

Build a Healthier Sandwich

These tasty spreads aren't just condiments; they can be nutritious stars of your lunch. Liven up that turkey and tuna. It's time to shake up your sandwiches and improve your health in the process. Here are three good-for-you spreads that are hearty and tasty.

HUMMUS

This Middle Eastern dip has surged in popularity in the U.S. in the past few years, and for good reason. A recent study published in the *Journal of Nutrition & Food Sciences* found that people who frequently ate hummus and/or chickpeas (the main ingredient in hummus) got more key nutrients, such as heart-healthy potassium and folate, and were less likely to be overweight. Plus its protein and fiber make hummus a satisfying sandwich filling.

Try it: Spread about 2 tablespoons of hummus on toasted whole-grain bread and top it with roasted red peppers and baby arugula.

NUT BUTTERS

PB&J, a perennial favorite, isn't the only sandwich you can make with nut butter. Nor is peanut butter your only option. There's almond, cashew, and hazelnut, too, and they're all chock-full of heart-healthy fats along with satiating fiber and protein. Watch out, though, for certain nut spreads. "Those that combine the nuts with chocolate are often packed with sugar," says Amy Keating, RD., a dietitian at Consumer Reports. Two tablespoons of Nutella, the hazelnut-chocolate spread, has 21 grams of sugars—about 5 teaspoons; a similar serving of hazelnut butter has just 1. (Both have 200 calories.) And skip reduced-fat nut butter. It's not any lower in calories than the regular stuff, because the manufacturers replace the fat with some form of sugar.

Try it: To make a savory Thai sandwich, mix 2 tablespoons of almond butter with 1 teaspoon of chili sauce, spread it on whole-grain bread, and top with shredded carrots, thinly sliced cucumber, and fresh cilantro.

GUACAMOLE

Worried that avocado—the main ingredient in guacamole—is too high in fat? Fear not: People who eat the green fruit (yes, it's a fruit) tend to weigh less and have smaller waist circumferences than those who skip it, according to a study published in *Nutrition Journal*. They also have a lower risk of developing metabolic syndrome, which can lead to diabetes and heart disease. Slices of avocado work, too.

Try it: Grill two slices of sourdough bread, top one of them with 2 tablespoons of guacamole (or three slices of avocado), thinly sliced tomato, romaine lettuce, and a piece of Swiss cheese, then cover with the other bread slice for a creamy, crunchy combo.

Swap this for mayo

If you're looking for something lighter to replace mayonnaise on a sandwich or in a tuna or egg salad, consider Greek yogurt dip. It's lower in calories and fat than mayo and has gut-balancing probiotics.

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