

10 tips

Nutrition
Education Series

build a healthy meal

10 tips for healthy meals



A healthy meal starts with more vegetables and fruits and smaller portions of protein and grains. Think about how you can adjust the portions on your plate to get more of what you need without too many calories. And don't forget dairy—make it the beverage with your meal or add fat-free or low-fat dairy products to your plate.

1 make half your plate veggies and fruits

Vegetables and fruits are full of nutrients and may help to promote good health. Choose red, orange, and dark-green vegetables such as tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and broccoli.

2 add lean protein

Choose protein foods, such as lean beef and pork, or chicken, turkey, beans, or tofu. Twice a week, make seafood the protein on your plate.



3 include whole grains

Aim to make at least half your grains whole grains. Look for the words “100% whole grain” or “100% whole wheat” on the food label. Whole grains provide more nutrients, like fiber, than refined grains.

4 don't forget the dairy

Pair your meal with a cup of fat-free or low-fat milk. They provide the same amount of calcium and other essential nutrients as whole milk, but less fat and calories. Don't drink milk? Try soymilk (soy beverage) as your beverage or include fat-free or low-fat yogurt in your meal.



5 avoid extra fat

Using heavy gravies or sauces will add fat and calories to otherwise healthy choices. For example, steamed broccoli is great, but avoid topping it with cheese sauce. Try other options, like a sprinkling of low-fat parmesan cheese or a squeeze of lemon.

6 take your time

Savor your food. Eat slowly, enjoy the taste and textures, and pay attention to how you feel. Be mindful. Eating very quickly may cause you to eat too much.

7 use a smaller plate

Use a smaller plate at meals to help with portion control. That way you can finish your entire plate and feel satisfied without overeating.

8 take control of your food

Eat at home more often so you know exactly what you are eating. If you eat out, check and compare the nutrition information. Choose healthier options such as baked instead of fried.

9 try new foods

Keep it interesting by picking out new foods you've never tried before, like mango, lentils, or kale. You may find a new favorite! Trade fun and tasty recipes with friends or find them online.



10 satisfy your sweet tooth in a healthy way

Indulge in a naturally sweet dessert dish—fruit! Serve a fresh fruit cocktail or a fruit parfait made with yogurt. For a hot dessert, bake apples and top with cinnamon.

Bulgur Chickpea Salad

Serving Size: 1/6 of recipe

Yield: 6 servings

Ingredients:

1¼ cups water
1 cup coarse bulgur
1 teaspoon dried parsley
1 teaspoon minced onion
1 teaspoon soy sauce
½ cup chopped green onions
½ cup raisins
½ cup chopped carrots
¾ cup canned chickpeas (garbanzo beans), drained and rinsed

Dressing:

2 tablespoons oil
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 tablespoon soy sauce
1 garlic clove, minced
Black pepper to taste

Preparation:

1. In a medium saucepan, bring water to boil. Stir in bulgur, parsley, minced onion and soy sauce. Reduce heat to low and cover. Simmer 15-20 minutes (until all water is absorbed and bulgur is not too crunchy). Do not overcook.
2. Remove from heat and allow mixture to cool. Fluff with fork.
3. Combine dressing ingredients; stir well.
4. Put bulgur mixture in a large bowl. Pour dressing over bulgur mixture and mix well.
5. Stir in green onions, raisins, carrots and chickpeas. Cover and chill for several hours.

Nutritional Analysis Per Serving: Total Calories: 145 kcal, Total Fat: 5 grams, Total Saturated Fat: 1 gram, Total Trans Fat: 0 grams, Total Polyunsaturated Fat: 1 gram, Total Carbohydrate: 23 grams, Total Protein: 3.5 grams, Percentage of Calories from Fat: 32, Total Dietary Fiber: 3.5 grams, Total Cholesterol: 0 milligrams, Sodium: 443 milligrams, Vitamin D: 0 percent, Vitamin C: 8 percent, Vitamin A: 40 percent, Folate: 10 percent, Calcium: 3 percent, Iron: 7 percent.

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These materials are partially funded by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact 1-888-LAHELPU or visit www.dss.state.la.us to download an application for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

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