

# Score big with a healthy, tasty Super Bowl feast

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Super Bowl party spreads famously include nachos, wings, burgers, hot

dogs and other unhealthy fare, but one expert offers some advice on how to make watching the game a healthy affair.

"Think about what food you anticipate will be there," said Dr. Bethany Agusala, director of UT Southwestern Medical Center's William T. and Gay F. Solomon General Internal Medicine Clinic in Dallas.

"If you have a health condition or dietary restrictions and you're not sure if there's going to be something good you can eat, you might think about bringing a healthy dish, like a veggie tray or a salad."

If you're hosting a Super Bowl party, recognize that some guests will have health concerns such as diabetes, [high blood pressure](#) or high cholesterol. Try to offer fruits, vegetables, [whole grains](#) and salsas so your guests aren't forced to eat high-salt or high-sugar foods, she suggested.

"It's best to eat foods at these parties where you're combining sources of protein and healthy fats," Agusala advised. "Healthier protein options would be foods like bean dip, chicken and fish."

"You could also have [complex carbohydrates](#) like vegetables and whole grains," she added. "These are broken down more slowly, so they won't cause blood sugar spikes."

Agusala listed what foods to look for and what foods you should avoid while watching the big game:

## Touchdowns

- Crunchy [vegetables](#) (broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, asparagus, cucumber)
- Salads with low-calorie dressings

- Dips with fewer calories, made with legumes/beans such as black beans, hummus
- Guacamole
- Salsa (just go easy on the chips)
- Popcorn (without salt or butter or in low amounts)
- Grilled chicken, fish, veggie burgers
- Sparkling water; flavored, low-calorie drinks

## **Punts**

- Queso and creamy dips
- Pizza
- Beef burgers
- Hot dogs, bratwurst
- Cookies, pies, candies
- Chips, high-fat crackers
- Sodas, sweetened beverages, alcohol

Agusala said it can be difficult to avoid mindless eating while caught up in the game, but she stressed mindfulness as a key component of healthy eating.

"Be aware of your hunger signals," she said. "It takes about 20 minutes or so for your stomach to realize it's full and tell your brain it's time to stop eating. So if you're eating more slowly, that can help. But you have to listen to those signals, and if you're distracted by a game, that may be hard to do."

Finally, Agusala recommended one tactic that seems simple enough.

"Don't sit next to where all the food's laid out, because then you're going to be more likely to reach for more. Having a little distance may be helpful."

**More information:** The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more on [eating healthy](#).

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