

The 'Whole' Truth About Food



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Second edition

Developed by Allina Health

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Introduction: Welcome!

If you've ever found yourself frustrated with nutrition information in the media ("Eggs are good!" "No, they're bad!"), confused by health claims on the front of a food package ("all natural," "gluten free") or distracted by dieting fads (keto, paleo), you're not alone! Knowing what and how much to eat is important for your health and well-being.

But with so much nutrition information available and food choices to make, what's best for you? This book will help you:

- understand the "whole" truth about food and which foods work best for your body
- give you the information and tools you need to achieve your goal(s).

To get started, let's think about why you want to make changes to your lifestyle and create a goal to help drive your success.

Making Changes and Goal Setting

SMART goals

Making changes can be challenging — but it's possible! Changing everything at once can be overwhelming, which is why it's best to set smaller, attainable goals.

Learning to set SMART goals can help you be successful.

S **Specific:** What would you like to do?

M **Measurable:** How will you know when you've done it?

A **Attainable:** Is it something you are able to do?

R **Relevant:** Is it important to you?

T **Time-bound:** When is the deadline?

SMART goal example

Here is an example of a SMART goal.

S I would like to eat healthier.

M I will know I'm eating healthier when I'm eating three servings of vegetables every day.

A I will accomplish my goal by keeping easy-to-grab, single-serving containers of fresh vegetables in my refrigerator.

R It's important for me to eat healthier to have enough energy to keep up with my busy schedule.

T I will start eating healthier on Monday, after I've done my weekend grocery shopping.



Tip

Make sure you're celebrating your successes (big and small) as you work toward your goals!

It's your turn!

Now that you know how to set goals it's your turn to try! Write down a goal to work on this week using what you've learned about SMART goals.

S

M

A

R

T

Chapter 1: The ‘Whole’ Truth About Food

Food is Information

The foods you eat affect your entire body — your brain, skin, eyes, joints, heart and more! Everything you eat acts as “information” for your body, sending messages that lead to health or disease. For example, eating plenty of dark-green, leafy vegetables gives your body the magnesium it needs to build strong, healthy bones. But drinking too many high-sugar carbonated beverages such as soda can cause your bones to become weak and brittle.

When you look at food as information, you can see why your body reacts the way it does. That’s why eating whole, nutrient-rich foods is the best thing you can do for your health!

Whole Foods

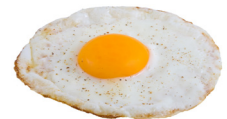
When you think of a whole food, what comes to mind? Consider what the following foods have in common.



Chicken



Berries



Eggs



Brown rice



Salmon



Milk



Beans and legumes



Broccoli



Sweet potato

What do you think would be listed in the ingredients lists of these foods? _____

Now consider what these foods have in common.



Chicken nuggets



Flavored yogurt



Sweetened cereal



Ice cream



Pepperoni



Soda



Frozen waffle



Cheesy crackers



French fries

What do you think would be listed in the ingredients lists of these foods? _____

Whole foods:

■ **are nutrient-rich:**

They contain vitamins, minerals, protein, healthful fats and unrefined carbohydrates.

■ **are (or were) living:**

They come from a plant or animal.

■ **contain few ingredients:**

The most healthful foods are often the ones that contain the fewest number of ingredients.

■ **will spoil:**

Some whole foods (root vegetables, rice) may last longer than a few weeks but in general, whole foods spoil quickly. They're fresh!

You will need to know how to find and read an ingredients list to determine if a food is a whole food. Turn to page 33 to learn more about how to read an ingredient list.

The Best Foods for You

Important

If you have a food allergy, your immune system overreacts to a food (or a substance in a food). It sees it as a threat and triggers a protective response. This is called an **allergic reaction**.

Allergic reactions can be mild or life-threatening. They can develop at any time.

Just because you haven't had a reaction to a food before, doesn't mean your body won't react to it in the future. You may be able to outgrow a food allergy.

Be aware of how your body responds to foods and seek help right away if you have serious (life-threatening) symptoms.

Now that you've learned how to determine if a food is a whole, unprocessed food, it's time to start thinking about which foods are best for you.

Inflammation

Certain foods may cause a bad reaction in your body, even if they're considered to be healthful foods. For example, if you have muscle weakness or feel extremely tired after eating, you may be having a reaction to something you ate. Maybe the reaction was caused by gluten in the piece of toast you had that morning or milk sugar (lactose) in the yogurt you ate as a snack — no matter the cause, your body didn't respond well to it. The food created **inflammation** in your body.

Inflammation is your body's way of fighting off danger. It's a way of protecting itself. Your body creates inflammation as it tries to remove something (in this case, a food) from its system.

Common signs of inflammation include:

- redness, warmth or both
- digestive problems
- joint pain, swelling or soreness
- extreme tiredness (fatigue)
- headaches.

You may have one, several or none of these. You may also have other signs not listed. Your body has its own unique way of responding to what you put into it.

Did You Know?

Butter and ghee (even from grass-fed cows) contain saturated fat, which may cause inflammation.

Inflammatory foods

Some foods are considered to be more inflammatory than others. Inflammatory foods contain high amounts of saturated fats and sugar (including honey and agave nectar).

Some of the most inflammatory foods include:

- processed, packaged or prepared foods
- foods that contain trans fats (partially hydrogenated oils)
- fried foods such as french fries and fried chicken
- alcohol
- high-fat and processed meats such as hot dogs, brats, bacon, bologna and salami
- added sugars and sweets (in food or beverages)
- artificial sweeteners
- food additives (artificial colors and flavors, preservatives)
- refined grains such as white bread
- cow's milk or milk substitute (almond, soy, rice) products.

Did You Know?

Homemade bone broth contains more nutrients (from the bones, meat, vegetables and herbs) than broth or bouillon bought from the store.

Anti-inflammatory foods

There are also foods considered to be anti-inflammatory. This means they can help to protect your body from inflammation. Anti-inflammatory foods are as close to “whole” foods as possible and contain fiber, antioxidants (“cancer fighters”) and healthful fats such as omega-3 fatty acids.

Some of the most anti-inflammatory foods include:

- fresh fruits and vegetables, especially:
 - berries (all kinds)
 - green leafy vegetables such as spinach and kale
 - green cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli and Brussels sprouts
- healthful oils (olive, avocado or peanut oil)
- meat (grass- or grain-fed) and fish (farm-raised or wild-caught)
- homemade bone broth
- walnuts
- seeds: chia, flax
- herbs and spices such as turmeric, ginger, cloves, rosemary, cinnamon, oregano, marjoram, thyme and sage
- garlic
- mushrooms (Shitake, button, portabella).

Keep a Food Log

The best way to find out which foods help you feel your best is to keep a food log. A food log is a written record of what you eat and drink each day, as well as how they make you feel. Here is an example of a food log.

Food log example (morning)		
Time	Food or beverage	How it made you feel
7 a.m.	1 cup black coffee	Energized, happy
7:30 a.m.	■ 1 piece whole-grain toast with 1 tablespoon grape jelly ■ 6 ounces freshly squeezed orange juice	Still hungry, tired
11 a.m.	■ 2 cups mixed greens salad with a 3-ounce grilled chicken breast, 1 ounce feta cheese and a drizzle of olive oil vinaigrette ■ water	Satisfied, thirsty, energized

Important

Be patient. Figuring out which foods work well for your body will take time. Keep trying new foods and writing down how they make you feel. Soon, you'll be an "expert" on your own body!

You can start to see patterns as you keep a food log for several days or weeks. Pay attention to foods or beverages that make you feel well (happy, full of energy) and those that make you feel unwell (tired, sluggish).

It's also helpful to pay attention to how the time of day affects how foods or beverages make you feel. For example, you may feel great after a midday smoothie but drinking the same smoothie in the evening may cause you to have poor sleep.

The following pages include charts for you to start logging your foods and beverages. You can use a blank notebook or make extra copies (before filling in one of the charts) if you need more space.

Food log

Date: _____

Time**Food or beverage****How it made you feel**

Time	Food or beverage	How it made you feel



Food log		Date: _____
Time	Food or beverage	How it made you feel

Food log

Date: _____

Time	Food or beverage	How it made you feel

Food log		Date: _____
Time	Food or beverage	How it made you feel

Food log		Date: _____
Time	Food or beverage	How it made you feel



Food log		Date: _____
Time	Food or beverage	How it made you feel

Food log		Date: _____
Time	Food or beverage	How it made you feel

Chapter 2: Making Shopping Simple

You're in the grocery store, trying to make healthy choices. What do you buy? The front of a food package can say almost anything, making claims such as "all natural," "helps to reduce cholesterol" or "trans fat free." Learning how to read a nutrition facts label and the ingredients list can help you know exactly what's in a food and how to make wise choices.



This chapter will teach you how to read a nutrition facts label and the ingredients list, shop for healthful foods on a budget and help you simplify shopping too!

How To Read Food Labels

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%
<i>Trans</i> 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 235mg	6%
*The % Daily Value 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.	

Source of labels: U.S. Food and Drug Administration

By reading food labels you will become aware of what's in the foods you eat. The information below explains how to read the food label at left.

1. **Serving size.** The serving size lists how many calories and nutrients are in one serving of the food. In this example, there are two servings per box. If you are eating twice the serving size, you are getting twice the calories, fat, saturated fat, sodium, etc.
2. **Percent of daily value.** Percent of daily value shows how the amount of a nutrient in a serving of food fits into a 2,000 calorie diet.
3. **Nutrients.** Nutrients show how much sodium, fiber, sugars, fat, etc., are in each serving. If you are on a restricted diet, look at the nutrients the food contains.
4. **Sodium.** Too much sodium in your diet can cause swelling in your body or make you feel short of breath. Limit the amount of sodium you eat to 1,500 to 2,000 mg (milligrams) each day.
5. **Daily values chart.** Daily values for diets of 2,000 or 2,500 calories appear on the lower half of the food label. These numbers list the recommended limits on total fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium, total carbohydrates and dietary fiber for your diet each day.

How to Read an Ingredients List

Tip

If you're buying strawberry yogurt and sugar is the second ingredient, put it down! Look for a yogurt with strawberries as the second ingredient instead. Better yet, buy low-fat or full-fat plain unsweetened Greek yogurt and add fresh strawberries instead!

Remember, vanilla yogurt is not plain yogurt. It is a flavor and will have added sugars.

Another important skill for knowing exactly what's in a food is being able to read an ingredients list. The ingredients list is underneath or beside the nutrition facts label.

If you're buying foods from the bulk section, the nutrition facts label and ingredients list is usually on the container in which the food is stored.

Unpackaged items you bag yourself in the produce department are one-ingredient whole foods (carrots, potatoes, squash, tomatoes).

Food manufacturers must list all ingredients in their food products. The ingredients are listed in order from the greatest weight to the least weight.



When reading a food label, check the ingredients list. The ingredients are listed in order from the greatest weight to the least weight.

Beware of added sugars

Sugars are found naturally in fruits and milk. Added sugars are sugars and syrups that are added to foods. Major sources of foods and beverages that have added sugars are:

- regular sodas, energy drinks, sports beverages
- candy
- cakes
- cookies
- pies and cobblers
- sweet rolls, pastries, doughnuts
- fruit beverages
- dairy desserts such as ice cream.

To tell if a food has added sugar, look at the food label for words that include “sugar” or “-ose” at the end of a word. These words include:

- brown sugar, powdered sugar, invert sugar, white sugar, granulated sugar, raw sugar, cane sugar
- dextrose, fructose, lactose, sucrose
- corn syrup
- honey
- maple syrup
- molasses
- nectars.

Limit foods and beverages with added sugars. Remember to read the ingredients list to find out if a food or beverage contains added sugars.

Added Sugar

When someone special makes your favorite chocolate chip cookies or a chocolate cake for your birthday, they usually put sugar in the recipe.

These kinds of food have **added sugars** because someone had to add sugar to make the food taste sweet.



Natural Sugar

Other kinds of food already have sugar in them, like bananas or peas. They have **natural sugars** and do not need sugar added to them to make them tasty.



How Much Sugar Is In ... ?

Food	Amount	Sugar (grams)	Sugar (teaspoons)
Doughnut (cake) without frosting	1	8 grams	2 teaspoons
Doughnut (cake) with frosting	1	20 grams	5 teaspoons
Cupcake without frosting	1	28 grams	7 teaspoons
Cupcake with frosting	1	35 grams	8 $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoons
Sucker (small)	1	4 grams	1 teaspoon
Sucker (large)	1	13 grams	3 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoons
Sundae	1 medium	50 grams	12 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons
Chocolate chip cookie	1 small	13 grams	3 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoons
Soda (regular)	1 can (12 ounces)	39 grams	9 $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoons
Banana	1 medium (7 to 8 inches)	14 grams	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons
Sweet potato	1 medium (8 ounces)	7 grams	1 $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoons
Grapes	1 cup	15 grams	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoons
Carrots	1 cup slices	6 grams	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons
Peas	1 cup	8 grams	2 teaspoons
Milk (fat-free, 1%, 2%, whole)	1 cup	12 grams	3 teaspoons

Did You Know?

Even if a food product says “0 grams trans fats” on the nutrition facts label, it can contain up to 0.5 grams trans fat. The only way to know for sure if a product has trans fats is by the ingredients list. If you see the words “partially hydrogenated,” it has trans fats!

Stay away from trans fats

Trans fats can be found naturally in a few foods but are most commonly added to foods during processing.

■ **Natural trans fats:**

A very small amount of trans fats can be found in some meat and milk products. However, natural trans fats are thought to be less harmful than trans fats added to foods during processing.

■ **Artificial trans fats:**

Most trans fats are added to foods to give them a better taste and texture. Examples include deep-fried foods, packaged crackers and cookies, and stick margarines.

To tell if a food has artificial trans fats, look at the food label for the words “partially hydrogenated.” If you see one of those words, **put it down!**

Organic Foods

As you've learned, the choices you make at the grocery store can help keep you healthy. It's important to choose a variety of healthful foods by reading the nutrition facts label and ingredients list. However, plenty of healthful foods do not come in a box, bag or can. This includes many of the fresh, colorful fruits and vegetables in the produce department.

But what about organic? When you are comparing an organic apple to a nonorganic (conventionally grown) apple, which should you choose? Should you spend the extra money on organic?

The Dirty 12 and Clean 15

The Environmental Working Group (EWG) has created lists called the "Dirty 12" and "Clean 15" to help you decide which fruits and vegetables are most important to buy organic.

Tip

If the cost of organic produce doesn't fit within your budget, buy nonorganic and rinse the food well under cool water.

In general, it's important to buy organic when:

- you eat the peel
- the food is difficult to clean well.

This includes fruits and vegetables that have:

- a large surface area such as leafy greens
- bumps or grooves such as strawberries.

If you eat a certain fruit or vegetable every day (for example, a grapefruit at breakfast every day), it is a good idea to choose the organic option for that food too.

EWG'S 2019 DIRTY 12™

1. STRAWBERRIES
2. SPINACH
3. KALE
4. NECTARINES
5. APPLES
6. GRAPES
7. PEACHES
8. CHERRIES
9. PEARS
10. TOMATOES
11. CELERY
12. POTATOES

+ HOT PEPPERS

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EWG'S 2019 CLEAN 15™

1. AVOCADOS
2. SWEET CORN
3. PINEAPPLES
4. SWEET PEAS FROZEN
5. ONIONS
6. PAPAYAS
7. EGGPLANTS
8. ASPARAGUS
9. KIWIS
10. CABBAGE
11. CAULIFLOWER
12. CANTALOUPE
13. BROCCOLI
14. MUSHROOMS
15. HONEYDEW MELONS

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The 12 most important (left) and 15 least important (right) fruits and vegetables to buy organic. Images used with permission by the Environmental Working Group (EWG).

Healthy Eating on a Budget

Eating healthful foods doesn't have to be expensive. Taking time to plan, prepare and shop will help you stock your kitchen with healthful foods while sticking to your budget. Use the tips on the following pages to help you before, during and after your shopping trip.



Tip

Look to see what foods you already have on hand before going shopping.

Before your shopping trip

Smart shopping starts at home. Use the following tips to help you prepare for your budget-friendly shopping trip.

- Look to see what foods you have in your refrigerator, freezer and cupboards. Write down any foods you have run out of and need to buy.
- Read your local grocery store's weekly flyer to see what's on sale.
- Clip coupons from newspapers and magazines or go online to find and print coupons.
- Plan your meals for the entire week. Try to include as many of the foods on sale that week or foods for which you have a coupon.
- Make a shopping list. Use the chart on the next page to help you plan your first shopping trip.
- Have a small snack so hunger does not cause you to buy foods not on your list.

How to plan your shopping trip

The following chart lists healthful, budget-friendly foods you may want to include in your regular shopping routine. Use this as a guide as you write your shopping list.

Food group	Budget-friendly options
Fruits and vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ fresh fruits such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — apples — bananas — navel oranges ■ fresh vegetables such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — red or white potatoes — sweet potatoes — greens (kale, spinach, romaine lettuce) — squash (butternut, spaghetti) — baby carrots ■ fresh, in-season fruits and vegetables ■ canned fruit packed in 100% fruit juice ■ canned vegetables labeled “no salt added” or “low sodium” ■ frozen fruits and vegetables of all kinds (no sauce or syrup) ■ canned tomatoes labeled “no salt added” or “low sodium”
Dairy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ low-fat milk ■ unsweetened low-fat or full-fat plain yogurt ■ unsweetened low-fat or full-fat Greek yogurt ■ low-fat or full-fat cheese
Protein	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ eggs ■ peanut butter (no trans fats) ■ tofu ■ canned fish in water (tuna, salmon, sardines) ■ canned chicken breast in water ■ dried or low-sodium canned beans (garbanzo, kidney, black)
Grains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ popcorn (dry kernels) ■ whole-grain bread and pasta ■ brown rice ■ barley ■ old-fashioned oats (dry)
*Fats and oils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ extra-virgin olive oil ■ peanut oil ■ avocado oil

*Remember, a little goes a long way! Even if an oil seems expensive, it'll last for weeks or months when stored properly. Oils should be stored in a cool, dark place.

During your shopping trip

You've done your planning and are ready for the store. Use the following tips to help you save money during your shopping trip.

- Stick to your list — unless you see specials or sales on healthful foods that have a longer shelf life (whole-grain pasta, low-sodium canned tomatoes). You may want to buy more than you had planned to take advantage of the low price.
- Skip convenience foods (pre-cut vegetables, frozen meals) and prepare the foods yourself.
- Buy fresh produce in season.
- Buy dried, canned or frozen fruits and vegetables out of season.
- Buy foods in bulk (frozen vegetables, meat, whole-grain products).
- Buy store brands when possible.
- Buy dried beans instead of canned.



Did You Know?

Many farmers markets offer foods at a lower cost than grocery stores. By shopping at farmers markets, you will be able to:

- buy local, healthful foods
- meet the farmers who grow your food
- save money through buying directly from the farmers.



Tip

Rinse canned foods with water to get rid of extra salt (sodium) and sugar.

Tip

Visit allinahealth.org/recipes for healthful recipe ideas.

After your shopping trip

Now that your kitchen cupboards are stocked with healthful options, it's time to prepare the foods so they're ready to eat! Use the following tips to help you.

- Cook and prepare healthful foods at home instead of going out to eat.
- Try making one meatless meal each week.
- Cook and freeze foods so they're ready to eat during the week. You can do this with entire meals (casseroles, soups) or parts of a meal (chicken breasts, brown rice).
- Adjust your portions of certain foods. Try serving smaller portions of expensive foods (meat) and larger portions of less expensive foods (brown rice, in-season produce).
- Place smaller portions of foods you buy in bulk in zip-close bags for convenient, on-the-go snacks.
- Don't waste leftovers! Bring leftovers to work or school to eat for lunch the next day. Make leftovers into a new dish to serve for your next meal. Put leftover meat on a salad or uneaten vegetables into a stir-fry, casserole or soup. You may even want to make planned leftovers to freeze and reheat for a quick dinner.

The Simplest Way to Shop

Tip

Can you pronounce the ingredients? If not, think twice about whether the food should go in your cart.

When in doubt, shop by these simple rules.

1. Look for foods with the **least amount of packaging**.

Examples include:

- produce department: fresh fruits and vegetables, mushrooms, fresh herbs
- bulk foods section: raw unsalted nuts and seeds, dried herbs and spices, rice, oats, dry beans
- meat department: freshly cut lean meats, fish and seafood

2. Look for foods with the **fewest number of ingredients**.




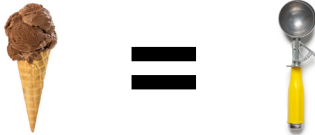


3. Make sure the ingredients list doesn't include sources of added sugars or trans fats.

4. Never go grocery shopping hungry! It's easy to put more in your cart when everything looks good. Plan your shopping trip for after you've eaten or pack a snack to enjoy on your way to the store.

Chapter 3: Putting It All Together on Your Plate

Understanding Portion Sizes

When a food scale or measuring cups aren't handy, you can still estimate your portion. Remember:

<p>Three ounces of meat is about the size and thickness of a deck of playing cards.</p>	
<p>One medium apple or 1 cup of cooked vegetables is about the size of a baseball.</p>	
<p>One ounce of cheese is about the size of four stacked dice.</p>	
<p>One-half cup of ice cream or ½ cup of cooked pasta is about the size of an ice cream scoop.</p>	
<p>One slice of bread or one 6-inch tortilla is about the size of a DVD.</p>	
<p>One teaspoon of butter is about the size of a poker chip.</p>	

Sample 1-day Meal Plan

Did You Know?

How you eat can be just as important as **what** or **how much** you eat! Remember to chew each bite well.

Eat slowly and savor your food. It takes time for your brain to realize your stomach is full! Try doing the following to slow down your pace:

- Don't multitask. Set the table, turn off the TV and focus on your food.
- Use smaller utensils. This will force you to take smaller bites.
- Put your utensils down between bites.
- Pay attention to the different tastes and textures of your food as you chew.

Turn to the end of this chapter for more information about eating mindfully.

■ Breakfast:

- Yogurt parfait:
 - 1 cup plain low-fat Greek yogurt
 - 1 cup mixed berries of your choice
 - ¼ cup low-fat granola
- 1 cup water, coffee or unsweetened green tea

■ Midmorning snack:

- 1 whole grain English muffin with 2 tablespoons peanut butter
- 1 medium apple, sliced

■ Lunch:

- Salad:
 - 1 cup spinach
 - ½ cup kale
 - 2 ounces grilled chicken breast
 - ⅓ cup cucumber slices
 - ⅓ cup cherry tomatoes
 - ⅓ cup julienne carrots
 - ⅓ cup cauliflower florets
 - 1 tablespoons balsamic vinaigrette
 - 1 ounce chopped walnuts
 - 1 tablespoon feta cheese
- 1 slice of 100% whole-grain bread

■ Afternoon snack:

- 1 ounce almonds
- 3 dried apricots

■ Dinner:

- 4-ounce grilled wild-caught salmon fillet
- ½ cup whole-wheat couscous or quinoa
- 2 cups roasted broccoli and carrots drizzled with 1 tablespoon olive oil

■ Evening snack:

- 2/3 cup fresh fruit of your choice
- ⅓ cup cottage cheese with a sprinkle of cinnamon

Other Meal and Snack Ideas

Meal ideas

- tuna salad (made with olive oil)
 - side of fruit
- omelet with vegetables and tomatoes
 - side of no-sugar-added applesauce
- whole-grain turkey sandwich
 - side of raw baby carrots
- 3-ounce hamburger (no bun)
 - side of rice and mixed vegetables
- whole-grain tortilla with sauteed chicken and peppers
 - side of black beans
- 4-ounce salmon fillet
 - side of sauteed spinach
- 3-ounce chicken breast
 - side of baked sweet potato fries (cooked in olive oil)
- oatmeal (made from old-fashioned oats and water) sprinkled with cinnamon
 - side of low-fat unsweetened plain Greek yogurt and one-half banana

Snack ideas

- ½ cup trail mix made with nuts, seeds, dried fruit and dark chocolate (at least 70% cocoa)
- raw, cut vegetables with ¼ cup hummus
- 6 ounces low-fat unsweetened plain yogurt with ½ cup mixed berries
- 1 medium apple (sliced) with 2 tablespoons almond butter
- 1 medium banana with 2 tablespoons peanut butter (no trans fats)
- 1 string cheese with 1 medium piece fruit
- 1 ounce walnuts, almonds or cashews
- 1 ounce sunflower or pumpkin seeds
- 1 medium baked sweet potato with 2 tablespoons low-fat unsweetened plain Greek yogurt

Mix-and-match method

You can also use a mix-and-match method for creating a meal or snack! Choose one food from each column to make sure you're including everything your body needs to feel its best.

Vegetables	Protein	Healthful Fat	Carbohydrate	Fruits
½ cup cooked carrots	6 ounces low-fat or full-fat unsweetened plain yogurt	1 ounce nuts	½ cup cooked squash (acorn, butternut, spaghetti)	1 medium apple
Dark leafy greens (kale, spinach, romaine lettuce)	2 tablespoons peanut butter (no trans fats)	One-half avocado	1 sprouted grain tortilla	½ cup mixed berries
½ cup cooked Brussels sprouts	3-ounce chicken breast	1 tablespoon butter	½ cup cooked brown or white rice	1 medium banana
Bell peppers (any color)	1 ounce feta cheese	¼ cup olives (or about 8 large)	½ cup cooked oatmeal	1 cup grapes
½ cup cooked cauliflower	1 hard-boiled egg	2 tablespoons unsweetened shredded coconut	½ cup cooked whole-grain or brown rice pasta	1 medium peach
½ cup cooked green beans	4-ounce salmon fillet	2 tablespoons sunflower or pumpkin seeds	½ cup cooked green peas	1 medium orange
½ cup cooked broccoli	½ cup cooked beans or legumes	1 tablespoon olive or avocado oil	1 medium baked sweet potato	1 medium slice watermelon

Eating Mindfully

Have you ever driven somewhere and once arrived at your destination, realized you don't remember driving there? Or how about forgetting your keys in the door as you get home from work? Or maybe as you make your favorite homemade muffin recipe, you forget if you've added 2 or 3 cups of flour. It's easy to go on auto-pilot during daily activities — and multitasking doesn't help.

It's also common to rush through eating, forgetting to pause to enjoy each bite and “check in” with how you're feeling. Practicing mindfulness can help you be more present in your body and aware of how hungry or full you feel. The goal is to feel satisfied (“just right”) after eating.

Think About This!

During your last meal or snack, were you:

- happy
- sad
- relaxed
- rushed?

Afterward, did you feel:

- satisfied
- guilty
- nourished
- overstuffed?

Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a moment-to-moment awareness of the things around you. It's a way to “wake up” to life. Mindfulness takes practice and you're likely already practicing it in your day-to-day life. Think of times when you've been focused on what you're doing. These are times of mindfulness!

Some characteristics of being mindful include:

- **non-judgement:**
When you find the mind judging, become aware of it. There is no need to act on these thoughts. Simply observe.
- **patience:**
Patience involves accepting that things unfold in their own time. There is no need to be impatient about progress (or a lack of progress). Patience is simply being open to each moment as it unfolds even when there is resistance.
- **“beginner's” mind:**
Having a beginner's mind (also known as a “child's” mind) is willing to see everything as if for the first time. This helps you to be free of expectations, open to new possibilities and able to develop a sense of wonder.
- **trust:**
In practicing mindfulness you are taking responsibility for being who you are, and learning to listen to and access your own basic goodness and wisdom. You become more fully who you are. The more you develop this trust with yourself, the easier it becomes to trust others.
- **non-striving:**
Mindfulness involves simply paying attention to whatever is happening as it is happening, without pushing or pulling. In doing so you gently and naturally turn toward a richer, fuller life.

Did You Know?

You already know how to “let go.” You do it every time you fall asleep!

■ **acknowledgment:**

You often use a lot of energy denying and resisting what is already fact in life. By developing acknowledgement, you become willing to see things as they are, taking each moment as it comes and being with it as fully as possible. “It is what it is.” If you cannot see things as they are, how can you change them?

■ **letting be:**

When you start paying attention to your inner experience, you start to realize there are thoughts, feelings and situations the mind seems to cling to or push away. In mindfulness practice, you remind yourself to let go of those impulses and see what happens. In letting be, you are letting go.

You can practice being mindful during your daily activities using these characteristics.

Mindful eating exercise

Using what you’ve learned about mindfulness, try this mindful eating exercise to practice being more present.

- Choose a food that’s easy to hold in your hand such as a grape, almond or date.
- Let go of any judgements you hold about the food you’ve chosen.
- Pick up the food and look closely at it. Imagine you’ve never seen it before.
 - What is its shape and size?
 - How heavy is it?
- As you hold the food:
 - Think about from where the food came. Imagine the tree or plant from which it grew. Feel the warm sunshine, and see the rain and soil that helped it grow.
 - Take a moment to thank the workers who grew, packaged, transported and sold the food — all for you! Honor the work they did and appreciate their unique talents.
- Take the food in your fingers.
 - Feel the surface.
 - Look closely at the textures and colors.
 - Bring the food to your nose and notice how it smells.
 - Bring the food to your ear, gently squeeze it and listen for any sounds.

- Pause to consider how you're feeling.
 - Are you already "tasting" the food as you look forward to eating it?
 - Are you feeling impatient?
- Place the food on your tongue. Do not chew. Roll it gently around your mouth as you notice the feel and taste of it.
- Bite down gently **one time**. Notice:
 - the change in flavor, texture and shape
 - any feelings or thoughts you have.
- Slowly continue chewing the food.
 - Notice how the food continues to change in texture, taste and shape.
 - Chew the food completely (to a liquid) before swallowing.
- Pause to consider how you feel after eating the food. Practice gratitude for the nourishment your body received. Sit quietly and breathe. Hold this moment.

Adapted from: Kabat-Zinn, J., 1990

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