



Meal Planning

Visit Five

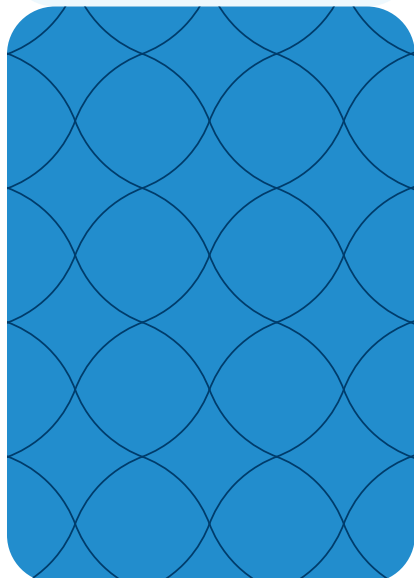
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Table of Contents

Meal Planning Tips	3
Grocery List Tips.....	3
Grocery Shopping Tips	3
Finding Net Carbs.....	3
Building Healthy Meals.....	4
Making Fast, Healthy Meals.....	5
Healthy Snacking	6
Emergency Snack Kit.....	6
Resources.....	7-8
Recipes.....	7
Weekly Calendar	7
Grocery List.....	8
Notes	9-10



Adapted from information
provided by Healthwise
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Meal Planning Tips

- Use cookbooks or look at recipes online to plan main meals for the week.
- Keep a meal planner on paper or your phone that plans out what meals you will eat on what days.
- Pick your protein first. Build your meal around the protein.
- Plan some quick meals for busy nights.
 - You can also make extra of some recipes that freeze well. Then you can save some for other busy nights when you don't have time to cook.
- Keep your meal plans from past weeks.
 - In a few weeks, you can go back and repeat the meals you liked.



Grocery List Tips

- Check your pantry for all the ingredients listed on your meal planner.
 - Write down all the ingredients you need to buy on a grocery list.
 - If you notice you are running low on certain basic items, put these on your grocery list too.
- Now fill in other foods that you use to make breakfasts, lunches, and snacks, such as eggs, protein or whole grain breads, tuna, milk, and juice. List plenty of fruits and vegetables.
- Post your grocery list on the refrigerator or use a list app on your phone.
 - Add to it as you run out of foods or think of other things you need.
- Reorganize this list, if needed, to match your grocery store's layout.

Grocery Shopping Tips

- When you go to the store or shop online, use the list – and stick to it.
 - You save money by not making impulse buys. But you don't need to be so rigid that you pass up a good sale item.
- At a grocery store, healthier food choices are usually on the main walls. We call this “living on the edge.”
 - The main walls (or edges) of the grocery store are where you can find fruits, vegetables, milk, meats, cheeses, cottage cheeses, and yogurt.
 - The aisles in the middle of the grocery store usually have more snack foods that aren't as healthy.
- Shop alone.
- Don't shop when you are hungry.
 - It may help to bring a water bottle with you while you are shopping.
- Read the food labels or “read it before you eat it.”
 - This can help you make choices about what foods to buy.
 - Food labels give a lot of good information, but they don't show net carbs

Finding Net Carbs

- Net carbs are the carbohydrates that your body uses for energy.
- To find net carbs, subtract the grams of fiber from the grams of carbohydrates.
 - For example, if a food has 10 grams of carbs and 3 grams of fiber, do 10 minus 3. This equals 7 net carbs.
- If a food has more grams of protein than net carbs, it may be a healthier choice.
 - For example, if a food has 8 grams of protein and 7 net carbs, it meets this guideline.

The amount of protein should be more than the total carbohydrate minus dietary fiber.

Protein > Carbohydrate - Fiber

Building Healthy Meals

You don't always need a recipe to build healthy meals. Let your tastes and time be your guide. Here are a few ideas to get you started.

- Think of the food groups.
 - These include grains, vegetables, fruits, dairy products, and proteins, like meat, fish, poultry, beans, and tofu.
 - They pack in many nutrients, colors, flavors, and textures.
 - Think of these as the basic parts of any healthy meal.
 - Mix and match the food groups for more variety on your plate.
- Break your meal into parts.
 - Think of your plate like it has 4 parts:
 - 1 part for proteins.
 - 1 part for whole grains or fruit
 - 2 parts for vegetables
 - With this method, half your plate will include vegetables.
- Pick a protein as your base. This is the most important part of your meal.
 - Protein can make up 1 part of your plate.
 - Choose lean meat, poultry, fish, beans, peas, lentils, tofu, nuts, seeds, or eggs.
 - *Example: **chicken or tofu.***
- Choose your whole grains or fruit
 - Whole grains or fruits can take up 1 part of your plate.
 - You can use a combination of both whole grain and fruits, but make sure they only take up 1 part of your plate.
- As the base of your meal, whole grains set the stage and can change your meal from sit-down to handheld.
- *Example: chicken or tofu + **brown rice or pineapple.***
- Choose your vegetables.
 - Vegetables can take up 2 parts of your plate.
 - These can be fresh or frozen.
 - Think about using different colors and textures to get a variety of nutrients.
 - *Example: chicken or tofu + brown rice or pineapple + **green lettuce and sliced red cabbage.***
- Add flavor with herbs and spices.
 - Herbs and spices punch up the flavor of your meals.
 - Add them while cooking vegetables or proteins. Or try sprinkling herbs and spices on top before serving. Use what you have and what you like.
 - *Example: chicken or tofu + brown rice or pineapple + green lettuce and sliced red cabbage + **garlic.***
- Select a sauce if you want.
 - Once your meal is built, you can add more flavor with sauces. This is an extra step that can really pull a meal together. Add a drizzle to a dollop.
 - *Example: chicken or tofu + brown rice or pineapple + green lettuce and sliced red cabbage + garlic + **peanut sauce.***
- Get your garnish on.
 - A garnish can add visual appeal, texture, and flavor to your dish. What will make colors and textures pop? Use what you like and what you have. You're the boss.
 - *Example: chicken or tofu + brown rice or pineapple + green lettuce and sliced red cabbage + garlic + peanut sauce + **sliced green onions.***



Making Fast, Healthy Meals

Making healthy meals doesn't have to take a lot of time or require complicated recipes. There are many ways you can save time in the kitchen and still eat delicious, healthy food. It's just a matter of having the right foods on hand and learning how to take shortcuts in the kitchen.

- Stock up on ingredients for quick meals.
 - Keeping commonly used foods in your kitchen can help you pull together a quick meal in no time.
 - Having frozen and canned foods and foods with a long shelf life is helpful for those nights when you haven't had time to go to the grocery store.
 - Some basic ingredients to have are:
 - Frozen chicken breasts and fish filets.
 - Frozen vegetables.
 - Frozen fruits.
 - Vegetable or chicken broth.
 - Canned beans, such as pinto beans, white beans, and black beans.
 - Tomato sauce and pasta sauce.
 - Whole-grain pasta.
 - Brown rice.
 - Onions and garlic.
- Let the store do the prep work.
 - You can find many foods already cut, washed, and ready to eat, such as:
 - Packaged, ready-to-eat fresh vegetables.
 - *Examples:* baby carrots, salad mixes, and chopped broccoli and cauliflower.
 - These are great for making quick salads, soups, casseroles, and stir-fries.
 - Packaged, pre-sliced fresh fruits.
 - *Examples:* melon and pineapple.
 - You can add these to a container of low-fat yogurt or make an easy fruit salad.
 - Pre-cut, trimmed meat.
 - Trimmed meat has less fat. And meat that has already been cut into strips or cubes cuts down on your preparation time.
 - Pre-cooked chicken.
 - Most grocery stores sell roasted chicken in the deli section. You can chop or shred the cooked chicken and use it as a filling in burritos, soups, and casseroles.



- Make “almost homemade” meals.
 - Start with one or two prepared ingredients, and then add your own fresh ingredients. Here are some ideas:
 - Pizza. Use a premade chicken or cauliflower pizza crust and a jar of pizza sauce. Add plenty of fresh vegetables and a sprinkle of low-fat mozzarella.
 - Vegetable soup. Combine canned chicken broth, a bag of frozen vegetables, and some uncooked rice or pasta.
 - Asian chicken salad. Combine grilled chicken breast slices with a bag of prewashed lettuce, fresh orange slices, and slivered almonds. Add a store-bought ginger-soy vinaigrette.
 - Fish tacos. Use frozen fish filets, such as cod, and bagged shredded cabbage. Place the cooked fish and the cabbage in lettuce or protein wraps. Top with salsa, lime juice, and low-fat sour cream.
 - Stir-fry. Use pre-cut vegetables, pre-cut and trimmed meat, and fresh pineapple chunks. Serve with steamed cauliflower rice.



Healthy Snacking

Having regular low-calorie snacks throughout the day along with regular smaller meals is a good way to manage your hunger. Plan snacks as part of your overall calories for the day, and avoid eating unplanned calories.

- Plan ahead for snacks.
 - Keep a supply of healthy snacks at home that you like and that fit your eating plan.
 - Take healthy snacks with you when you're away from home so that it's easier to make a healthy choice.
- Check your hunger level.
 - If you feel like snacking but you aren't actually hungry, try an activity that doesn't involve eating, such as taking a bath, reading a book, or doing a hands-on activity.
- Use portion control.
 - Measure one portion of a snack into a bowl so you aren't tempted to keep reaching into the box or bag.

Emergency Snack Kit

- Keep an emergency food kit is a collection of healthy foods that can help when you are hungry.
- Eating from your emergency food kit can help avoid easy high-calorie foods when hunger strikes.
- A good weight-loss emergency food kit might include:
 - Protein-rich snacks: protein bar, protein drink, pull-top canned tuna or tuna in a pouch, chicken in a pouch, salmon in a pouch.
 - Fruits and vegetables: apples, oranges, baby carrots, mini cucumbers.
 - Healthy fats: individual servings of peanut butter, nuts, string cheese.
 - Other items: bottle of water, straw, napkin, spoon and fork.
- Having items like these available can help you stick to your weight-loss goals while staying satisfied.

Resources

Recipes



myplate.gov/myplate-kitchen/recipes



getfreshcooking.com

Weekly Calendar



CREATE A GROCERY GAME PLAN WEEKLY CALENDAR

	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
BREAKFAST							
LUNCH							
DINNER							
SNACKS							

NOTES:



CREATE A GROCERY GAME PLAN

GROCERY LIST

FRUITS

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

GRAINS (BREADS, PASTAS, RICE, CEREALS)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

DAIRY (MILK, YOGURT, CHEESE)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

VEGETABLES

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

PROTEIN FOODS (MEAT, SEAFOOD, NUTS & SEEDS, EGGS, SOY PRODUCTS, AND BEANS, PEAS & LENTILS)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

OTHER

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

NOTES:



[WellSpan.org](https://www.wellspan.org)

