

Meal Planning Guide

Two Ways to Plan Healthy Meals

1. Portion Plate



Portion of Plate	Food Types	Examples
1/2 plate	Non-starchy vegetables	Broccoli, cauliflower, green beans, carrots, spinach, kale, salad greens, zucchini, bell peppers, cabbage, asparagus, brussels sprouts, cucumbers, celery, mushrooms, tomatoes, eggplant
1/4 plate	Protein	Chicken, turkey, fish, tofu, eggs, no-sugar added cottage cheese, no-sugar added Greek yogurt
1/4 plate	Carbohydrates (Carbs)	Beans, peas, lentils, corn, rice, cereals, grits, plantain, tortillas, quinoa, pasta, potatoes, fruit

The order you eat your plate matters!

When possible, eat non-starchy vegetables first, then protein, then carbs.

Three meals, evenly spaced throughout the day, can help with blood sugar and weight management (snacks are optional).

2. Carb Counting

Carb Counts of Selected Foods

- Bread (1 slice) = 15-20g carbs
- Cooked rice or pasta (1 cup) = 45g carbs
- Milk (1 cup) = 12g carbs
- Beans (1/2 cup) = 20g carbs
- Potato (small, whole) = 30g carbs
- Tortilla (1 medium) = 20g carbs
- Banana (1 medium) = 30g carbs
- Small fruit (like an apple) = 15g carbs
- Can of soda = 38g carbs
- Orange juice (1 cup) = 30g carbs

Protein Counts of Selected Foods

- Chicken or turkey (4 ounces) = 28g protein
- Fish (4 ounces) = 26g protein
- Eggs (2 large) = 12g protein
- Greek yogurt (1 cup) = 20g protein
- Cottage cheese (1/2 cup) = 14g protein
- Tofu (1/2 cup) = 10g protein
- Beans (1 cup) = 15g protein

1 Check the serving size

2 Keep an eye out for certain fats

3 Count on total carbohydrates (carbs)

4 Get your fiber on

5 Added sugar is less appealing

6 Pack on the protein



Quick Guide to Healthy Eating Targets

Nutritional needs can vary per person, but these general targets are a great starting point!

Choose foods rich in fiber, lean protein and healthy fats. These foods help stabilize blood sugar levels and keep you feeling fuller for a longer time.

Nutrient/Group	Recommendation	Notes
Protein	30-40 grams per meal 7 grams or more per snack	Aim for lean or plant-based sources.
Carbohydrates	45 grams or less per meal 15 grams or less per snack	Focus on whole, minimally processed carbs and limit added sugars.
Fiber	25-35 grams per day (when increasing fiber, do it slowly and drink plenty of water.)	Get fiber from non-starchy vegetables, whole grains, beans, lentils, fruit, nuts, seeds.
Sodium	Less than 2300 mg per day	Limit processed foods and restaurant foods.
Non-starchy vegetables	At every meal whenever possible	Fill half your plate with a variety of differently colored vegetables.
Fats	Types of fat matter more than amount of fat.	Choose plant-based fats instead of animal-based fats.