

The handy tool for healthy chips

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(HealthDay)—Want chips that deliver great taste without the typical additives in most packaged varieties? Then a food dehydrator is the kitchen appliance for you.

At its core, a [food](#) dehydrator is a great way to preserve foods. Because it removes a food's water content, mold and bacteria can't grow. Dried fruits and vegetables make great on-the-go snacks that can be prepared days in advance.

Two caveats: It is important to realize that dried foods are more calorie-dense than the original, so keep portions small to avoid weight gain. Also, the dehydrating process does remove some of a food's natural nutrients, typically vitamins A and C, so make these up elsewhere in your diet.

When choosing a home model food dehydrator, keep in mind the amount of counterspace you can devote to it if you plan to keep it out. The taller the unit and the more trays it has, the more food you can dry at once.

Making [vegetable](#) chips with zucchini and carrots in a dehydrator lets you skip unhealthy sugar, salt and saturated fat while still feeding your munch-and-crunch cravings. They also have fewer calories than dried fruits.

Zesty Zucchini and Carrot Chips

- 2 large [zucchini](#), thinly sliced
- 4 carrots, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon dried mixed herbs of your choice
- 1 teaspoon ground chili
- 1/2 teaspoon lemon pepper

Place the sliced vegetables in a large bowl along with the olive oil. Toss well. Add the spices and toss again.

Spread out the slices on the dehydrator tray and set the temperature according to your appliance's directions. Run at least eight hours or overnight until the vegetables have decreased in size and are crisp. Enjoy immediately or store airtight for up to six days.

Yield: 2 servings

More information: The University of Missouri Extension has more on choosing [a food dehydrator](#) and how to use it safely.

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