

RFL HORSE SHOW SURVIVAL CHEAT SHEET

MY TOP 20 TIPS TO NAVIGATE HEALTHY EATING & SNACKING AT HORSE SHOWS!

1. We know there will typically be lots of tasty junk food available in the tack stall. Plan ahead by bringing a guilt-free snack to contribute. Something that you can generally eat more of but also has a low-calorie density. Bonus if it is high in protein!

- Protein bars
- Cut fresh food & veggies
- Nuts and seeds (be careful, these can be calorie bombs)
- Edamame
- Hard-boiled eggs
- Raw veggies and hummus
- Quality meat jerky
- Grilled and/or season chicken breast slices
- Deli meat and low-fat cheese
- Yogurt or cottage cheese
- Low sugar jello or pudding
- Air-popped popcorn
- String cheese

****Remember! Foods that are any combination of salt/sugar/fat trigger our dopamine receptors in our brain to want to eat more even if we're not hungry. I am an advocate for ALL foods in moderation. But if you find yourself repeatedly triggered by a food and frustrated, your best bet may be to NOT even have a bite of that specific food.**



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2. Head to the nearest grocery store and stock up on boxed salads, baby veggies, hummus, deli meat, and fruit. Select one “treat” food to include each day so you don’t feel deprived.

3. When eating out, don’t aim for perfection; just pick the menu item that is best for you. You can’t go wrong with a lean protein and a veggie and/or side salad. Ask them to double the protein for an extra dose!

4. Stay lean but full by asking for more garnishes at the restaurant – lettuce, cabbage, tomatoes, orange slices, etc.

5. Look for build-your-own-meal restaurants – Chipotle, Subway, Qdoba, Salata, Cool Greens, etc.



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6. For longer shows, make your PLAN beforehand:

- Pre-order grocers from the local store (research the nearest grocery store ahead of time)
- re-order meals from a local delivery service
- Get common restaurant menus in advance and decide what you'll order
- Ship food to your destination
 - A few meal prep companies that ship:
 - Icon Meals
 - Trifecta Nutrition
 - Mega Fit Meals
 - The Chicken Pound (for cooked chicken)
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7. Decide whether you'll stick to your healthy habit or take a temporary break. Either way is good as long as it is a conscious choice. The feeling of guilt creeps in when our behaviors differ from our intentions.

8. Aim for "better" instead of "perfect"...avoids the ALL OR NOTHING mentality.

9. Hunger is not an emergency. Remember this!

10. Decide on your "MINIMUMS" and "NON-NEGOTIABLES" – at least 1 serving of greens per day, protein at each meal, one bottle of water each hour, etc.



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11. Eat slowly, mindfully, and until satisfied but not stuffed (80% full). This will serve you anytime, anywhere.

12. Get a high-protein breakfast in. Kick-off your day with nutritious protein which will help keep you full, satisfied, and your blood sugars steady.

13. Regulate your sleep as best as possible. It's no secret that large horse shows can be ROUGH on sleep/wake cycles. This variance from our normal circadian rhythms can throw off leptin, ghrelin, and cortisol leading to increased cravings and blood sugar swings, as well as mood disturbances. Just know that the more sleep-deprived you get, the more likely you will crave junky foods.

14. Don't restrict your food choices so hard at home that when you leave for a show you say F@CK IT and eat everything in sight!

15. Three great tools to have in any tack room – a crockpot, an InstaPot, and/or a plug-in portable meal warmer like HotLogic.



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16. Pause before eating and take inventory on what you are feeling emotionally – are you really hungry, tense, anxious, stressed, bored, etc? This is an excellent practice to begin incorporating into all of your meals. It takes a minute or less, but if you start to practice it with objective curiosity, it really can provide some deep insight into how our current emotional state affects our eating patterns. Practice sensing emotions, accepting them, and letting yourself feel them, without judgment.

17. Mark every time you snack beyond your intentions but do it without judgment. Once you have a tally for the whole week, think about strategies to make it “one step better.”

18. If you want additional snacks, go ahead & eat the snack, but make yourself wait 20 minutes before you help yourself to another serving with these caveats:

- snacks need to be low calorie
- snacks need to be filling

19. Make sure your protein intake is high enough at meals – aim for 30-40 g per meal. Protein is the most satiating (and under-utilized) macronutrient.



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20. Other things to note for the mental side of things:

*Food is just-food. If hunger isn't the problem, food isn't the solution. You never regret NOT eating something!

*Excuses and rationalization can lure you from your intended behaviors.

*You have to change something and accept mild discomfort for a while to get results. If nothing changes then nothing changes!

*Focus on what you are saying YES to, rather than what you are trying to say NO to. Every choice in life means letting one option go.

*Allow for some imperfection. You don't need 100% perfection to lose weight. What you do consistently over time is what you will become – both good and bad.

