



Healthy is a Habit:  
*Start Here!*

NOTHING  
TASTES AS GOOD AS  
BEING HEALTHY  
FEELS



Easy, budget friendly,  
healthy & delicious recipes,  
cooking techniques, time  
saving tricks & more!



*Your health is in your hands...*

## 5 keys to unlock a healthier, happier you!

1. Focus on fruits & vegetables
2. Practice portion control
3. Cut down on convenience foods
4. Choose whole grains
5. Exercise daily & get more sleep



### *Stock up on Staples!*

- Keep canned protein like beans, tuna, salmon & chicken for a meal in minutes.
- Have canned tomato products, broth, whole grain pasta & brown rice at all times.
- Make sure to have canned fruits & veggies, dried fruit & nuts to satisfy snack cravings & easily add nutrients to a dish.
- Have ingredients like oil & vinegar, spices & dried herbs on hand for a quick, easy & healthy salad dressing. Also use dried herbs & spices to flavor your food without adding salt & extra fat.
- Use your freezer: frozen fruits & veggies are typically precut & so with little preparation & easy storage, you use only what you need.

### *Lighten up & Snack Smart!*

- Try using lower fat substitutions like low fat plain yogurt in place of mayo or sour cream in recipes.
- Choose oil based dressings over milk products like ranch or butter.
- Bake, broil, grill or sauté instead of frying foods.
- Try replacing applesauce for sugar and oil in baked goods recipes.
- Add fiber, like leaving the skins on vegetables or choosing whole wheat pasta to help fill you up at meals.
- Cut & dice vegetables ahead of time & have available when hunger strikes.

## Plan Ahead to Make Progress

“Failing to plan is planning to fail.”

-Ben Franklin



### *Cook once, Eat twice!*

- Shop for ingredients that can be used in more than one meal.
- Make big batches of whole grains like brown rice or barley and store saved portions in the freezer for up to a month– this will ensure you have the ingredients to make a healthy meal in a hurry.
- Roast a big batch of your favorite veggies at the beginning of the week & use with different meals every day.
- Remake last night’s dinner leftovers into tomorrow’s lunch. Add cooked meats and veggies to a salad or wrap in a whole grain tortilla for a quick burrito. Try adding beans and greens to a baked potato or salad greens.

By using MyPlate we can build a better plate!  
Before you eat consider what goes on your plate,  
in your bowl or cup!

The 5 FOOD GROUPS are the foundation of a healthy diet and by practicing portion control we can reach our health goals.

We can also save money by following the portion sizes. For example, the protein portion is much smaller than what we might currently consume & also be a pretty expensive part of our grocery bill.

By cutting back on protein & choosing less expensive protein foods, like beans, we can cut our grocery bills in half!

Saturated fat, sodium & added sugar aren’t on the plate & should be limited. By comparing Nutrition Facts labels we can identify healthier choices and by using the ingredient list we can identify foods with less saturated fat, sodium & added sugar.



## Tips for Preparing Brown Rice

There are three types of brown rice & that's why the ratios for grain to water get tricky, giving us mushy or hard rice!

### GRAIN TO LIQUID RATIO:

**Short Grain** 1 cup to 2 1/4 cups simmer for 45 minutes covered

**Medium Grain** 1 cup to 2 cups simmer for 45 minutes covered

**Long Grain** 1 cup to 2 cups simmer for 45 minutes covered

*And remember, leave the pot alone, only fluff at the end!*

## Tips for Preparing Dried Beans

Use the QUICK COOKING method instead of soaking overnight: Cover beans with an inch of water and bring to a boil. Remove from heat, cover and let sit for one hour. Drain and cook as usual.

### AS A GENERAL RULE:

1 cup dried beans = 2 1/2- 3 cups cooked beans

#### **Make Half your Plate Fruits & Vegetables:**

Try to fill up your plate with fruits & vegetables before adding grains and protein.

#### **Focus on whole fruits:**

Eat whole fruits instead of drinking 100% juice. Whole fruits have all the fiber!

Snack on fresh, frozen or canned fruits instead of sugary cookies, cakes or packaged snacks

#### **Vary your veggies:**

Eat the rainbow! Choose vegetables that are red, orange, green, purple, yellow!

Add fresh, frozen or canned veggies to salads, side dishes, and your main meals!

Try to limit the amount of sauces, gravies or glazes you add to your veggies to reduce added sodium, saturated fat and added sugars!

#### **Make Half your Grains Whole:**

Choose whole grains foods like oatmeal, brown rice, popcorn, whole wheat flour, instead of refined grains like white bread, white rice and white pasta

Look for high fiber, whole grain foods by reading the Nutrition Facts label and ingredient list

#### **Move to low fat and fat free dairy:**

Choose low fat/fat-free milk & yogurt

Buy lower fat cheese & practice portion control

Limit regular cream cheese, butter and cream because they have little or no calcium and are high in saturated fat.

#### **Vary your Protein Routine:**

Mix up your protein foods to include seafood, beans, nuts, seeds, soy, eggs, lean meats and poultry

Add beans, peas, unsalted nuts & seeds and soy to main dishes & snacks

## Dinner

- ◆ Roasted protein and veggies with brown rice
- ◆ Soup/stew/chili
- ◆ Whole wheat pasta and veggies with lean protein
- ◆ Stir fry
- ◆ Fish & baked sweet potato with side salad
- ◆ Lasagna with eggplant or zucchini instead of noodles
- ◆ Sautéed beans and greens, like collards or kale
- ◆ Stuffed Peppers
- ◆ Tuna stuffed tomatoes
- ◆ Burritos, tacos or enchiladas with lower fat ingredients; like plain yogurt instead of sour cream
- ◆ Pizza with whole wheat crust & loads of veggies

## Ways to Eat More Vegetables

- Start your day by adding veggies like mushrooms, peppers and spinach to your eggs!
- Pack carrot and celery sticks for a healthy on-the-go snack.
- Sneak veggies like onions, pepper, shredded carrots and zucchini into meat dishes like meatloaf, spaghetti sauces, stews, soups or casseroles.
- Puree pumpkin , squash or sweet potato and add it to pancake or waffle mix!
- Use applesauce in place of oil in baking recipes.

# Meal Time Ideas:

## Breakfast

The first meal of the day helps kick start your metabolism, keep you focused, attentive and gives you fuel to take on the day! Try choosing some whole grain foods and protein foods to keep you full longer!

- ♦ Whole wheat tortilla, peanut butter & banana
- ♦ Oatmeal with fruit and nuts or peanut butter
- ♦ Scrambled eggs with veggies like pepper, onion, tomato, mushroom & spinach
- ♦ Toast with avocado spread like butter
- ♦ Homemade granola bars
- ♦ Smoothie with oats in it for extra fiber
- ♦ Last night's dinner

## Lunch

Themed salad bowls:

- ♦ *Mexican*- black beans, corn, avocado, tomato, bell pepper, lettuce and oil & vinegar dressing with cilantro
- ♦ *Fall Harvest*- sweet potato or squash, beets, carrots, onion, pepper, mushrooms, chicken or fish with oil & vinegar dressing
- ♦ *Greek*- tomatoes, feta cheese, onion, olives,  
cucumber with oil, vinegar & lemon juice dressing
- ♦ Roasted veggie and bean burrito
- ♦ Veggie packed sandwich with lean lunch meat
- ♦ Pasta with roasted veggies & tomato sauce
- ♦ Quesadillas
- ♦ Soup- the options are limitless!