

# MEAL PLANNING Made Easy

## Did you know...

Planning meals ahead of time can help you stick with a healthy eating plan, save time and money. If you are new to meal planning, start small and work up to more using some of our tips and tricks.

### Plan



Map out the meals you plan to eat for the week. Compile your recipes and figure out how much time each will take to make.

### Swap

Use your recipes to create your shopping list. Cross off the ingredients you already have on hand. Missing an ingredient? Look to see if you have an alternative that can be swapped in the recipe.



**TIP:** try canned pumpkin, pureed avocado, or mashed banana instead of butter

### Shop

Try to stick to your grocery list. Check stores for sales or discounts. Buying in bulk can save money.



### Cook

Get all your ingredients and utensils ready. Prepare larger portions that can be frozen for another week or to have leftovers for a quick and easy lunch.



### Store

Some meals can be prepped and kept in the fridge or freezer for quick dinners later in the week. Stackable bento boxes are perfect to prepare healthy lunches in advance for a busy work week.



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# The Miracle Drink: WATER!

## Did you know...

Approximately 70% of your body is made up of water. Your body uses about 9 cups of water every day to transport oxygen, nutrients, and waste. It also uses water to keep your skin, eyes, and mouth moist.

## Why does it matter?

Drinking water has many health benefits. Water keeps digestion regular, helps regulate and maintain body temperature, lubricates and cushions joints, protects your spinal cord and sensitive tissue, increases alertness and productivity levels, strengthens the immune system by riding the body of toxins and waste, jumpstarts your metabolism to aid in weight management, improves complexion and skin radiance, and promotes hair growth.

**TAKEAWAY:** aim to drink at least 8 cups of water every day to experience the maximum health benefits.

## When to drink water

- ✓ 2 glasses of water in the morning, after waking up, helps activate internal organs and jumpstart your metabolism
- ✓ 1 glass of water before each meal will help with digestions
- ✓ 1 glass of water before a bath or shower will help lower blood pressure
- ✓ 1 glass of water in the evening, before going to bed, can help reduce the risk of heart attack or stroke

**PRO TIP:** plain water getting boring? Try adding some healthy flavoring with fresh fruit or herbs.



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# Sodium: More Than Just Table Salt

## Did you know...

The American Heart Association recommends consuming less than 1500 mg of sodium per day - even if you don't have high blood pressure. The average American adult consumes over 3400 mg per day - that's more than double the American Heart Association recommendation.

## Why does it matter?

Too much sodium can increase your risk for high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke. Even cutting back by 1000 mg per day can improve your blood pressure and heart health.

## Where do we get our salt?

Most of the sodium we eat doesn't come from salt we add ourselves, it comes from processed foods we buy at the store. According to the FDA, over 70% of dietary sodium comes from eating packaged and prepared foods. Food from restaurants contributes 20%, and the salt we add at the table and to home-cooked meals only contribute about 10% of the total sodium you eat, because it could be added to your food before you even take it home.

**TAKEAWAY:** the best way to reduce our sodium intake is to eat fewer processed foods and cook at home more often.



## Top 5 Sources of Sodium

- Breads and rolls
- Pizza
- Sandwiches
- Cold cuts and cured meat
- Soups



## Tips to eat less sodium:

- ✓ Buy frozen vegetables or no salt added/low sodium canned vegetables.
- ✓ Rinsing regular canned vegetables with water can remove up to 40% of sodium.
- ✓ Check the nutrition facts label and compare brands- choose products with the lowest amount of sodium per serving.



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# Make Reading Food Labels a Healthy Habit

## 1 Serving Size

Serving size helps consumers identify the correct portion. A serving is measured in familiar units such as cups or pieces. All other information on the label is for 1 serving so eating more or less than a serving will alter the quantities and percent.

## 2 Total Fat

This includes the healthy unsaturated fat as well as the harmful saturated and trans fat in the product. For a 2000 calorie per day diet try keeping total fat intake to under 65 grams a day. Most of the fat you consume should come from healthy sources like fish, nuts, seeds, olives or avocados.

## 3 Important Nutrients

Many people do not get enough dietary fiber, vitamin D, calcium, iron or potassium. Getting enough of these nutrients can improve your health and reduce your risk of some diseases.

## Nutrition Facts

8 servings per container

**Serving size** 2/3 cup (55g)

**Amount per serving**

**Calories** 230

% Daily Value\*

**Total Fat** 8g 10%

Saturated Fat 1g 5%

Trans Fat 0g

**Cholesterol** 0mg 0%

**Sodium** 160mg 7%

**Total Carbohydrate** 37g 13%

Dietary Fiber 4g 14%

Total Sugars 12g

Includes 10g Added Sugars 20%

**Protein** 3g

Vitamin D 2mcg 10%

Calcium 260mg 20%

Iron 8mg 45%

Potassium 240mg 6%

\* 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.

## 4 Calories

Calories measure how much energy you get from one serving of a food. To maintain weight you want to burn through exercise the same number of calories you consume daily.

## 5 Cholesterol & Sodium

Try to consume as little cholesterol as possible (less than 300 mg/day). Adults and children over 14 should also keep their sodium intake below 2,400 mg/day.

## 6 Total Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates give you energy. Healthy options include whole grains, vegetables, fruits and beans which also provide vitamins, minerals and fiber to your diet.

## 7 Protein

Protein helps build muscle. Lean meats, nuts, eggs, fish, and dry beans are good sources of protein.

## Use food labels to make healthy choices:

- ✓ Keep track of your calorie intake.
- ✓ Choose foods with lower % Daily Value of total fat, saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, and sodium.
- ✓ Choose foods with higher % Daily Value of vitamins, minerals, and fiber.



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# WAKE UP With Breakfast

## Did you know...

Your body needs breakfast! The ideal breakfast contains a good balance of carbohydrates, healthy fats, and protein. This provides the nutrients your body needs to help prevent overeating throughout the day and the energy that will help you concentrate and be more productive.

### Carbohydrates

- ✓ Provide fuel for our brains and muscles
- ✓ Contain important vitamins, minerals, fiber, and antioxidants that help prevent disease

### Healthy Fats

- ✓ Provide energy and essential fatty acids
- ✓ Helps keep our skin healthy
- ✓ Play a key role in brain development
- ✓ Enhance absorption of fat soluble vitamins

### Protein

- ✓ Helps maintain blood sugar
- ✓ Helps us feel alert
- ✓ Provides a feeling of fullness



**Tip:**  
Keeping breakfast light & low-fat will help you feel energetic and alert!



## How to choose a healthy breakfast:

### 1 Serving Protein

- 1 cup skim or 1% milk
- 6-8 ounces low-fat yogurt
- 1/2 cup low-fat cottage cheese
- 1 ounce low-fat cheese
- 1-2 slices lean ham, Canadian bacon, or smoked salmon
- 1 egg, 2 egg whites, or 1/2 cup egg substitute
- 2 vegetarian sausage links

### 1 Serving Whole Grain

- 1 slice whole wheat bread
- 1/2 whole wheat bagel or 1 mini whole wheat bagel
- 1 whole wheat English muffin
- 1/2 cup cooked oatmeal
- 1 ounce ready-to-eat whole grain oatmeal with 5+ grams of fiber per serving

### 1 Serving Fruit and/or Vegetable

- 1 piece whole fruit or 1 cup sliced fruit
- 4 ounces of 100% fruit juice
- 6 ounces low-sodium vegetable juice
- 2 tablespoons dried fruit
- 1/2 to 1 cup raw or cooked vegetables

### 1 Serving Healthy Fat

- 1 teaspoon olive or canola oil
- 2 teaspoons of nut butter
- 2 tablespoons chopped nuts
- 1 tablespoons of seeds
- 1/8 of an avocado

**Grab-n-Go Ideas:** fat free or low-fat yogurt, part skim milk cheese stick, whole wheat bread or English muffin spread with peanut butter, serving bag of trail mix, piece of fruit



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# Eat Your Colors!

## Red Foods

- contain lycopene and anthocyanins
- keep your heart healthy
- keep memory strong
- lower chance of certain cancers

## Orange & Yellow Foods

- provide beta-carotene
- keep your skin and bones healthy
- improves your vision
- promotes immune system

## Green Foods

- full of lutein that supports clear vision and glowing skin
- keep your bones and teeth strong
- indoles in certain green foods help prevent certain cancers

## Purple & Blue Foods

- contain anthocyanins
- aid in improving memory
- keep your bladder healthy
- lower chance of heart disease and certain cancers



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# Get Ready to Grill SAFELY

## Did you know...

Food poisoning peaks in the summer months when warmer temperatures cause foodborne germs to flourish. CDC estimates that each year 48 million people get sick from a foodborne illness, 128,000 are hospitalized, and 3,000 die.

## Why does it matter?

Common symptoms of foodborne diseases are nausea, vomiting, stomach cramps, and diarrhea. However, symptoms may differ among the different types of foodborne diseases. Symptoms can sometimes be severe, and some foodborne illnesses can even be life-threatening.

## Follow these steps for a safe and enjoyable grilling season

### 1 Separate



- When shopping, pick up meat, chicken and other poultry, and seafood last, right before checkout.
- Separate them from other food in your shopping cart and grocery bags.
- To guard against cross-contamination, put packages of raw meat and poultry into individual plastic bags.



### 2 Chill, Thaw and Marinate

- Keep meat, poultry, and seafood refrigerated until ready to grill.
- When transporting, keep 40°F or below in an insulated cooler.
- Thaw food safely in the refrigerator, cold water or microwave.
- Always marinate food in the refrigerator no matter what kind of marinade you're using.

### 3 Clean



- Wash your hands with soap before and after handling raw meat, poultry, and seafood.
- Wash work surfaces, utensils, and the grill before and after cooking.
- Use a moist cloth or paper towel to clean the grill surface before cooking.



### 4 Cook and Store

- Use a food thermometer to ensure meat is cooked hot enough to kill harmful germs.
- When smoking, keep temperatures inside the smoker at 225°F to 300°F.
- Divide leftovers into small portions and place in covered, shallow containers.
- Put in freezer or fridge within 2 hours of cooking.

#### HOW HOT SHOULD MEAT BE?



145°F for beef, pork, lamb, veal, and fish  
160°F for hamburger and other ground meat  
165°F for poultry



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# Wellness in Action

## Did you know...

Exercise is an important part of a healthy lifestyle? Physical activity doesn't need to be complicated or require additional equipment. The CDC recommends that adults get 150 minutes a week of moderate-intensity physical activity with 2 days of muscle strengthening activities.

## Why does it matter?

According to some studies, people who walked at a moderate pace for 30-45 minutes a day reported 43% fewer sick days and fewer upper respiratory infections. Something as simple as a daily walk can help you maintain a healthy weight, prevent or manage conditions like heart disease, high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes, strengthen your bones and muscles, improve overall mood, balance and coordination.

## Examples of Aerobic Activities

### Moderate-intensity Activities

- ✓ Brisk walking
- ✓ Water aerobics
- ✓ Bike riding on level ground
- ✓ Playing doubles tennis



### Vigorous-intensity Activities

- ✓ Jogging or running
- ✓ Swimming laps
- ✓ Playing basketball
- ✓ Playing singles tennis



**TIP:** Start with short bursts of activity and gradually build up. You don't have to get all of your minutes at once. You can reach 150 minutes by getting 30 minutes for 5 days.

## Examples of Strengthening Activities

- ✓ Lifting weights
- ✓ Working with resistance bands
- ✓ Exercises that use body weight for resistance like push-ups and sit-ups



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# Cost of Calories

## Did you know...

Exercise is an important part of a healthy lifestyle, but exercise alone will not help you reach weight loss goals. Calories burned through exercise need to be greater than the calories consumed if you are trying to lose weight. Many of Americans favorite foods, especially those at restaurants, are high in calories and contain a larger portion of fats and added sugars.

## Why does it matter?

If your goal is to maintain or lose weight you want to be sure you burn as many, or more, calories than you consume. Take a look at some popular foods and see how many minutes of walking would be needed for a 150-pound person to burn the calories consumed.



### Quarter Pound Cheeseburger

- 520 calories
- 79 minutes



### Large Fries

- 510 calories
- 77 minutes



### Large Soda

- 280 calories
- 43 minutes



### 2 Pieces of Fried Chicken

- 490 calories
- 74 minutes



### Half of a Frozen Pizza

- 660 calories
- 100 minutes



### Bag of Chips

- 320 calories
- 49 minutes



### Large Cookie

- 220 calories
- 34 minutes



### Candy Bar

- 250 calories
- 38 minutes



### Cup of Ice Cream

- 300 calories
- 46 minutes

## Exercises that burn 100 calories...

✓ Climb stairs for 10 minutes

✓ Hike for 15 minutes

✓ Yoga or walk for 30 minutes

✓ Run a 10-minute mile

✓ Jump rope for 7 minutes

✓ Garden for 25 minutes

**TAKEAWAY:** there is not enough time in a day to work off a poor diet. Smart food choices are just as important as exercise when weight loss is your goal.



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# Hey There, SUGAR!

## Did you know...

The American Heart Association has set recommended limits on daily intake of all sugars:



No more than 6 teaspoons or 100 calories a day of added sugar for women



No more than 9 teaspoons or 150 calories a day of added sugar for men

## Why does it matter?

Too much sodium can increase your risk for Type 2 Diabetes, addiction, depression, acne, headaches, fatigue, dental issues and obesity.

## Where does sugar come from?

Some sugars, like those found in fruit, are naturally occurring. However, many products contain added sugar that are thought to enhance flavor, improve the color or texture of products, aid in fermentation of many foods and beverages, and help preserve some foods like jams and jellies. On average 67% of your sugar intake comes from the food you consume and 33% comes from sugary beverages.

**TAKEAWAY:** to reduce sugar intake prepare more foods at home and switch from sweetened beverages to water.

## Pro Tip: try infused water instead of sweetened beverages.



- ✓ Add your favorite fruit slices to your water. Try citrus fruits, berries, watermelon, or cucumber.
- ✓ Gather loose herbs and flowers in a tea infuser.
- ✓ Crush ginger and leafy herbs, like thyme, basil, mint, or star anise, to release flavors.
- ✓ Keep it simple. Think of flavor combos you like in other recipes and build from there.

1 Yogurt



2 Soda



3 Salad dressings



**Beware added sugar in these 5 foods!**

4 Cookies and treats



5 Cereals



## Sugars on Nutrition Labels

- High fructose corn syrup (syrup)
- Fructose, sucrose or dextrose
- Molasses
- Honey
- Sugar (refined, cane, white, brown)



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# Enjoy the Season Without Sacrificing Health

## Did you know...

The three-month period that begins with Halloween treats and winds up with New Year's festivities can be challenging for many Americans, who on average gain 3 pounds each holiday season.

## Why does it matter?

Staying healthy during the holidays doesn't mean you can't enjoy the parties and celebrations. Indulging a little won't hurt – if you plan ahead for meals that are healthy, too.

### Holiday Drink Tips

- ✓ Like eggnog? Fill your glass mostly with low-fat or skim milk and add a small amount of eggnog to get that noggy flavor but with fewer calories.
- ✓ If cocoa is your drink of choice, use low-fat or fat-free hot chocolate mixes with low-fat or nonfat milk or hot water.
- ✓ Halve your cocktails by having a glass of water or sparkling water between each alcoholic drink. This will leave less time or room to overindulge.



### Meats and Side Dishes Tips

- ✓ What part of the bird do you like best? If you reach for the lighter pieces of meat, they have fewer calories than the darker ones. And, taking off the skin reduces fat and calories.
- ✓ You can still complement your meal with some dressing or gravy. Try to limit it to about 1/4 cup.
- ✓ Compare the labels of your holiday ingredients. Choose items with lower sodium, saturated fat and added sugars. And use low-fat or nonfat milk instead of whole milk or heavy cream.



### Sweets and Treats Tips

- ✓ Use half wheat and half white flour in your baking recipes to work in more healthy whole grains.
- ✓ Want your cake (or pie) and eat it too? Use the buddy system. Split your dessert with someone or try bite-sized or half portions.



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# Portion or Distortion?

## Did you know...

According to the National Heart, Blood, and Lung Institute average portion sizes have increased so drastically in the last 20 years that they now contain enough food for 2 or more people. This increase has resulted in Americans altered view on what a "normal" portion, the phenomenon known as the portion distortion.

## Why does it matter?

Consuming an extra 100 calories a day for a year, without using them, can lead to a weight gain of 10 pounds

## Time to scale back?

Over the years restaurants and fast food chains aren't the only ones who have contributed to the increase in portion sizes. In fact, research has observed the average size of a sample of dinner plates increased almost 23%, from 9.6 inches to 11.8 inches, since 1900. This may not sound like much, but when each meal of each day is on a larger plate, we lose sight of what an appropriate portion size actually looks like.

**TAKEAWAY:** understanding a portion is important. Check out the reference images to the right to learn more.



Deck of cards = 3 ounces of meat



Light bulb = 1 cup of raw vegetables



Tennis ball = 1 medium piece of fresh fruit



**Bigger isn't better:  
Phrases that indicate a surplus**

## Tips for easy portion control:



- ✓ Pour one 8-ounce cup of your sweet beverage instead of drinking what is served in oversized bottles.
- ✓ Measure a single serving out from a large bag of chips, crackers or your favorite snack.
- ✓ Share baked goods or serve as a smaller size with yogurt and fruit.
- ✓ Make fast food a real value by splitting the burger and fries with a friend and adding a side salad.

- Value meal or Combo
- King-size
- All-you-can-eat
- Deluxe, supreme or ultimate
- Colossal, jumbo or tub



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