



THE O QUIZ

Hunger Games

Research shows that the average person makes more than 200 food decisions a day—white or wheat? coffee or tea? salad or fries?—yet the most wholesome options aren't always obvious. To test your nutrition IQ, pick the food you think is the healthiest in each of the groups below.

FROM THE VENDING MACHINE:

- A. Popcorn
- B. Honey-roasted peanuts
- C. Gummy fruit snacks

Peanuts offer the most nutritional bang per bite. "They may be higher in calories, but they're also packed with protein, minerals, fiber, and healthy mono- and polyunsaturated fats," says Susan Kleiner, PhD, a registered dietitian and author of *Power Eating*. Popcorn is high in fiber but contains little protein. And the fruit snacks? "Nobody should pretend that's real fruit," says Kleiner. "It's candy."

ANSWER: B

AT THE SALAD BAR:

- A. Hard-boiled egg
- B. Sunflower seeds
- C. Olives

A handful of sunflower seeds provides a healthy dose of vitamin E, but the egg is the better bet. "We can get E from many sources," says Kleiner. "But egg yolks are the richest source of the nutrient choline, and animal studies suggest it plays a role in improving memory." One large egg contains nearly 30 percent of a woman's daily recommended intake of choline. As for the briny olives, the high sodium content is their tragic flaw: You can consume 20 percent of your daily limit with just seven olives.

ANSWER: A

AT A COCKTAIL PARTY:

- A. Broccoli and dip
- B. Goat cheese and crackers
- C. Shrimp cocktail

"The shrimp platter is where you'll find me at any party," says Kleiner, who's a fan of the crustacean's high B12 content (five large shrimp provide 19 percent of your recommended dietary allowance). Broccoli's benefits are all but negated by the fat-laden mystery dip at most parties. And while goat cheese may have fewer calories than other popular varieties, one ounce contains six grams of saturated fat—roughly one-third your daily limit. That makes it a snack worth skipping.

ANSWER: C

IN THE FREEZER AISLE:

- A. Bean burrito
- B. Veggie pizza
- C. Chicken potpie

Cooked black and pinto beans are nutritional powerhouses—one cup can provide more than half your suggested daily intake of fiber and one-third the protein. And because fiber and protein slow digestion, beans provide sustained energy and satiety. That trumps any minor health benefits you'll get from the peas and tiny carrots you might find in your potpie or the spinach on your sodium-laden pizza.

ANSWER: A

AT THE SNACK BAR:

- A. Fruit Danish
- B. Bagel with cream cheese
- C. Croissant

You won't find many nutrients in anything made of refined white flour and butter, but, surprisingly, the croissant is the lesser evil. "Picking baked goods is really a matter of damage control," says Keri Gans, registered dietitian and author of *The Small Change Diet*. A large fruit Danish can pack as much sugar as three glazed doughnuts, while the bagel with cream cheese can clock in at 400 calories or more. At roughly 250 calories, the buttery croissant is more a nutritional fender bender than a train wreck.

ANSWER: C

—KATE ROCKWOOD