

YOUR MEDITERRANEAN MEAL PLAN



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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	5
Carbohydrate Foods	6
Proteins	9
Fats	12
Beverages	13
Alcohol	14
How much sugar is in your drink?	15
What’s in your cup?	16
Nutrition Goals at a Glance	17
Plan Your Plate	18
Your Guide to Serving Sizes	18
• Serving Size vs. Portion Size.....	19
• Estimating Portions	20
• Reading the Nutrition Facts Label	21
• Carbohydrate Foods	23
• Protein Foods	25
• Fats	26
• Nuts	27
• Nut Butters & Powders.....	28
Meal Planning Tips.....	29
Getting Started	30
Example 5-Day Meal Plan	31
Example Grocery List	37
Create Your Own Salad	39
More Salad Topping Ideas.....	40

Plant-Based Eating for a Healthy Lifestyle.....	41
Mindful Eating.....	43
Mediterranean Recipe Guide.....	45
My Exercise Routine	79
Don't Quit	87
References	88
Notes.....	89



Introduction

The Mediterranean Diet is based on the eating habits of those living in countries around the Mediterranean Sea, such as Spain, Greece, Italy, and France, just to name a few! While it is often called a “diet,” this way of eating is really a lifestyle that has been shown to improve overall health. A Mediterranean lifestyle may protect against heart disease, type 2 diabetes, obesity, cancer, depression, dementia, Alzheimer’s and more!¹⁻⁷

A few key components of a Mediterranean lifestyle include:

- More fruits and vegetables
- Plant-based foods, such as whole grains, legumes, nuts, and seeds
- Olive oil as the main source of added fat
- Fish and poultry as the main source of animal protein instead of red meat
- Herbs and spices to flavor foods

This booklet provides general information on the foods included in a Mediterranean meal plan, serving sizes, recipe ideas, and much more. It is one of many tools that can help you gain structure with your eating habits. Your doctor or dietitian can help with more personalized suggestions and assist you as you set your own goals. There is no “one size fits all” approach to weight loss and healthy eating. Just as your doctor may need to change a medication or dose to find what works best for you, the same is true with nutrition!



Carbohydrate Foods

Carbohydrates, also called carbs, are found in many foods and beverages, such as fruits, vegetables, grains, milk products, and much more. The body uses carbohydrates as a source of energy. A Mediterranean lifestyle includes plenty of nutrient-dense carbohydrates – foods that contain many vitamins and minerals but are lower in calories. It also focuses on foods that are high in fiber, a carbohydrate that helps keep you full for a longer period of time. The following section will give you an idea of carbohydrates that are included in a Mediterranean lifestyle.

Fruits

- Eat more fresh, frozen, or canned (in water or light syrup) fruit
- Consume dried fruit in smaller amounts as it is higher in carbohydrates and calories compared to whole, fresh fruit
- Choose a variety of colors
- Eat no more than **3 servings of fruit each day**
- 1 serving of fruit = 1 small fruit (such as an apple, orange, peach, or pear), 1 cup of berries, 1 cup of melon, ½ banana, or 1 oz. of dried fruit
- At least half of the fruit recommendation should come from whole fruits rather than canned or dried fruit⁸





Vegetables

There are two groups of vegetables – non-starchy and starchy. Non-starchy vegetables contain carbohydrates, but in small amounts. They are high in vitamins, minerals, and fiber, and they are low in calories. Starchy vegetables contain more carbohydrates and calories than non-starchy vegetables. They also typically have less fiber.

Non-Starchy Vegetables

- Non-starchy vegetables include bell peppers, broccoli, Brussel sprouts, carrots, cauliflower, salad greens, and many more.
- Eat more fresh, frozen, or canned (no salt added) non-starchy vegetables
- Avoid vegetables prepared with butter, salt, and creamy sauces
- Use herbs and spices to add flavor
- Choose a variety of colors
- Aim for **at least 3 servings of non-starchy vegetables per day (unlimited!)**
- 1 serving = 1 cup raw or cooked vegetables or 2 cups of leafy salad greens
- Try to fill your plate with $\frac{1}{2}$ non-starchy vegetables at lunch and dinner.

Starchy Vegetables

- Starchy vegetables include white potatoes, sweet potatoes, butternut squash, peas, and corn.
- 1 serving of starchy vegetables = $\frac{1}{2}$ cup corn, 1 cup squash, $\frac{1}{2}$ medium white or sweet potato, or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup mashed potatoes
- Limit your plate to $\frac{1}{4}$ starchy vegetables at lunch and dinner.

Grains

- Aim to eat half of your grains as whole grains
- Whole grains include brown rice, bulgur, millet, oats, popcorn, quinoa, whole-wheat bread, whole-grain cereals and crackers, and wild rice
- Look for breads, cereals, crackers, and pasta with a whole grain listed as their first ingredient
- Limit refined grains (grain products that remove parts of the whole grain and its essential nutrients) to half or less of your grains for the day
- Refined grains include white breads, refined cereals and crackers, cream of rice, cream of wheat, pasta, and white rice
- When choosing refined grains, look for enriched products and those with limited added fats, sugar, and sodium
- 1 serving of whole grains = 1 slice whole grain bread, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked oatmeal, $\frac{1}{3}$ cup brown rice, $\frac{1}{3}$ cup whole grain pasta, or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup quinoa

Dairy & Dairy Alternatives

- If you drink cow's milk, choose skim or low fat (1%) milk.
- Select low fat yogurts and cheeses.
- Choose unsweetened plant-based milks, such as almond, rice, coconut, or oat. Look for brands that fortify with calcium, vitamin A, and vitamin D.
- Most adults only need about 2 to 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ servings of dairy or dairy alternatives per day.⁸
- 1 serving of dairy = 1 cup milk, $\frac{3}{4}$ - 1 cup yogurt, or 1oz. cheese



Proteins

Proteins have many different roles in the body. They are building blocks of hair, skin, nails, and muscle. Proteins transport other nutrients and oxygen around the body and provide the body with another source of fuel. Eating good sources of protein each day is important so that the body can perform these essential functions. The next section will focus on the proteins included in a Mediterranean lifestyle.

Meat & Poultry

- Choose lean forms of fresh, frozen, or canned meat and poultry
- Lean proteins include chicken or turkey (without the skin), 93% lean ground beef, and certain pork and beef cuts with the visible fat removed
- 1 serving of meat or poultry = 3-4 oz.
- Air frying, baking, broiling, roasting, or grilling are preferred methods of cooking over deep frying
- Restrict lunch meat to a couple times per week and choose low sodium options if available
- **Limit red meat to no more than 1 serving per week (3-4 oz.)**
- Protein needs tend to vary between individuals, but the following is a general rule of thumb:
 - 1-2 oz. of protein for breakfast
 - 3-4 oz. of protein for lunch and dinner

Fish

- A Mediterranean dietary pattern includes **fish 2-3 times per week** with an emphasis on eating oily fish, such as tuna and salmon¹
- 1 serving of fish = 3-4 oz.
- Choose fish that is fresh, frozen, or canned in water
- Avoid breaded or fried fish



Eggs

- Eggs are considered a protein, and they are loaded with vitamins and minerals
- 1 egg contains the same amount of protein as about one ounce of meat



Legumes

- Legumes are a group of foods that include beans, peas, and lentils.
- They are an excellent source of plant-based protein, vitamins and minerals, and fiber.
- Legumes also contain varying amounts of carbohydrate.
- A Mediterranean lifestyle includes legumes **at least 3 times per week**¹.
- 1 serving of legumes = ½ cup cooked beans, lentils, or peas.





Nuts & Seeds

- Nuts and seeds are a good source of plant-based protein, vitamins and minerals, and fiber.
- Nuts include almonds, cashews, macadamia nuts, walnuts, pistachios, and many others.
- Seeds include chia, flax, sunflower, and pumpkin seeds, just to name a few!
- Choose unsalted nuts and seeds when possible
- Watch portion sizes when eating nuts and seeds as they tend to be high in calories and fat
- 1 serving = 1 oz. or a small handful

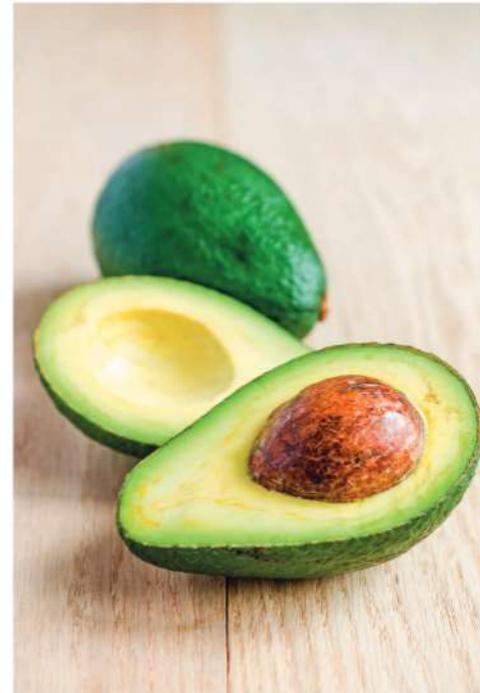
Other Plant-Based Protein Foods

- While a typical Mediterranean dietary pattern includes poultry, meat, and seafood, many people choose to follow a plant-based, vegetarian, or vegan lifestyle.
- Other foods that are plant-based sources of protein include tofu, tempeh, edamame, quinoa, and seitan.

Fats

Fats are high in calories, but they also have many essential roles in the body. Fats are an important source of energy for the body, they aid in the transport of nutrients, and they help keep you full for longer. Meats, poultry, fish, oils, dairy and dairy products, nuts, seeds, and sweets are all examples of foods that contain fats. Some types of fats are more beneficial to our bodies than other types of fats. This section focuses on fats that are included in a Mediterranean lifestyle and the fats to avoid.

- **Olive oil is the main source of fat in a Mediterranean lifestyle¹.**
 - Olive oil can be used when cooking and as a base for salad dressings among other uses.
 - 1 serving of olive oil = 2 tablespoons
- Other healthier fat options include avocados, fatty fish like salmon and tuna, and raw and unsalted nuts and seeds.
- Limit foods high in saturated fat, trans fat, or hydrogenated oils. These foods include:
 - Processed meats, such as hamburger, bacon, sausage, salami, bologna, and hotdogs
 - Full-fat dairy foods like whole milk, cheese, ice cream, sour cream, and cream
 - Solid fats like butter, lard, coconut, and palm oils
- Ways to reduce fat include:
 - Cutting off visible fat from meat
 - Removing the skin from poultry
 - Air-frying, baking, grilling, and broiling meats instead of deep frying.
- **Limit red meat to one time per week or less**



Beverages

We recommend about 6-8 cups of fluid in the form of water each day. In general, please drink this water according to your thirst level. Those with certain health conditions, such as heart problems or kidney disease, or those taking certain medications may need to drink less. If you are concerned about how much fluid to drink, then check with your doctor.

Water & Other Low Calorie/Low Carb Beverages Include:

- Water (tap, bottled, mineral)
- Regular or decaffeinated coffee with half and half
- Unsweetened iced or hot tea
- Sugar free powdered drink mixes
- Seltzer water or sparkling water
- Unsweetened soy or almond milk

Ways to Flavor Water:

- Add a lemon, lime, or orange wedge to water
- Berries, pineapple, and watermelon, among other fruits, can add a burst of flavor to water
- Try using fresh mint, basil, ginger, rosemary, or parsley to boost flavor
- Cucumber and mint make a refreshing combination, especially in summer months



Alcohol

Alcohol can contribute to weight gain, nutritional deficiencies, dehydration, and other health conditions. It is important to moderate your intake. While you may read that wine, especially red wine, may have some health benefits, there is no research to prove a cause-and-effect link.⁹ In fact, the American Heart Association does not recommend drinking wine or other forms of alcohol to gain any potential health benefits.⁹

If you do drink alcohol, the general guidelines are the following:

- Moderation for women = 1 drink per day
- Moderation for men = 2 drinks per day

Drink	Examples (Carbs)	Portion	Calories
Light Beer	Michelob Ultra (2.6g) Miller Lite (3.2g) Corona Light (4.8g) Coors Light (5g) Bud Light (6.6g)	12 oz. bottle	About 100
Beer	Guinness Draught (9g) Budweiser (11g) Stella Artois (11g) Blue Moon (14g) Corona Extra (14g)	12 oz. bottle	125-170
Wine	Cabernet Sauvignon (3g) Chardonnay (3g) Pinot Grigio (3g) Pinot Noir (3g) Sauvignon Blanc (3g)	5 oz. glass	100-130
Liquor	Gin (0g) Rum (0g) Tequila (0g) Vodka (0g) Whiskey (0g) + mixer	1 oz.	65-75 + calories from mixer
Hard Seltzer	White Claw (2g) Truly (2g) Bud Light Seltzer (2g)	12 oz. can	About 100



How much sugar is in your drink?



Soda (12 oz.)
39g



Orange Juice (12 oz.)
33g



Red Bull (12 oz.)
37g



Gatorade (20 oz.)
34g



Sweet Tea (16 oz.)
24g



Water = 0g of sugar



=



**1 teaspoon = about
4g of sugar**



What's in your cup?



Caramel Frappuccino

380 calories, 16g fat, 54g added sugars
(16 fluid oz.)*



Latte

190 calories, 7g fat, 18g added sugars
(16 fluid oz.)*



Iced Coffee (with 2% milk)

35 calories, 1.5g fat, 3g sugar
(16 fluid oz.)*



Black Coffee

5 calories, 0g fat, 0g sugar
(16 fluid oz.)*



*Nutrition information obtained from starbucks.com/menu/drinks

Nutrition Goals at a Glance

The following table summarizes the key recommendations for following a Mediterranean lifestyle as discussed in the previous pages:

Nutrition Recommendations^{1,8}

Daily Recommendations:

- Extra virgin olive oil as the main source of fat
- No more than 3 servings of fruit per day
- At least 3 servings of non-starchy vegetables per day
- 3-6 servings per day of grains and starchy vegetables
- At least ½ of grains should be whole grains

Weekly Recommendations:

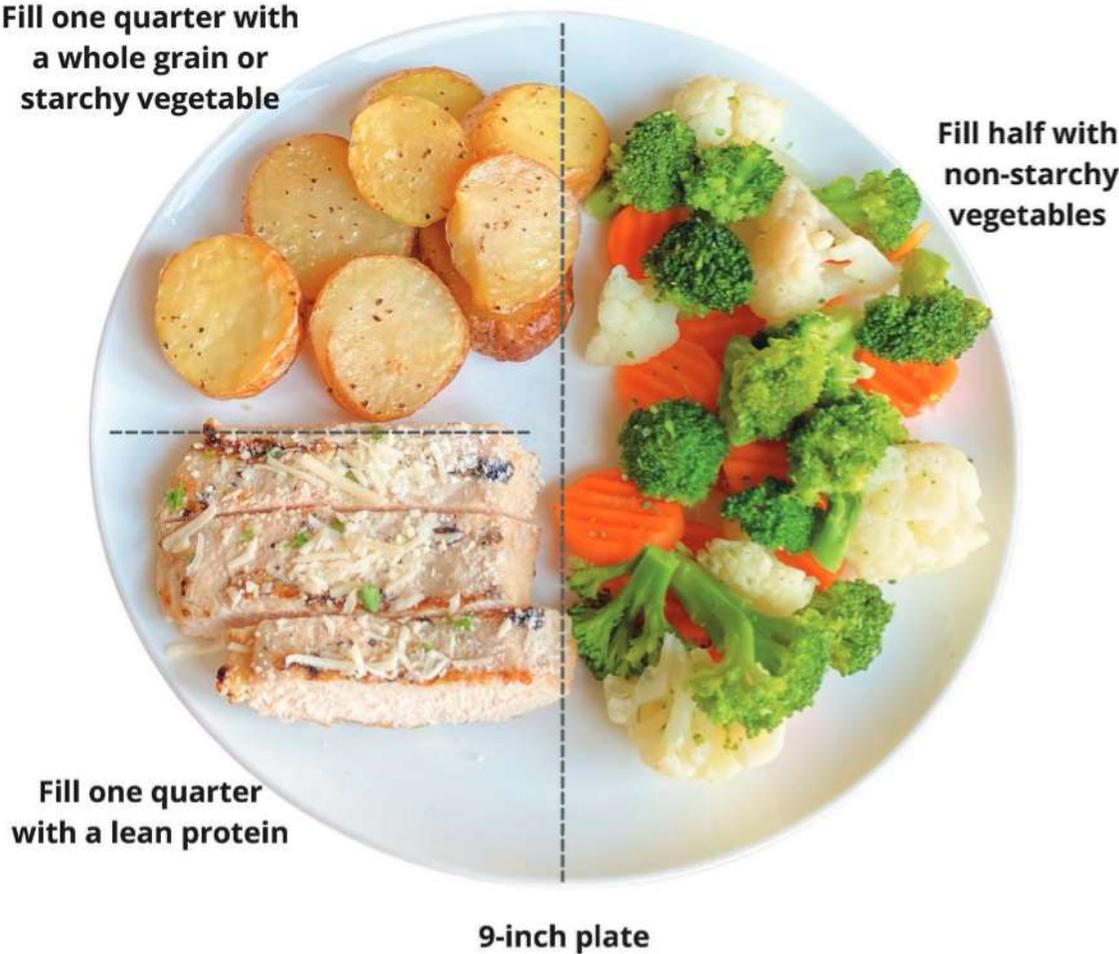
- Fish 2-3 times per week
- About 3 servings of legumes (lentils, chickpeas, beans, peas) per week
- Red meat no more than once per week
- Limit sweets and sugary beverages

Some people find that calorie goals help them feel more structured with their eating. Others find them to be too time-consuming and rigid. Your dietitian can help determine a calorie goal for you if you are interested. You can use this information along with an app, like MyFitnessPal, to track your daily goals.

Calorie & Macronutrient Goals						
Calories	1,400	1,600	1,800	2,000	2,200	2,400
Carbohydrates (g)	160	180	205	225	250	270
Protein (g)	70	80	90	100	110	120
Fat (g)	55	62	70	78	86	93

Plan Your Plate

Plate sizes in the U.S. have increased over time the same way that portion sizes have increased. Try using a smaller plate compared to what you would normally use when eating meals. Dinner plates in the U.S. usually range between 10-12 inches. Instead, use a 9-inch plate to plan your meals and control your portions. A 9-inch plate is often sold as a “lunch”, “salad”, or “dessert” plate in stores. An appetizer plate is about 8-inches, and it is also a good option to use as a way to manage portions at meals.



Your Guide to Serving Sizes

While eating foods that are better for your health is an important part of weight loss, keeping the serving sizes of the food we eat in check often plays an even larger role.

Serving Size vs. Portion Size

Foods we eat have different serving sizes, which are measured in cups, ounces, grams, and other measurements. A **serving size (or serving)** is the amount of food listed on a product's food label. A **portion size** is the amount of food we choose to eat at one time, and this does not always match the serving size. For example, we might eat 2 cups of ice cream in one sitting as our portion size, while the food label shows a serving size of $\frac{2}{3}$ cup.

In the next section, we will discuss the following:

1. Estimating Portions
2. Reading the Nutrition Facts Label
3. Reviewing Serving Sizes for Carbohydrates, Proteins, and Fats



Estimating Portions

Use your hand as a quick way to estimate portions of certain foods! While this method is not as precise as using measuring cups or a kitchen scale, it can be a more practical and time-saving method.



Reading the Nutrition Facts Label

The following is a quick guide on how to read the Nutrition Facts Label.

1. Serving Information →

2. Calories →

3. Nutrients →

4. Quick Guide to percent Daily Value (%DV)
• 5% or less is **low**
• 20% or more is **high**

Nutrition Facts	
4 servings per container	
Serving size	1 cup (227g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	280
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 9g	12%
Saturated Fat 4.5g	23%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 35mg	12%
Sodium 850mg	37%
Total Carbohydrate 34g	12%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 6g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 15g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 320mg	25%
Iron 1.6mg	8%
Potassium 510mg	10%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Step #1: *Start with the Serving Size.*

- The information that follows is based on eating that portion of food.
- The serving size on a food label is not a recommendation of how much to eat, but it is a tool to calculate the number of calories and nutrients that the food provides.
- The serving size for this food item is one cup. If you eat two cups, then you are eating twice the calories, fat, and other nutrients.

Step #2: *Compare the total calories to your individual needs.*

- Look at how many calories are in a single serving and compare it to how many calories you need in a day. 2,000 calories per day is used for general nutrition advice, but your needs may be higher or lower depending on your age, height, weight, sex, and activity level.

Step #3: *Look at the Nutrients.*

- You can use the nutrient information to help you choose which foods to eat.
- Aim for foods higher in fiber, vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium.
- Limit foods higher in saturated fat, added sugars, and sodium.
- A low sodium food is less than 140mg per serving.

Step #4: *Use the Percent Daily Values as a guide.*

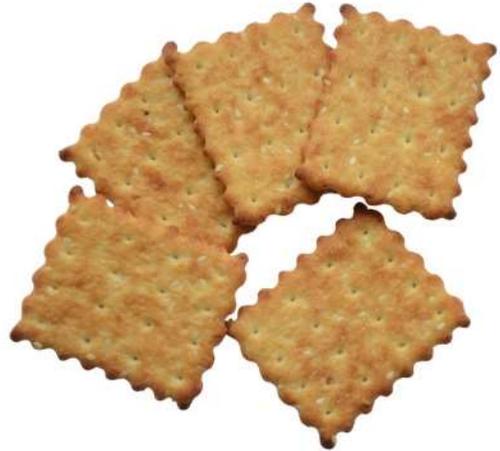
- The Percent Daily Values (DV) show what percent of nutrients are provided by one serving of the food. The DV is for the entire day and based on a 2,000-calorie diet.
- If you need about 2,000 calories in a day, then this food would provide 37% of your daily sodium.
- Look for foods with less than 10% DV for saturated fat and sodium.

Adapted from: Sarah Klemm, RDN, CD, LDN. The Basics of the Nutrition Facts Label. Published March 4, 2022. <https://www.eatright.org/food/nutrition/nutrition-facts-and-food-labels/the-basics-of-the-nutrition-facts-label>

Carbohydrate Foods

One serving of whole grains equals:

- 1 slice whole grain bread
- ½ cup cooked oatmeal
- ⅓ cup brown rice
- ⅓ cup whole grain pasta
- ½ cup quinoa
- 10-15 whole grain pita chips
- 5 whole grain crackers
- 3 cups unbuttered, popped popcorn
- ½ whole grain English muffin
- ½ whole grain hamburger or hotdog bun
- ½ whole grain bagel



One serving of beans equals:

- ½ cup cooked beans (black, garbanzo, kidney, lima, pinto, lentils)
- ⅓ cup hummus

One serving of fruits equals:

- 1 medium apple, orange, pear, peach, nectarine
- 1 cup berries – blueberries, raspberries, strawberries, blackberries
- 1 cup melon – cantaloupe, honeydew, watermelon
- ½ banana
- 10-12 grapes
- ½ papaya or mango
- ½ cup canned fruit (in water or light syrup)
- 1 oz. dried fruit



A tennis ball is about the size of a medium piece of fruit

One serving of dairy equals:

- 1 cup milk – cow's milk, almond, soy
- ¾ - 1 cup yogurt
- 1 oz. of cheese (2 cubes or 1 thin slice)



A pair of dice =
1 oz. of cheese



One serving of starchy vegetables equals:

- ½ cup green peas
- ½ cup corn or ½ ear of corn
- 1 cup butternut or acorn squash
- ½ medium potato or sweet potato
- ½ cup mashed potatoes

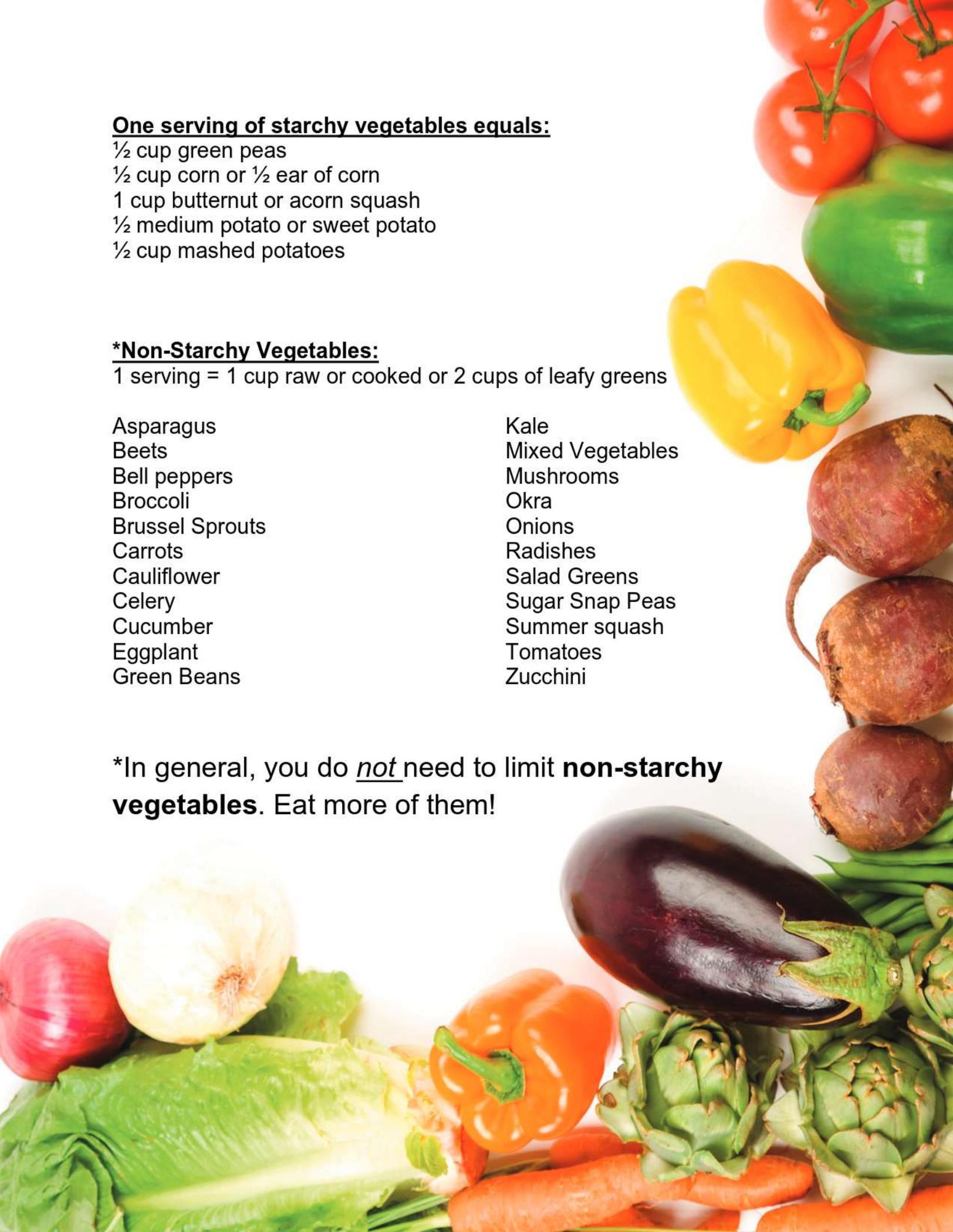
***Non-Starchy Vegetables:**

1 serving = 1 cup raw or cooked or 2 cups of leafy greens

Asparagus
Beets
Bell peppers
Broccoli
Brussel Sprouts
Carrots
Cauliflower
Celery
Cucumber
Eggplant
Green Beans

Kale
Mixed Vegetables
Mushrooms
Okra
Onions
Radishes
Salad Greens
Sugar Snap Peas
Summer squash
Tomatoes
Zucchini

***In general, you do not need to limit **non-starchy vegetables**. Eat more of them!**



Protein Foods

Lean Proteins:

Chicken (without skin)

Turkey (without skin) or lean ground turkey

Fish

 Tuna (fresh or canned in water)

 Sardines (canned)

 Shellfish

Beef: 93% lean ground beef, sirloin, NY strip steak, tenderloin

Pork: chop, roast, tenderloin (cut off visible fat before cooking)

Cottage cheese: low-fat or fat-free

Eggs

Lunch meat: ham, turkey, chicken (reduced sodium, if possible)

Medium to High Fat Proteins: *Limit choices from this list to once per week or less.*

Beef: 85% lean ground beef, meatloaf, prime rib, short ribs, corned beef

Cheese

Fried fish

Lamb

Pork: shoulder roast or cutlet, sausage, ground pork

Poultry: fried chicken, chicken with skin, ground turkey

Veal

Bacon

Hot dogs

Plant-Based Proteins:

1 serving equals...

3 oz. tofu

3 oz. tempeh

½ cup cooked beans

½ cup quinoa



3-4 oz. of protein = about the size of a deck of cards or the palm of your hand

Fats

One serving of fat equals:

- 1 tsp oil
- 1 tsp butter or margarine
- 1 tbsp cream cheese
- 1 tbsp seeds (chia, flax, pumpkin)
- 1-2 tbsp nut butters
- 2 tbsp (1 oz) avocado
- 2 tbsp salad dressing
- 2 tbsp sour cream



Olive oil, regardless of the type, is higher in monounsaturated fatty acids (“healthier fats”) and antioxidants compared to other animal fats and vegetable oils. It is an important part of a Mediterranean lifestyle, and its use may help lower the risk of heart disease and stroke.¹¹

Nuts

One serving of nuts = one ounce

Nuts are high in fat and should be eaten in small amounts. While one ounce of most nuts is typically considered a serving, the fat content varies between different kinds of nuts. Nuts are also considered a source of plant-based protein.

24 Almonds
165 calories, 14g fat



18 cashews
160 calories, 13g fat



12 hazelnuts
180 calories, 17g fat



6 Brazil nuts
190 calories, 19g fat



15 pecans
195 calories, 20g fat



14 walnuts
185 calories, 19g fat



35 peanuts
160 calories, 14g fat



50 pistachios
160 calories, 13g fat



10 macadamia nuts
200 calories, 22g fat



Nut Butters & Powders

Nut butters and powders are another source of fat and plant-based protein. Look for brands with a short ingredient list. Avoid palm oils and other added oils and sugar. **One serving of nut butter or powder = 2 tablespoons.** The calories, fat, and protein content for each butter or powder are as follows:



Almond Butter:

190 calories, 17g fat, 7g protein
per serving



Cashew Butter:

190 calories, 16g fat, 6g protein
per serving



Peanut Butter:

190 calories, 16g fat, 7g protein
per serving



Peanut Powder:

70 calories, 2g fat, 8g protein
per serving

Meal Planning Tips

Think of a meal plan as a tool to help you structure your meals and snacks. There is no perfect meal plan, and you may find that you need to make changes based on your lifestyle, food preferences, and cooking abilities! Below are some tips when following the meal plan and grocery list provided in this booklet:

- Check how many servings each recipe makes.
 - Most breakfast and lunch ideas listed serve one person.
 - Dinner recipes produce about 4-6 servings.
 - You may need to adjust recipes if you are cooking for more people or plan for leftovers if you are not.
- Adjust the grocery list as needed.
 - You may need to buy more of an item than is listed if you plan to double a recipe or if another person in your household is following this meal plan.
 - If you are planning to make a recipe that is not included in the meal plan, then add those ingredients to your grocery list.
 - Check your pantry to see what you already have before you go shopping!
- Plan ahead as much as possible.
 - Pack lunches the night before, so you aren't tempted to grab convenience foods.
 - Look to see if there is part of a meal you can prep ahead of time.
 - Write or type up your plan for the week and put it somewhere easy to see so you stick to it.



Getting Started

- 1.** Plan out your meals and snacks for the week. An example 5-day meal plan is included in this booklet.
- 2.** Create a grocery list of the ingredients you will need. Use the example grocery list as a guide.
- 3.** Go grocery shopping with your list!
- 4.** Start cooking!

"Obstacles don't have to stop you. If you run into a wall, don't turn around and give up. Figure out how to climb it, go through it, or work around it."

Michael Jordan



Example 5-Day Meal Plan



MONDAY

BREAKFAST

Mediterranean-style avocado toast

1 egg

Coffee + 1 tbsp. cream

SNACK

1 cup berries

LUNCH

Greek salad + 3 oz. oven baked chicken

SNACK

1 apple (sliced) with cinnamon

DINNER

Sheet pan chicken & rainbow vegetables

SNACK

Greek yogurt + 1 cup frozen mixed berries

TUESDAY

BREAKFAST

Breakfast sandwich
Coffee + 1 tbsp. cream

SNACK

1 sliced bell pepper
½ cup hummus

LUNCH

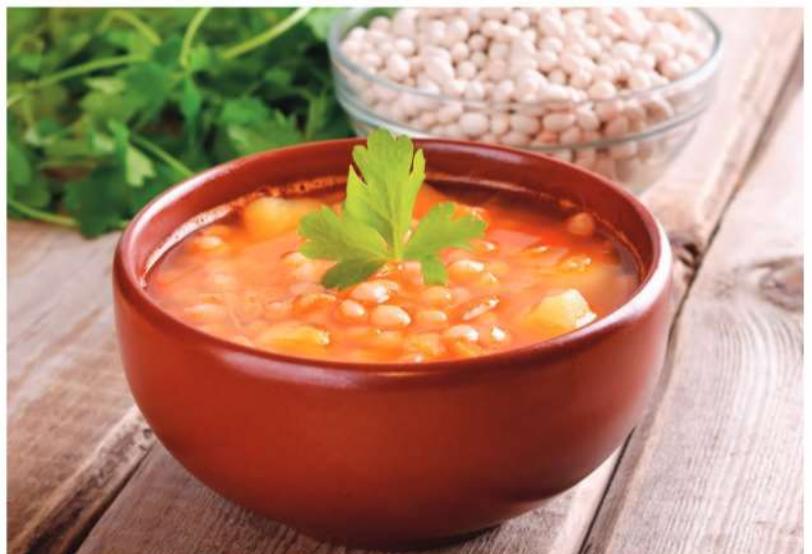
Turkey sandwich
1 cup berries

SNACK

1 apple (sliced) with cinnamon

DINNER

Pasta E Fagioli (Pasta and Bean) Soup
Roasted vegetables





WEDNESDAY

BREAKFAST

Breakfast omelet
½ toasted English muffin
Coffee + 1 tbsp. cream

SNACK

1 cup berries

LUNCH

Tuna salad English muffin
1 sliced bell pepper
1 apple (sliced) with
cinnamon



SNACK

Greek yogurt + 1 cup frozen
mixed berries

DINNER

Baked salmon
Orzo salad with cucumber,
tomato, & basil



THURSDAY

BREAKFAST

Mediterranean-style avocado toast

1 egg

Coffee + 1 tbsp. cream

SNACK

1 cup berries

LUNCH

Turkey sandwich

1 sliced bell pepper

½ cup hummus

SNACK

1 apple (sliced) with cinnamon

DINNER

Mediterranean ground beef stir fry

1 cup steamed broccoli

1/3 cup brown rice





FRIDAY

BREAKFAST

Breakfast omelet
1 cup berries
Coffee + 1 tbsp. cream

SNACK

Homemade trail mix

LUNCH

Tuna salad English muffin

SNACK

Greek yogurt + 1 cup frozen mixed berries

DINNER

Greek chicken kabobs
Baked sweet potato



SATURDAY / SUNDAY

- Use leftover produce, bread, English muffins, meat, dairy & other groceries from the week for weekend meals.
- If you ended up with leftovers from a recipe, eat those leftovers the next day if possible. Save the recipe listed for the next day's meal(s) for a weekend meal instead.
- The booklet provides many extra recipes beyond what is listed in the meal plan for the week. Try making one of those recipes!
- Most recipes list a source where that recipe was found. Those sources can be great resources for other recipes to try!
- Note: If you plan to make a recipe not listed on the meal plan, make sure to add any additional ingredients to your grocery list. You may have several of the ingredients already!



Example Grocery List

Bread/Bakery

- Whole wheat English muffins
- Whole grain bread (1 loaf)

Canned Goods

- Black olives (1 can)
- Chickpeas (2- 15 oz. cans)
- Roman, kidney, navy, or another bean of choice (2- 14oz. cans)
- Tomato puree (8 oz.)
- Tuna canned in water (2- 5oz. cans)

Condiments

- Dijon mustard
- Olive oil
- Mayonnaise
- Red wine vinegar

Dairy/Protein

- Boneless, skinless chicken breast (2.5 lbs.)
- Eggs (1 dozen)
- Feta cheese (small container)
- Fresh or frozen salmon (1-1.5 lbs.)
- Greek yogurt (32 oz. container)
- Lean ground beef (1 lb.)
- Parmesan cheese
- Sliced cheddar cheese (1 pack)
- Turkey lunch meat
- Unsalted butter

Dry Goods/Pantry Items

- Brown rice, regular or instant (16 oz.)
- Brown sugar
- Chicken or vegetable stock (1.5L)
- Dark chocolate chips (Small bag)
- Dried cranberries (Small bag)
- Orzo or other pasta of choice (16 oz.)
- Panko breadcrumbs
- Unbuttered popcorn

Seasonings

- Cayenne pepper
- Cinnamon
- Dried oregano
- Everything bagel seasoning
- Garlic powder
- Ground black pepper
- Ground cumin
- Italian seasoning
- Onion powder
- Paprika
- Salt

Frozen Foods

- Frozen mixed berries, unsweetened (32 oz. bag)
- Steam in bag broccoli or other vegetable (1 bag or more)

Create Your Own Salad



Butter lettuce

+



Mixed greens

+



Spinach

+



Kale

+

Lettuce



Egg

+



Chicken

+



Salmon

+



Quinoa

+

Protein



Corn

+



Peppers

+



Tomatoes

+



Sweet potato & beets

+

Veggies



Avocado



Olives



Feta cheese



Almonds

Fats

More Salad Topping Ideas



Carrots



Cucumber



Cabbage



Basil



Blueberries



Pomegranate



Mandarin oranges



Strawberries



Edamame



Chickpeas



Tofu



Walnuts



Salsa



Blackbeans



Onions



Cilantro

Plant-Based Eating for a Healthy Lifestyle

A plant-based diet focuses on vegetables, fruit, whole grains, beans, peas, lentils, nuts, and seeds rather than on meat, poultry, fish, eggs, and dairy products. A plant-based eating approach is different from a vegetarian or vegan diet that may completely eliminate meat and/or animal products.

Plants are filled with nutrients and have numerous health benefits such as high fiber and low cholesterol. They have been shown to reduce the risk of chronic diseases, including diabetes, cancer, and cardiovascular disease. A plant-based diet with the inclusion of lean meats is a sustainable and healthful option.

A plant-based plate is composed of three-quarters foods that are plant sources and up to one-quarter from animal sources.

Plant-Based Recommended Foods

Dairy

- Low fat milk or milk substitutes, yogurt, creamer, cheese, and ice cream made from almonds, cashews, oats, soy, and coconut
- If you choose to drink cow's milk or dairy products, make sure they are low fat.

Fruits

- Fresh, frozen, dried, and unsweetened canned fruits
- All fruits are recommended including apples, bananas, berries, citrus fruits, pears, melons, and stone fruits

Vegetables

- Fresh, frozen, canned (no-salt added) vegetables
- All vegetables are recommended including asparagus, broccoli, carrots, corn, cucumbers, eggplant, green beans, leafy greens, mushrooms, peppers, potatoes, squash, tomatoes, and root vegetables



Bread & Grains

- Breads, cereals, crackers, and pasta with a whole grain listed as the first ingredient
- Maximize use of grains prepared in their whole form such as wheat berries, whole corn, brown rice, steel cut oats, and quinoa

Protein

- Beans, legumes, and lentils including black beans, chickpeas, kidney beans, navy beans, soybeans, peas, and pinto beans
- Nut and nut butters
- Seeds including chia, flax, and pumpkin
- Meat and protein substitutes such as tofu, tempeh, seitan, and veggie burgers

Fats

- Soft or tub margarine instead of butter
- Extra-virgin olive oil or oils made from avocado, canola, flaxseed, grapeseed, sesame, and vegetable

Meats

- Processed meats, such as deli meats, cured meats, and hot dogs should be avoided
- Limit portion sizes of meat to one-quarter of the plate including beef, chicken, duck, lamb, turkey, and pork
- Fish should be eaten 2-3 times per week
- Cooking methods suggested are air-frying, broiling, baking, roasting, or grilling instead of deep-frying
- Serving size for meat and fish is 3 ounces or about the size of your palm



= plant-based recipe (limited animal products)





Mindful Eating

Why do we eat? Seems like a simple question; we eat because we're hungry and we need to survive, right? However, sometimes we eat simply because we have a perceived craving for the food. Emotions such as happiness, sadness, anger, stress, fatigue or just boredom, all amplify our cravings for certain foods.

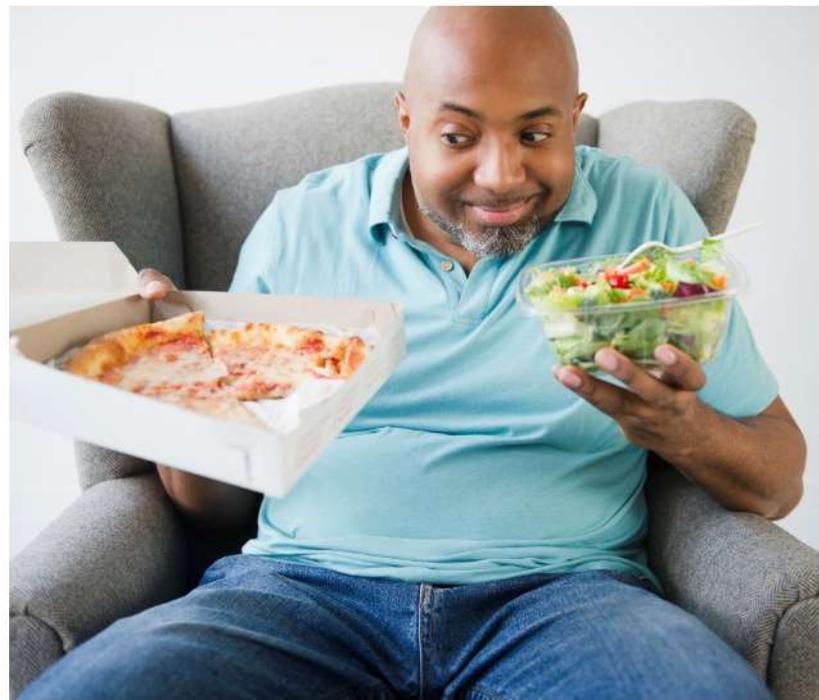
I want to introduce you to the idea of mindful eating, a mind-body approach to nutritional health. It is the development of an increased awareness to hunger cues and differentiating between cravings for food and the real need to eat (to provide nutrition and an energy source for our internal organs). Being mindful of the reason we are eating at any one moment in time, can help us gain control over our eating habits. Improving self-awareness helps us fight cravings and allows us to know when it is time to push that plate away.



Here are some thoughts and tips:

- Always ask yourself – Is it time to eat now? Am I hungry? Am I eating out of habit?
- Maybe I'm just thirsty? Drinking water throughout the day can help with cravings and is good for the body
- Try to schedule your day with proper times for meals and snacks (schedule them in advance).
- Once you start to feel hungry between meals, try not to ignore it too many times. If you keep ignoring the hunger, you will likely overeat and lose control when you finally do sit to eat.
- A few hours after dinner, you may be used to eating an evening snack. Maybe you are tired and should just head to bed. Try to brush your teeth or gargle some mouth wash so as to help decrease the craving.
- They say that a strong craving decreases within 15 min. Can you challenge yourself to wait just 15 min before indulging the craving?
- When heading out to a gathering, eat something beforehand so that hunger doesn't control you.
- When going out to a restaurant – look up the menu in advance. Avoid restaurants that offer minimal healthy options.
- When you have that strong urge to eat an unhealthy snack – get yourself to leave the room, change your setting, go for a walk, talk on the phone, or just go to bed!
- The more you are AWARE or MINDFUL of your triggers, the more you can avoid them or learn to fight them.

List some of your triggers:



Mediterranean Recipe Guide

Mediterranean-Style Avocado Toast



Ingredients

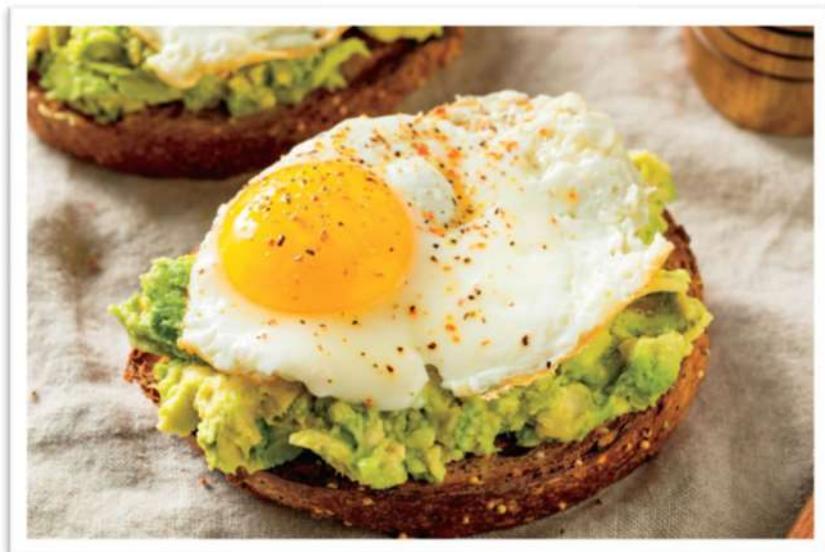
- ½ small avocado, pit removed, scoop out of skin
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon everything bagel seasoning
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 (1 oz.) slices whole grain bread, toasted

Directions

1. In a small bowl, combine avocado, lemon juice, and pepper. Gently mash with a fork.
2. Top toasted bread with mashed avocado mixture, ground black pepper, and everything bagel seasoning.

Tips & Nutrition

- Add a poached or over-easy egg for added protein!
- 345 calories, 18g fat, 31g carbs, 14.5g protein (2 slices of avocado toast + 1 egg)



Greek Yogurt Parfait

Ingredients

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup plain or vanilla Greek yogurt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 cup frozen or fresh fruit (mixed berries, pineapple, peaches)

Directions

Layer yogurt and berries in a serving dish and enjoy!

Tips & Nutrition

- Sprinkle a small handful of dark chocolate chips on top to turn into a dessert. Mint makes a great garnish!
- 210 calories, 3g fat, 30g carbs, 15g protein ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup vanilla Greek yogurt + 1 cup mixed berries)



English Muffin Breakfast Sandwich

Ingredients

- 1 whole wheat English muffin, toasted
- 1 egg
- 1 slice cheddar cheese
- 2 slices of tomato
- Lettuce (optional)

Directions

1. Top a sliced English muffin with cheese and toast.
2. Spray a non-stick frying pan with cooking spray. Crack the egg in the pan and cook on medium heat for about 2 minutes.
3. Flip and cook the other side for another 30 seconds (or longer as needed).
4. Place the egg on the toasted English muffin and add a couple slices of tomato to complete the breakfast sandwich. Add lettuce if desired.

Nutrition

- 335 calories, 16g fat, 30g carbs, 19g protein



Easy Breakfast Omelet

Ingredients

- 2 large eggs
- Cooking spray
- 2 tablespoons grated cheese, any kind
- 3 to 4 cherry tomatoes
- 2 tablespoons chopped basil, parsley, or herb of your choice

Directions

1. In a bowl, beat the eggs with a fork.
2. Spray an 8-inch nonstick skillet with cooking spray and place over medium-low heat.
3. Add the eggs to the skillet and cook without stirring until the edges begin to set. With a silicone spatula, push the edges toward the center of the pan and tilt the pan so the uncooked eggs move to the edge. Repeat until the eggs are somewhat set but still a little soft in the center, about 6 minutes.
4. Place the cheese, tomatoes, and herbs in a line down the center of the omelet and cook for about 1 minute longer, or until the eggs are mostly set but still a little soft in the center.
5. Slide the spatula around one side of the omelet at the edge to loosen it. Slip it under the eggs and use it to carefully fold the omelet in half. Slide the spatula under the folded omelet to loosen it from the pan. Tilt the pan over a plate and use the spatula to nudge it onto the plate.



Nutrition

- 230 calories, 16g fat, 7g carbohydrate, 18g protein

Source: Adapted from

https://www.simplyrecipes.com/recipes/how_to_make_an_omelet

Chocolate Avocado Pancakes

Ingredients (4 servings)

- 1 banana, mashed
- 1 ripe, fresh avocado, halved, pitted, peeled, and mashed
- 2 large eggs
- 2 tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 tbsp. granulated sugar

Instructions

1. Combine banana, avocado, eggs, cocoa powder, and sugar until blended. Let stand 15 minutes to thicken.
2. Lightly spray a large non-stick skillet with non-stick cooking spray and heat over medium heat.
3. Spoon mixture, 2 tablespoons at a time, onto skillet and cook 1 minute until browned. Turn and cook additional 1 minute or until cooked through.

Nutrition:

- 135 calories, 8g fat, 15g carbs, 4g protein



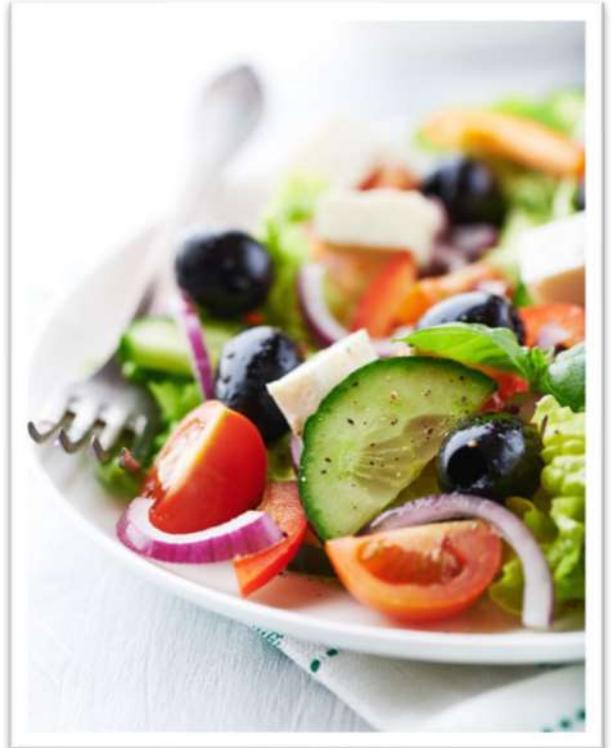
<https://loveonetoday.com/recipe/heart-healthy-gluten-free-easy-chocolate-avocado-pancakes/>

Greek Salad



Ingredients (1 serving)

- Lettuce of choice (e.g., romaine, butterhead)
- Red onion, thinly sliced
- Kosher salt
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- Freshly ground pepper
- 2 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 6-8 tomatoes (grape or cherry), halved
- ½ red bell pepper, chopped
- 3-4 black olives, halved and pitted
- Cucumbers, sliced crosswise and about ½ inch thick
- 1 tbsp. feta cheese, crumbled



Directions

1. Add the lettuce, tomatoes, bell pepper, cucumbers, olives, and red onion to a bowl and toss.
2. Drizzle with olive oil and vinegar (or olive-oil based salad dressing of choice).
3. Drain the feta cheese and crumble on top of salad.
4. Top with oregano and season with salt and pepper.

Tips & Nutrition

- Add grilled or baked chicken or a hardboiled egg for extra protein! (See the next recipe for baked chicken.)
- If packing in lunch, leave salad dressing separate and in airtight container. Prep the chicken or hardboiled egg the night before.
- 390 calories, 32g fat, 19g carbs, 7g protein

Oven Baked Chicken Breasts

Ingredients

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
**Make less if using this recipe to go with Greek salad*
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon Italian seasoning
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon paprika
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Toss chicken breasts with olive oil and seasonings. Mix well to coat.
3. Place on a lightly greased pan and bake 22-26 minutes or until internal temperature reaches 165°F.
4. Rest 5 minutes before slicing.

Nutrition

For a 3oz. serving: 140 calories, 4g fat, 0g carbs, 26g protein



Source: Adapted from <https://www.spendwithpennies.com/oven-baked-chicken-breasts/>

Tuna Salad English Muffin

Ingredients

- 1, 100% whole wheat English muffin
- 1 green lettuce leaf
- ½ can (5oz.) tuna, drained
- 2 tbsp. mayo
- 2 tbsp. diced celery
- 2 slices tomato
- Salt and pepper to taste



Directions

1. In a bowl, combine tuna, mayo, and diced celery; season with salt and pepper to taste.
2. Place lettuce on half of the toasted English muffin. Top with ¼ cup of tuna salad and 2 slices of tomato.

Nutrition: 410 calories, 23g fat, 29g carbs, 23g protein

Turkey Sandwich

Ingredients

- 2 slices whole grain bread
- 2 oz. sliced turkey breast
- Lettuce
- Tomato
- 2 tbsp. mayo

Nutrition: 440 calories, 25g fat, 34g carbs, 18g protein



Turkey Avocado Lettuce Tacos

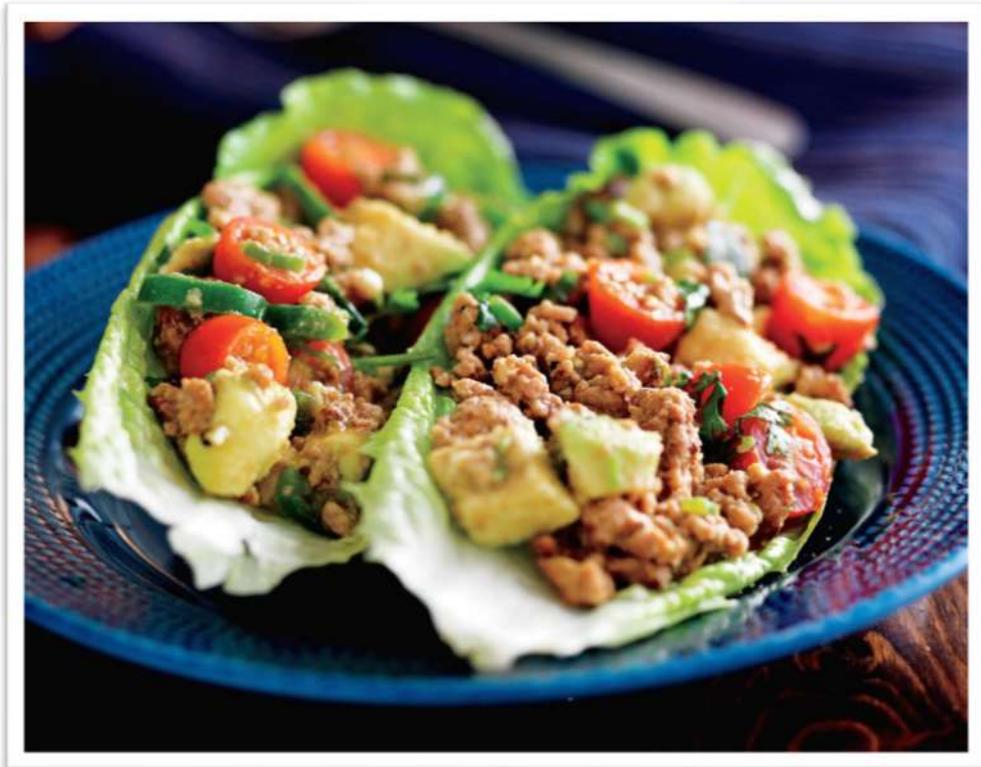
Ingredients (4 servings)

- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 large yellow onion, chopped
- 1 lb. lean ground turkey
- 1 Tbsp. chili powder
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- 2 Tbsp. tomato paste
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 ripe, fresh avocado, halved, pitted, peeled and diced
- 1 Tbsp. fresh lime juice
- 1 large tomato, cored and chopped
- 1 medium red onion, diced
- 1/2 cup fresh cilantro, chopped
- 1 jalapeño, seeded and minced
- 12 butter lettuce leaves, washed and trimmed

Directions

1. Heat oil over medium heat in large non-stick pan. Add onion, chili, cumin, and salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, until soft. Add turkey and cook stirring occasionally until cooked through. Add tomato paste and water and simmer until liquid evaporates. Remove from heat.
2. Combine tomato, avocados, lime, onion, cilantro, and jalapeno in a small bowl.
3. Fill lettuce leaves with warm turkey mixture and avocado salsa, dividing evenly.
4. Serve with fresh lime wedges if desired.

Nutrition: 390 calories, 23g fat, 16g carbs, 34g protein per 3 tacos



Kale Avocado Salad with Roasted Carrots



Ingredients (4 servings)

- 2 ripe avocados, halved, pitted, peeled, and diced
- 1 lb. bag baby carrots
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. pepper
- 1 (15.5 ounce) can chickpeas, drained
- ⅓ cup coarsely chopped walnuts
- 1 large bunch kale (about 1 pound), stalks removed, leaves coarsely chopped
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice
- ¼ cup Parmesan cheese, grated (optional)

Directions

1. Heat oven to 400°F.
2. In a bowl, toss carrots, oil, ¼ teaspoon of the salt, and pepper.
3. Transfer to a rimmed baking sheet and bake for 20 minutes.
4. Add chickpeas and walnuts to pan, stir and return to oven.
5. Bake until carrots are brown and tender, an additional 5 to 10 minutes.
6. In a large bowl combine kale, lemon juice, remaining ¼ teaspoon salt and half of the avocado.
7. Massage kale with both hands until the avocado is pureed, and the kale softens and turns bright green, about 2 minutes.
8. Add half of the carrot mixture to the kale and toss.
9. Place in a large serving bowl. Top with remaining carrot mixture and avocado.
10. Season with Parmesan cheese, if desired.

Source: <https://loveonetoday.com/recipe/kale-avocado-salad-with-roasted-carrots/>

Tips & Nutrition

- Other topping ideas include red cabbage, cucumber, beets, apples, pears, quinoa, or grilled chicken
- 425 calories, 25g fat, 44g carbs, 14g protein per serving



Smashed Chickpea & Avocado Sandwich



Ingredients (1 serving)

- 2 slices whole grain bread
- ½ cup cooked chickpeas
- 1 avocado
- ¼ lemon or lime, juiced
- Ground black pepper to taste
- Pinch fine sea salt
- 1 cup salad greens

Directions

1. Toast 2 slices of bread per person.
2. Use a fork to smash chickpeas in a medium bowl. Add avocado and use fork to smash again until avocado is nearly smooth.
3. Stir in lemon juice, salt, pepper, and red pepper flakes (if using).
4. Divide and spread filling over 2 of the slices and top with salad greens. Serve warm.

Nutrition

- 545 calories, 27g fat, 67 carbs, 19g protein



Sheet Pan Chicken and Rainbow Vegetables

Ingredients (4 servings)

- 1 large, sweet potato, *scrubbed and diced into ½ inch wide pieces*
- 1 large head broccoli, *cut into florets (about 2 cups florets)*
- 1 red bell pepper, *cored and cut into ½ inch pieces*
- 1 zucchini, *halved lengthwise, then cut into ½ inch thick half moons*
- 1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breasts, *cut into bite-size pieces (about 2 medium breasts)*
- Zest and juice of 1 medium lemon
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, *divided*
- 1 ¼ teaspoons Kosher salt, *divided*
- ¾ teaspoon black pepper
- 2 ½ teaspoons Italian seasoning
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- ¼ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Directions

1. Place rack in the center of the oven and preheat the oven to 400°F. For easy cleanup, line a large, rimmed baking sheet with foil. Lightly coat the foil with nonstick spray.
2. Place the sweet potatoes in a large bowl. Drizzle with 1 tablespoon olive oil and sprinkle with ¼ teaspoon kosher salt and ¼ teaspoon black pepper. Toss to coat and then spread into a single layer on the baking sheet. Keep the bowl handy. Bake for 10 minutes, or until the sweet potatoes are just beginning to soften on the outsides but are still too firm to eat.
3. Meanwhile, in the bowl that you used previously for the sweet potatoes, place the chicken, broccoli, bell pepper, and zucchini. Drizzle with the remaining 2 tablespoons of olive oil. Add the lemon zest and juice, Italian seasoning, garlic powder, and remaining 1 teaspoon salt and ½ teaspoon pepper. Toss to coat.
4. Transfer the chicken and vegetable mixture to the sheet pan with the sweet potatoes, using a spatula to spread everything into a fairly even layer and stirring if needed.

5. Return sheet pan to the oven and bake for an additional 15-20 minutes, stirring once halfway through, until the chicken is cooked through and no longer pink in the middle and the vegetables are tender.
6. Sprinkle with parmesan and serve hot.

Tips & Nutrition

- **TO STORE:** Leftovers can be stored in an airtight storage container in the refrigerator for up to 4 days.
- **TO REHEAT:** Gently rewarm chicken and vegetables on a lightly greased baking sheet in the oven at 350° F until hot. You can also reheat this dish in the microwave.
- 410 calories, 16g fat, 25g carbs, 39g protein per serving



Source:<https://www.wellplated.com/sheet-pan-chicken-rainbow-vegetables/>

Pasta E Fagioli (Pasta and Bean) Soup



Ingredients (4 servings)

- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 large yellow onion, peeled and finely diced
- 4 celery ribs, including the leaves, finely diced
- 3 large potatoes, peeled and diced
- 6 ¼ cups (1.5 L) chicken or vegetable stock
- 1 cup (250 mL) tomato puree
- 2 (14-oz [400-g] cans Roman (borlotti) beans – can also use pinto beans, kidney beans, cannellini beans, navy beans, and Great Northern beans based on preference and store availability
- 7 oz. (198-g) pasta of your choice (e.g., orzo, shells, fettucine, etc.)
- Salt and cracked black pepper, to taste
- Freshly grated Parmesan, for serving

Directions

1. Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan and sauté the onion, celery, and potatoes over medium heat until the onion is translucent and softened.
2. Add the stock, tomato puree, and beans; simmer for 15 minutes
3. Add the pasta and cook until al dente, stirring occasionally.
4. Season the soup with salt and pepper, to taste. Serve with freshly grated Parmesan.



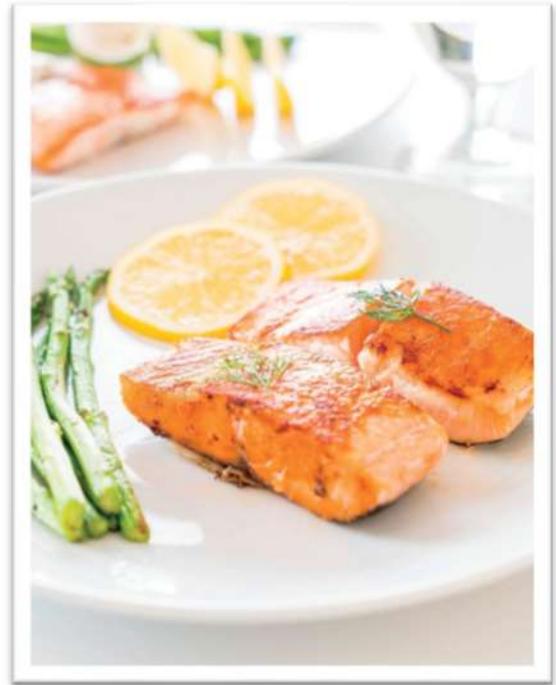
Nutrition: 670 calories, 21g fat, 94g carbs, 29g protein per serving

Source: Adapted from Lionello, M. Frugal Mediterranean Cooking. Page Street Publishing Co.; 2020.

Baked Salmon

Ingredients (4-6 servings)

- 2 tablespoons light brown sugar
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- ¼ cup panko breadcrumbs
- ½ cup parsley leaves, chopped
- 1 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 1 – 1.5 pounds skin-on salmon fillet, preferably center-cut
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard



Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Line a baking sheet with foil. Mix the brown sugar, paprika, garlic powder, cayenne pepper, 1 teaspoon kosher salt and a generous amount of freshly ground black pepper in a small bowl. Mix the panko with the parsley, butter, ¼ teaspoon kosher salt and a few grinds of black pepper in another small bowl.
2. Place the salmon skin-side down on the prepared baking sheet and spread the surface with the Dijon. Press the brown sugar mixture all over the salmon then top with the breadcrumb mixture. Crimp all four sides of the foil to create a border around the salmon, this will help collect the juices, so they don't spread and burn. Bake until the breadcrumbs are golden brown, and the salmon is firm and flakes easily when pressed, 15 to 18 minutes. Cut into four equal portions for serving.

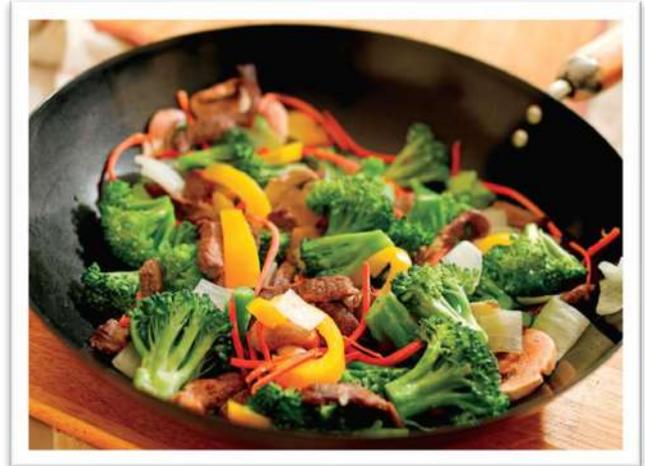
Nutrition: 265 calories, 16g fat, 9g carbs, 21g protein per 3 oz. serving

Source: <https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/food-network-kitchen/the-best-baked-salmon-1-8081733>

Mediterranean Ground Beef Stir Fry

Ingredients (4 servings)

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 red bell pepper, deseeded and diced
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes, sliced in half
- 8 oz. baby spinach (small tub)
- 2 teaspoon minced garlic (from jar) or 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 green onions, thinly sliced, white and green parts separated
- 1 lb. lean ground beef
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- Kosher salt and ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 tablespoons crumbled feta



Directions

1. Heat the oil in a large pan on medium-high heat. Add the bell pepper and cherry tomatoes and sauté for 4-5 minutes, until the tomatoes are blistered and saucy. Add the garlic and stir another minute.
2. Add the spinach and white parts of the green onion. The spinach will take up most of the pan, but it will wilt down. Stir for another 2-3 minutes, until the spinach has wilted. Remove these veggies to a plate.
3. Add the ground beef, oregano, salt, and pepper to the pan, and use a spatula to break up the meat. Cook the ground beef until it's browned, then drain off any excess grease.
4. Transfer the veggies back to the pan, add the green parts of the green onion, and stir until warmed through. Garnish with crumbled feta before serving.

Tips and Nutrition

- To store: Keep leftovers for up to 4-5 days in the fridge in a sealed container. Let it cool before closing the lid!
- You can also use frozen stir fry vegetable mixes instead of the vegetables listed to save time and money.
- Try using tofu or chicken as an alternative to ground beef!
- 315 calories, 17g fat, 6g carbs, 32g protein

Source: <https://downshiftology.com/recipes/mediterranean-ground-beef-stir-fry/>

Greek Chicken Kabobs

Marinate chicken the night before!

Ingredients for marinade (4-6 servings)

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 ½ teaspoon minced garlic
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper

Ingredients for kabobs

- 1 pounds boneless, skinless chicken breasts, about 2 large breasts, cut into 1 ½-inch pieces
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded, cut into 1 ½ - inch pieces
- 1 yellow bell pepper, seeded, cut into 1 ½ - inch pieces
- 1 red onion, cut into 1 ½ inch chunks
- 1 zucchini, sliced

Source:

<https://downshiftology.com/recipes/greek-chicken-kabobs/>

Directions

1. To make the marinade, whisk together the olive oil, red wine vinegar, lemon juice, Dijon mustard, minced garlic, dried oregano, salt, and pepper.
2. Place chicken pieces in a glass dish and pour the marinade over the chicken. Cover and marinate in the fridge for an hour (or prep the night before for best results).
3. Preheat your oven to 400°F
4. Assemble your kabobs, then place them on a rack on top of a baking sheet.
5. Bake for about 25-30 minutes, flipping them halfway through.

Tips & Nutrition

- Metal skewers work best for this recipe!
- Cut all the ingredients the same size so everything on the skewers will be ready at the same time.
- 200 calories, 7g fat, 8g carbs, 24g protein



Garlic Bread Panzanella



Ingredients for Caramelized Onions

- 2 ½ tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 yellow onions, peeled and finely sliced
- ½ tsp salt
- 4 tsp balsamic vinegar
- 2 tbsp brown sugar

Ingredients for the Garlic Bread

Croutons

- 6 slices ciabatta or sourdough bread (other preferred bread can be substituted)
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 3 teaspoons minced garlic
- 3 tbsp finely chopped parsley
- ½ tsp salt

Ingredients for the Dressing

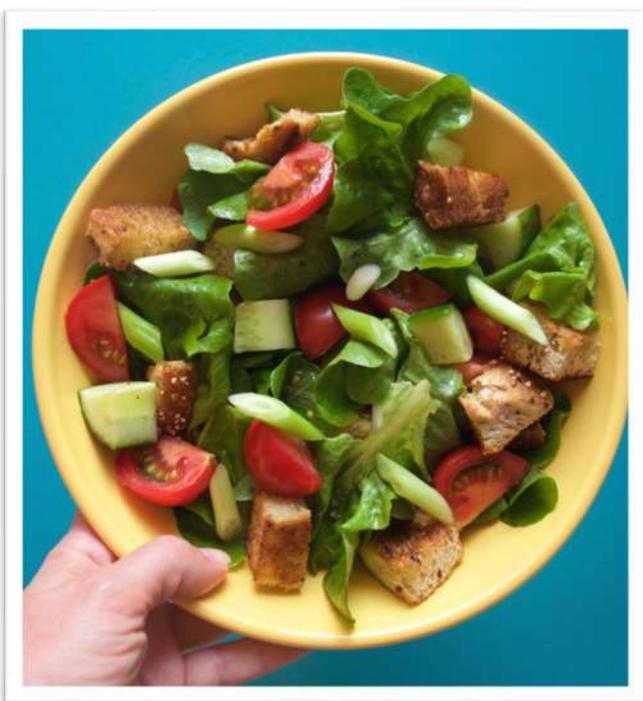
- 2 ½ tbsp red wine vinegar
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and cracked black pepper to taste

Ingredients for the Salad

- 1 tub lettuce of choice (e.g., romaine, butterhead)
- 1 pint cherry (or grape) tomatoes
- ½ cup pitted kalamata olives
- 15 large basil leaves
- ½ cup shredded mozzarella

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. To make the caramelized onions, add the olive oil, onions, and salt to a skillet over low heat. Let the onions cook slowly for about 30 minutes until they are softened (but not browning or crisping). After 30 minutes add the vinegar and brown sugar; cook for about 10-15 minutes.
3. *While the onions are cooking*, make the croutons. Place the bread on a baking sheet. Combine the olive oil, parsley, garlic, and salt in a small bowl. Generously brush this mixture onto each slice of bread. Bake for 15-20 minutes, or until the bread is very golden. Let the bread cool before slicing into cubes.
4. To make the dressing, combine the red wine vinegar, olive oil, salt, and pepper in a small bowl. Add the lettuce and tomatoes to a serving dish with the olives. Sprinkle the basil and mozzarella on top. Add the caramelized onions, croutons, and dressing; toss the salad and enjoy!



Nutrition & Tips

- Recipe makes about 4 servings
- 740 calories, 44g fat, 72g carbs, 16g protein per serving

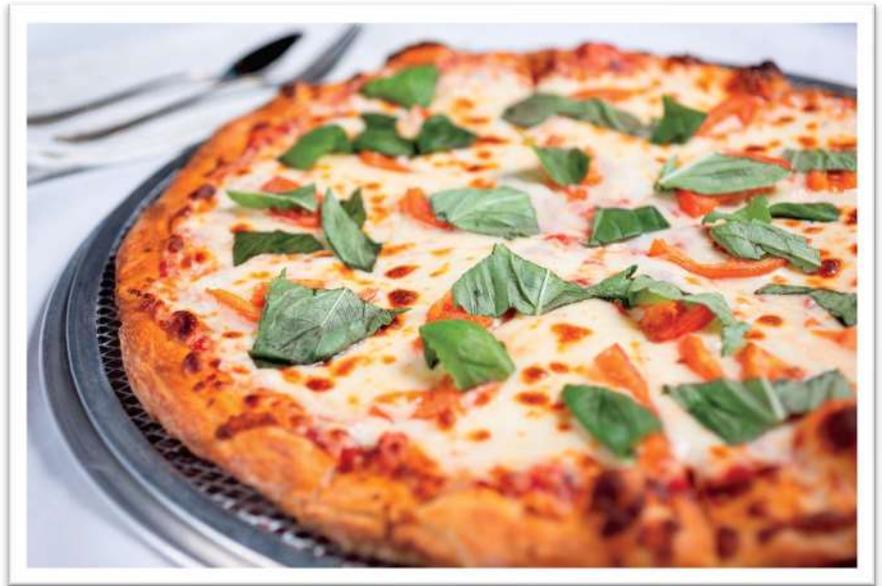
Source: Adapted from Lionello, M. Frugal Mediterranean Cooking. Page Street Publishing Co.; 2020

Homemade (Margherita) Pizza



Ingredients (4-6 servings)

- 1 bag store-bought, pre-made pizza dough
- 16 oz. pizza sauce
- 2 tsp dried oregano
- 3 tbsp flour
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 8 oz. shredded mozzarella
- ¼ - ½ cup basil chopped
- ¼ cup balsamic glaze



Directions

1. Let dough rise.
Keeping the store-bought dough in the bag, set it out on a counter for 30 minutes up to a few hours. *If the dough is frozen, leave it out on the counter under a bowl in the morning before work.* When you are ready to make the pizza, preheat oven to 450°F.
2. Stretch the dough. Place raw pre-made dough on top of flour, coating each side. Begin stretching the dough by pinching the outside in a circular motion to spread it out. Then you can alternate between pinching the dough with your fingers, pressing it out on your work surface, and using your knuckles to pull the in an outward motion. Usually, a few motions work best! When it's large enough, transfer it to a sheet lined with parchment paper and a light drizzle of olive oil.
3. Bake the dough in the oven at 450°F for 7 minutes. During this time, prep the toppings.
4. Once the dough cooks for 7 minutes, take it out and preheat the oven to 500. Brush olive oil around the perimeter of the dough to create a golden crust. Add the sauce, dried herbs, cheese, and other toppings.
5. Bake the pizza at 500°F for 7-10 minutes, removing when the cheese has melted. Sprinkle the chopped basil and drizzle the balsamic glaze on pizza. Allow the pizza to cool before slicing and serving.

Nutrition: 450 calories, 12g fat, 69g carbs, 14g protein

Apple Turkey Gyro

Ingredients (6 servings)

- 1 cup sliced onion
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 2 cups sliced red bell pepper
- 2 cups sliced green bell pepper
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ½ lb. turkey breast, cut into thin strips
- 1 medium apple, cored and sliced
- 6 whole wheat pitas, lightly toasted
- ½ cup low fat plain yogurt (optional)

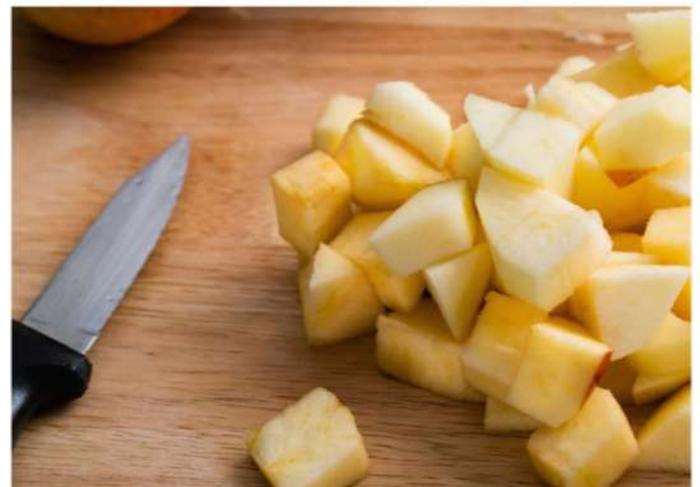
Directions

1. In a nonstick skillet, sauté onions, lemon juice, and bell peppers in oil until crisp-tender.
2. Stir in turkey and cook until turkey is fully cooked. Remove from heat and stir in apple.
3. Fold pita in half and fill with apple mixture; drizzle with yogurt. Serve warm.

Tips & Nutrition

- A whole wheat tortilla can be used instead of pita bread if desired.
- 290 calories, 5g fat, 46g carbs, 19g protein

Source: Everyday Healthy Meals Cookbook. California Department of Public Health's *Network for Healthy California*; 2007.



Tofu & Vegetable Stir Fry

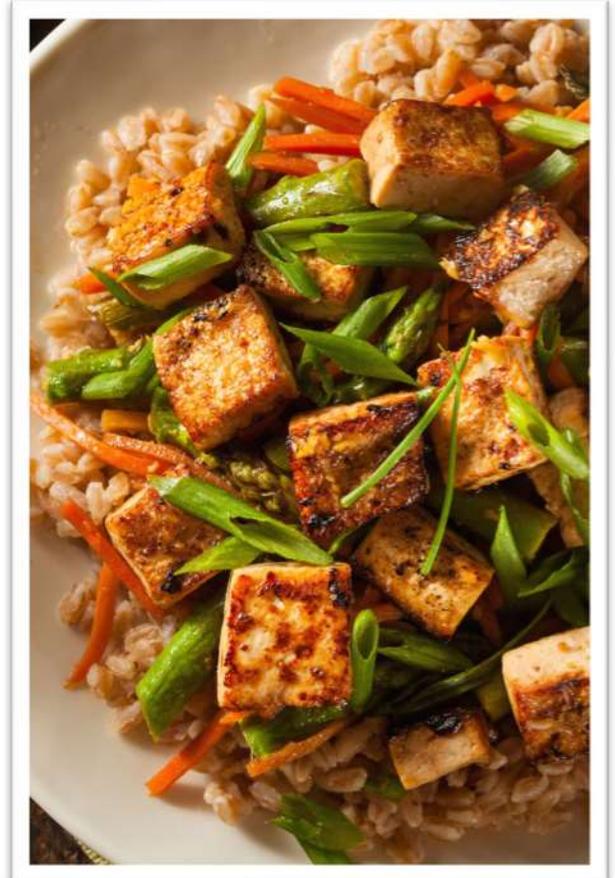


Ingredients

- 2 cups frozen or precooked brown rice
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 8 oz. firm tofu, drained and cubed
- ½ teaspoon low sodium soy sauce
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 teaspoon ginger, minced
- Pinch of red pepper flakes
- ½ teaspoon brown sugar (optional)
- 2 cups frozen stir fry vegetables

Directions

1. Heat large pan over medium heat.
2. Add rice and 2 tablespoons water and cook, covered for 5 minutes.
3. Heat 2 teaspoons of olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat and cook tofu cubes until browned on both sides (about 8 minutes). Set aside. If you have time, remove extra water from tofu by pressing it between two towels topped with a cutting board or a pan to press down.
4. Combine the soy sauce, garlic, ginger, red pepper flakes, and sugar (if desired) in a bowl.
5. Add remaining oil to the hot pan, add vegetables, and cook for approximately 2-3 minutes or until heated through.
6. Add the tofu back into the pan, drizzle with sauce, and toss to combine.
7. Serve warm over rice.



Nutrition: 400 calories, 14g fat, 50g carbs, 15g protein per serving

Source: Quick & Easy Healthier Traditions Cookbook. Transamerica Center for Health Studies.

Slow Cooker Mediterranean Chicken

Ingredients (4 servings)

- 4 medium- large boneless skinless chicken breasts
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 3 tsp. Italian seasoning
- 2 tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 tbsp. minced garlic
- 1 medium onion chopped
- 1 cup olives
- 1 cup roughly chopped bell pepper
- 2 tbsp. capers
- 1 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- Fresh thyme, oregano, or basil for garnish (optional)



Directions

1. Season chicken with salt and pepper to taste. Cook in a large skillet over medium-high heat 1-2 minutes on each side until browned. Transfer to greased slow cooker.
2. Add onions, olives, red peppers, and capers to slow cooker (tuck them around the sides so they aren't covering up the chicken).
3. Whisk together Italian seasoning, lemon juice, extra virgin olive oil and garlic and pour over chicken.
4. Cover and cook on low for 4 hours or on high for 2 hours. Garnish with fresh thyme, oregano, or basil.

Nutrition: 260 calories, 12g fat, 6g carbs, 35g protein

Recipe courtesy of Sarah Ray

Roasted Vegetables (Broccoli, Cauliflower, Carrots, Zucchini)



Ingredients

- 1-2 tbsp. olive oil
- ½ teaspoon Kosher salt
- Ground black pepper to taste
- Chopped broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, or other vegetable(s) of choice

Directions

- Preheat oven to 425°F.
- Combine olive oil, broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, salt, and pepper on a baking sheet; toss.
- Bake at 425°F for 20 minutes; Toss vegetables after 10 minutes.

Nutrition

- 125 calories, 9g fat, 9g carbs, 2g protein per 1 cup serving (cooked)





Orzo Salad with Cucumber, Tomato, & Basil

Ingredients (4-6 servings)

- 1 1/3 cups orzo
- 2 large cucumbers
- 2 cups cherry tomatoes
- 1/2 cup basil leaves
- 3 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- Juice of 1 lemon
- Salt and cracked black pepper, to taste
- Feta cheese, for serving

Directions

1. Cook the orzo in boiling water until it is al dente. Strain and rinse with cold water in a colander. Place the cooked orzo into a large mixing bowl.
2. Slice the cucumbers into rounds and cut each round into quarters. Add these to the bowl. Halve the cherry tomatoes and add to the bowl. Tear up the basil leaves and toss into the bowl. Drizzle the olive oil over the ingredients and add the lemon juice as well.
3. Season with salt and cracked black pepper to taste. Top with feta cheese.

Nutrition

- 170 calories, 9g fat, 19g carbs, 4g protein per serving



Source: Adapted from Lionello, M. Frugal Mediterranean Cooking. Page Street Publishing Co.; 2020

Deconstructed Avocado Egg Salad

Ingredients (4 servings)

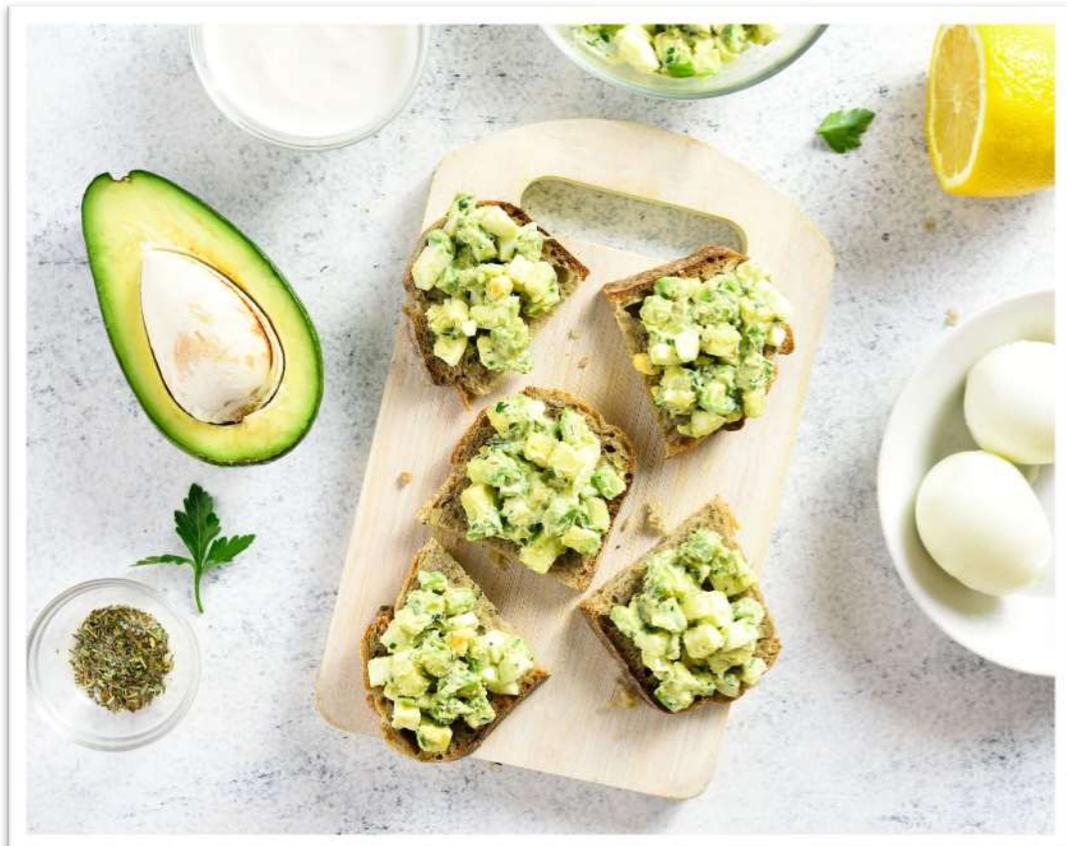
- 1 ripe, fresh avocado, halved, pitted, peeled, and diced
- 4 soft-boiled eggs, peeled and cut into chunks
- 1/2 lemon
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 8 wheat crackers
- Herbs, such as dill, tarragon, parsley or cilantro (optional)

Directions

1. Boil eggs 7-10 minutes to desired consistency.
2. Divide avocado and eggs among 4 dishes.
3. Season to taste with a squeeze of lemon juice and salt. Garnish with herbs, if desired.
4. Serve with crackers.

Nutrition: 225 calories, 13g fat, 20g carbohydrate, 9g protein

Source: <https://loveonetoday.com/recipe/deconstructed-avocado-egg-salad->



Baked Sweet Potatoes



Ingredients

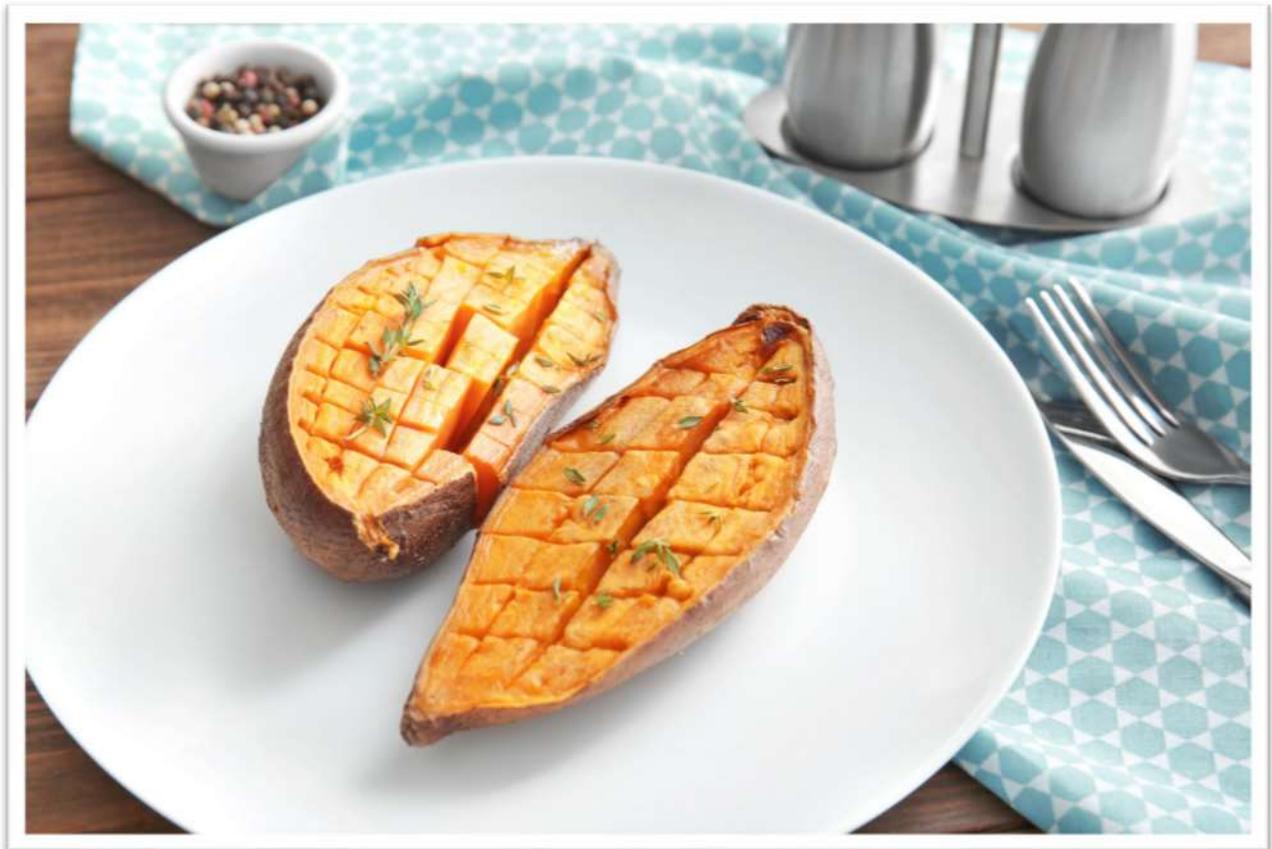
- Sweet potatoes
- 1 teaspoon brown sugar

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F
2. Prick the sweet potato several times
3. Place on a baking sheet and bake until tender (about 1 hour for a medium sweet potato).
4. Once cooled, slice down center, pull open, and sprinkle with brown sugar.

Nutrition

- 140 calories, 0g fat, 36g carbs, 3g protein



Stuffed Sweet Potato



Ingredients

- 2 medium sweet potatoes
- 1 15 oz. can of black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 medium tomato, diced
- ½ teaspoon cumin
- ⅛ teaspoon garlic powder
- ⅛ teaspoon fine sea salt
- 2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil
- 3 tablespoons plain yogurt
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro

Directions:

1. Use a fork to poke sweet potatoes several times. Place on a microwavable dish. Heat on high for 5-7 minutes until completely tender.
2. Meanwhile, mix beans, tomato, cumin, sea salt, and garlic powder in a small microwaveable bowl. Microwave for 1 minute. Add olive oil and stir to combine
3. Cut the sweet potato in half lengthwise. Add half of filling to each potato and top with yogurt and cilantro. Serve warm.

Nutrition: 420 calories, 6g fat, 76g carbs, 18g protein



Source: Quick & Easy Healthier Traditions Cookbook. Transamerica Center for Health Studies.

Classic Hummus



Ingredients (8-10 servings)

- Two 15-ounce cans chickpeas, drained, liquid reserved
- ¼ cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
- ¼ cup tahini
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- Smoked paprika, for serving, optional
- Vegetables, for serving



Directions

1. Put the chickpeas, lemon juice, tahini, cumin and garlic into a food processor and pulse until smooth. With the motor running, slowly pour in the oil in a steady stream. Add the salt and puree until very smooth. If the mixture is too thick, add some of the reserved chickpea liquid, 2 tablespoons at a time, until the desired consistency is reached.
2. To serve, transfer the hummus to a serving bowl. Garnish with a sprinkling of smoked paprika if using and serve with vegetables and pita chips for dipping.
3. Store leftover hummus in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.

Nutrition

190 calories, 9g fat, 21g carbs, 7g protein per serving

Source: Adapted from <https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/katie-lee/classic-hummus-2333947>

Easy Homemade Trail-mix

Ingredients (1 serving)

- 2 cups *popped* unbuttered popcorn (e.g., SkinnyPop Original)
- ¼ cup dried cranberries
- 2 tablespoons dark chocolate chips

Directions: Mix popcorn, dried cranberries, and dark chocolate chips.

Nutrition: 320 kcals, 13g fat, 51g carbohydrates, 2.5g protein

Fruit Sorbet



Ingredients (1 serving)

- 1 cup frozen fruit
- ¼ cup unsweetened almond milk (or other low fat milk alternative)

Directions

1. Add frozen fruit of choice and low-fat milk to blender or high-speed food processor. Process until smooth and creamy, stopping to scrape down sides as needed.
2. Enjoy the sorbet immediately, soft-serve style, or pack into a freezer-safe container and freeze at least 1 hour until firm enough to scoop.

Nutrition: 80 calories, 1g fat, 18g carbs, 1g protein

Recipe courtesy of Sarah Ray



Stovetop Apple Crisp



Ingredients (4 servings)

- 2 ½ tablespoons unsalted butter
- ⅓ cup chopped pecans
- ⅓ cup rolled oats
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- 2 tart apples, such as Granny Smith, Winesap, or Pink Lady, sliced into wedges (about 4 cups)
- 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon



Directions

1. Line a plate with parchment paper. Set aside.
2. Melt 2 tablespoons of butter over medium heat. Stir in pecans, oats, brown sugar, and salt. Cook until mixture begins to brown, about 5 minutes.
3. When topping is done cooking, transfer to parchment-lined plate.
4. Melt another ½ tablespoon butter or oil over medium heat. Sauté apples for 5 minutes until soft. Stir in sugar, lemon juice, and cinnamon; simmer for 2 minutes. Top with oat mixture and serve warm.

Nutrition: 250 calories, 15g fat, 29g carbs, and 3g protein

Source: Quick & Easy Healthier Traditions Cookbook. Transamerica Center for Health Studies.

Fruit Dip



Ingredients (4 servings)

- 1 (8-ounce) container low-fat vanilla yogurt
- 2 tablespoons 100% orange juice
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- ½ tablespoon brown sugar
- Fruit of choice

Directions: In a small bowl, combine yogurt, orange juice, lime juice, and brown sugar; mix well.

Nutrition: 54 calories, 1g fat, 9g carbs, 3g protein per serving of dip



Source: Everyday Healthy Meals Cookbook. California Department of Public Health's *Network for Healthy California*; 2007.

Raspberry Oatmeal Bars

Ingredients (12 servings)

- 10 oz. frozen raspberries
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1/3 cup butter
- 2/3 cup brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 cup oats
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda

Directions

1. Thaw the raspberries over medium heat.
2. Add in cornstarch and sugar. Heat until it's thick and bubbly.
3. Prepare the crust. Cream the butter and sugar together.
4. Then, add the rest of the ingredients and blend them until it looks like a coarse meal.
5. Press 2 cups of this onto an 8x8 inch pan.
6. Bake it for 12 minutes at 350°F.
7. After the crust comes out, spread the remaining raspberry mixture over the crust. Sprinkle it over with the remaining dry mixture.
8. Bake for 15 more minutes.



Nutrition: 160 calories, 6g fat, 26g carbs, 2g protein

Black Bean Brownies



Ingredients (Makes 12 brownies)

- 1 can (15 ounces) black beans, rinsed and drained
- ½ cup semisweet chocolate chips, divided
- 3 tablespoons canola oil
- 3 large eggs
- ⅔ cup packed brown sugar
- ½ cup baking cocoa
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ⅛ teaspoon salt

Directions

1. Place the beans, ¼ cup chocolate chips, and oil in a food processor, cover and process until blended.
2. Add eggs, brown sugar, cocoa, vanilla, baking powder, and salt; cover and process until smooth.
3. Transfer to a parchment-lined 8-in. square baking pan. Sprinkle with remaining chocolate chips.
4. Bake at 350°F for 20-25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack. Cut into bars.

Nutrition

170 calories, 7g fat, 24g carbohydrates, 4g protein



Source: <https://www.tfrecipes.com/black-bean-brownies-weight-watchers>

My Exercise Routine

Although they say, “Abs are made in the kitchen”, daily exercise can really help!

It is recommended that all adults target 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity each week.¹² This can be achieved by doing 50 minutes of exercise three times a week, or 20-25 minutes a day, or 10-15 minutes twice per day morning and night, or 5 minutes 4-5 times per day. You get the idea!

Try to think of exercise as a way of getting your internal engine to activate and move faster and more efficiently. Your engine is your metabolism. Exercise is divided into aerobic, resistance and stretching moves. Aerobic exercises can include walking, running, bicycling, swimming, elliptical, rowing, jumping, among others.¹³ Resistance exercises focus on strength training such as lifting weights, squatting, lunging, and using elastic bands. Finally, stretching exercises focus on helping to improve flexibility and balance.

YOUR GOAL: You aren't training for a marathon, but you are simply doing more than you did last week. So get up from the chair, and try doing 5 minutes of exercise a day, and slowly build yourself up towards a higher goal. Get rid of excuses, get out of your comfort zone, start moving, be accountable, and results will come your way!



Where should I start?

If you are unsure of where to begin when it comes to physical activity, start with some of these activities and work your way up. The most important thing is to start moving!

- Walking (by yourself, your dog, or with friends)
- Stretching
- Chair exercises
- Yoga
- Home workout videos
- Water aerobics
- Recreational swimming



Other Physical Activity Ideas

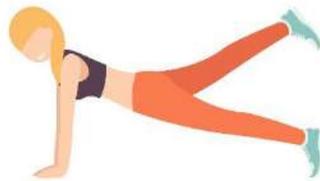
No Equipment Workouts



Squats



Beckenheber



Leg lift



Donkey Kicks



Plank



Back extension

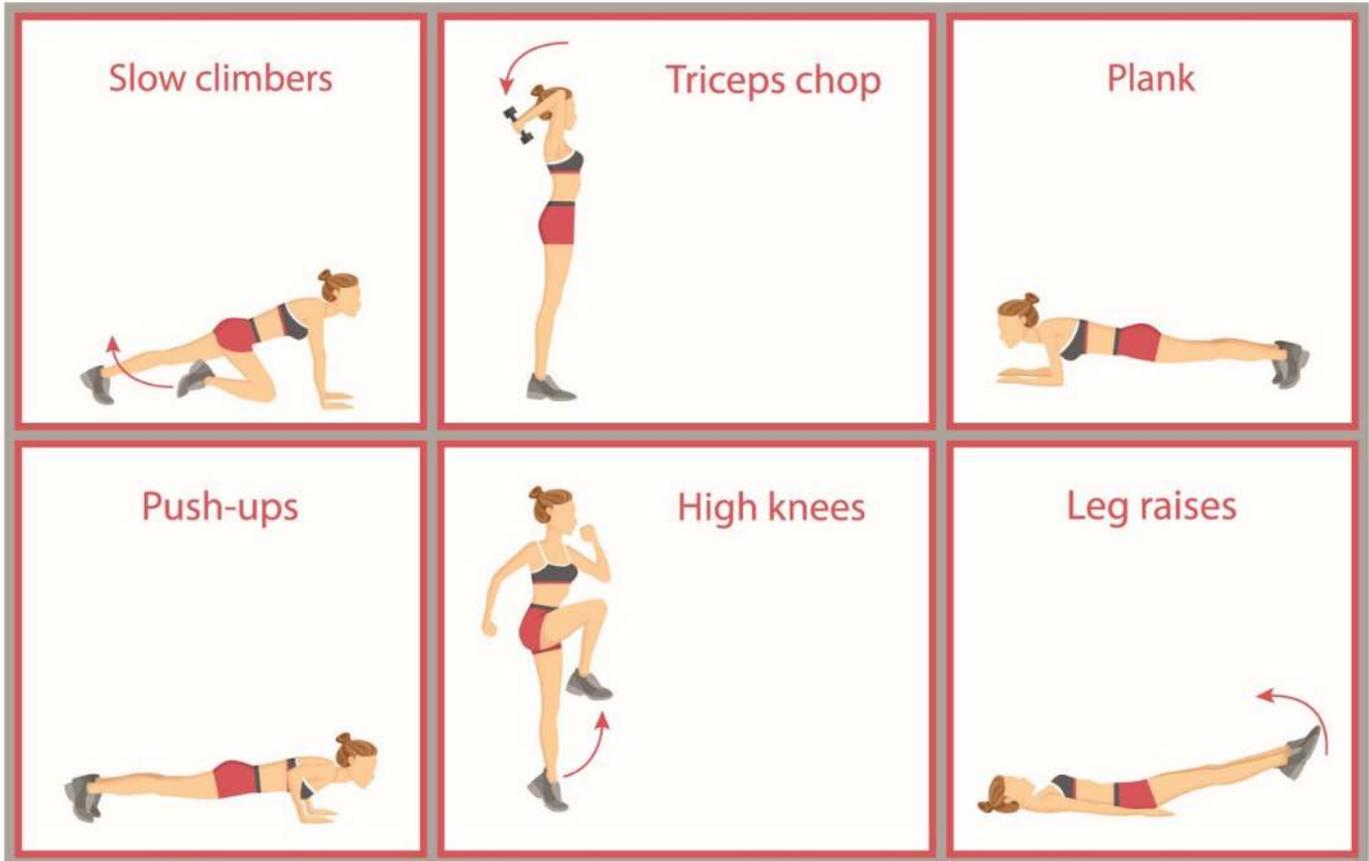


Deep lunges



Bird dog

6-Minute Workout



“IF YOU CAN'T FLY, THEN RUN,
IF YOU CAN'T RUN, THEN WALK,
IF YOU CAN'T WALK, THEN CRAWL,
BUT WHATEVER YOU DO,
YOU HAVE TO KEEP MOVING FORWARD.”

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

10 Minute Abs Workout

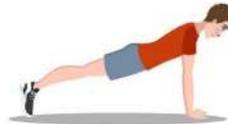


ABS WORKOUT

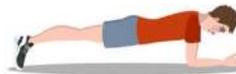
1 3 sets 10 reps



2 full plank 60 sec



elbow plank 60 sec



3 3 sets 15 reps



5 3 sets 10 reps



6 3 sets 10 reps



7 3 sets 10 reps



IF I QUIT NOW, I
WILL SOON BE
BACK TO WHERE I
STARTED.
AND WHEN I
STARTED, I WAS
DESPERATELY
WISHING TO BE
WHERE I AM NOW.

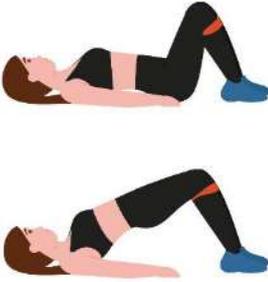
Water Aerobics Classes



Lower Body Workout with Resistance Bands



Running in place



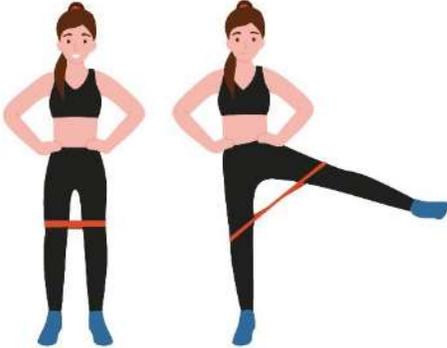
Pelvic lift



Squats



Lunges



Leg side abduction



Deadlift



Donkey kick backs



Standing clamshell



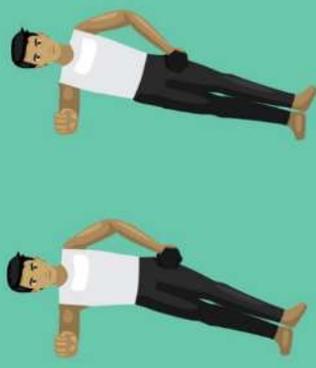
Side lying leg raise

Dumbbell Exercise Sets

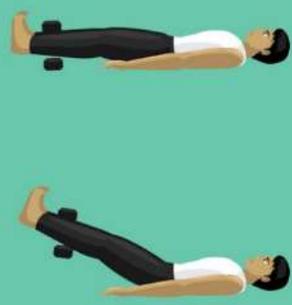
KNEE TO CHEST



SIDE PLANK



LEG RAISE



RUSSIAN TWIST



SIDE BEND



WOODCHOP



BENT-OVER REVERSE FLY



SINGLE-ARM OVERHEAD



STANDING BICEPS CURL



CURTSY LUNGE



GOBLET SQUAT



REVERSE LUNGE



STANDING LATERAL RAISE



FLOOR PRESS



GLUTE BRIDGE

Don't Quit

When things go wrong as they sometimes will,
When the road you're trudging seems all uphill
When the funds are low and the debts are high,
And you want to smile, but you have to sigh,
When care is pressing you down a bit-
Rest if you must, but don't quit.

Life is strange with its twists and turns,
As every one of us sometimes learns,
And many a fellow turns about
When he might have won had he stuck it out.
Don't give up though the pace seems slow-
You may succeed with another blow.

Often the goal is nearer than
It seems to a fair and faltering man,
Often the struggler has given up
When he might have captured the victor's cup,
And he learned too late when night came down,
How close he was to the golden crown.

Success is failure turned inside out-
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt,
And you never can tell how close you are,
It may be near when it seems afar,
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit-
It's when things seem worst that you mustn't quit.

John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892)

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