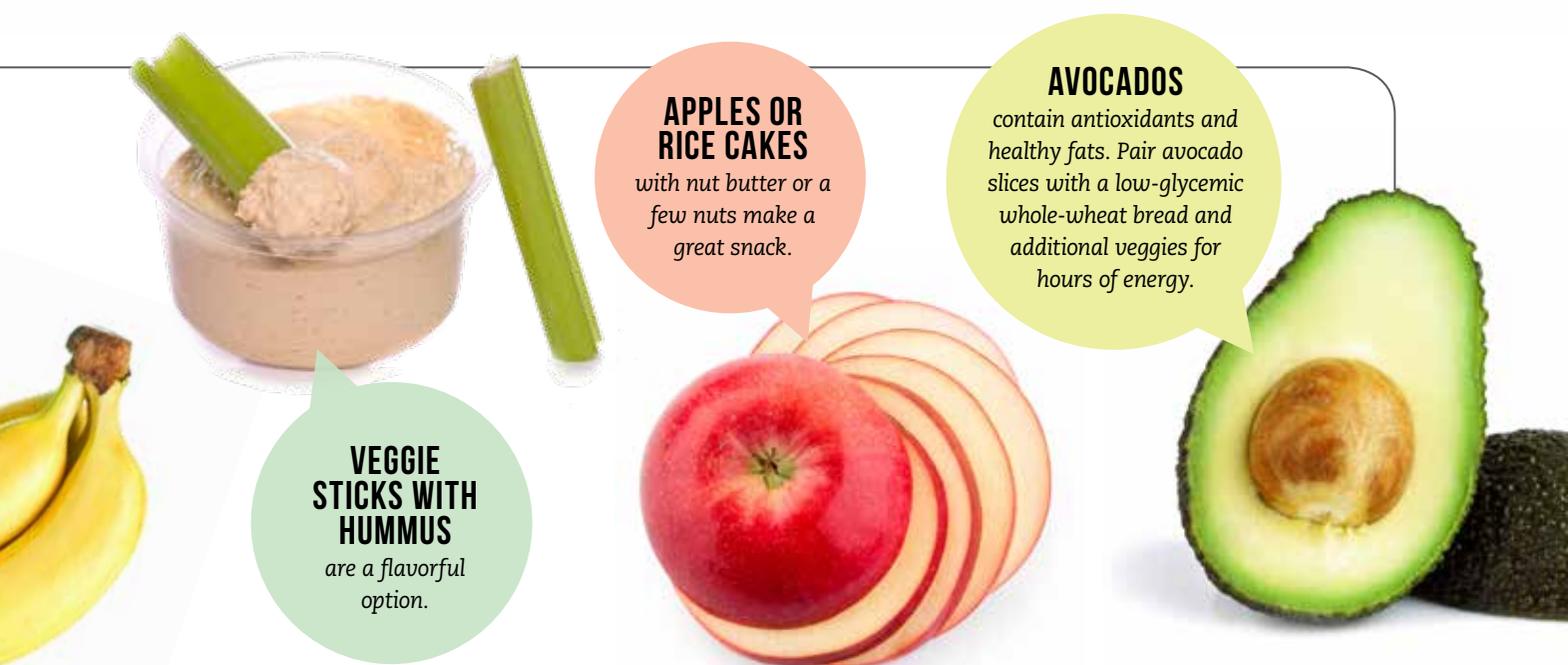
If you plan to practice early in the morning, eating something that contains carbohydrates can give you the energy you need. If you are practicing later in the day and your meal will be delayed, you might need a snack to fuel the activity. The snack you choose will depend on the intensity of the yoga practice and your hunger. Be sure your snack is at least 1 hour before your yoga practice to avoid feeling bloated or heavy. Some good choices might include a small piece of fruit or a

YOGA HAS ENDLESS POSITIVE EFFECTS ON YOUR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING, INCLUDING:

- Stress reduction
- Increased self-confidence
- Increased strength and flexibility
- Increased discipline
- Personal satisfaction and fulfillment

small handful of nuts. The post-practice snack or next meal should be rich in protein to alleviate soreness and build and repair muscles. A grilled protein, such as a chicken breast or piece of fish, and a mixed green salad are perfect, as are vegetarian proteins such as nuts, beans, legumes, tofu, and eggs.

And don't forget to drink plenty of water before, during, and after practice.



VEGGIE STICKS WITH HUMMUS
are a flavorful option.

APPLES OR RICE CAKES
with nut butter or a few nuts make a great snack.

AVOCADOS
contain antioxidants and healthy fats. Pair avocado slices with a low-glycemic whole-wheat bread and additional veggies for hours of energy.