

The Balanced Plate

Try to use a 9–10” plate for meals.



Fruit

- ▶ Try to choose more fresh or frozen fruits than juices because the whole fruits have more fiber.
- ▶ When choosing canned or juice options, look for unsweetened varieties or 100% juice products.

Non-starchy vegetables

- ▶ Choose fresh or frozen vegetables that have no added sauce, fat, or salt most often.
- ▶ Aim for a variety of colors and types of vegetables.
- ▶ You should be able to fit 1–2 cups of vegetables on half of the plate at lunch and dinner.



Dairy

- ▶ Choose fat-free or low-fat milk and yogurt.
- ▶ Choose unsweetened products or products with artificial sweeteners.



Grains, beans & starchy vegetables

- ▶ Aim to choose more whole-grain foods.
- ▶ Add less fat when cooking and to prepared grains, beans and starchy vegetables.
- ▶ Choose higher fiber starchy foods whenever possible.



Meat & Meat Substitutes

- ▶ Choose skinless fish and poultry more often.
- ▶ Select lean cuts of meat and trim off all visible fat.
- ▶ Try to bake, broil, grill, or boil meats and meat substitutes instead of frying.
- ▶ Read food labels and choose meats and cheeses with less than 5 grams of fat per serving.

Suggested Servings

Fruit

Choose ___ servings per day.

15 grams carbohydrate

- Apple 2 inches (small)
- Banana 6-inch segment
- Berries 1 cup
- Cherries, fresh 12 large
- Canned fruit ½ cup
- Grapefruit ½ grapefruit
¾ cup
- Grapes 17
- Melon 1 slice (10 ounces)
1 cup
- Orange 3 inches (small)
- Peach 1 small
½ cup
- Pear ½ large
1 small
- Raisins 2 tbsp

Fruit Juice

Choose ___ servings per meal.

15 grams carbohydrate

- Apple, Orange, Grapefruit,
Pineapple ½ cup
- Grape, Peach, Pear,
Prune 1/3 cup

Grains/Starchy Vegetables

Choose ___ servings per meal.

15 grams carbohydrate

- Sandwich bread,
regular 1 slice
- Sandwich bread,
low-calorie 2 slices
- Bagel 1 ounce (½ small)
- English muffin 1 ounce (½ large)
- Hamburger/hot
dog bun ½ bun
- 6" pita ½ pita
- Pancake/waffle 4 inch
- Tortilla 6 inch
- Breadstick 4-inch segment
- Dinner roll 1 small
- Biscuit 2 ½ inches
- Potato 3 ounces baked
½ cup mashed
3 ounces fried
- Beans (pinto,
black, kidney, etc) .. ½ cup
- Baked beans 1/3 cup
- Corn ½ cup, 6-inch cob
- Peas ½ cup
- Breakfast cereal see label
- Pasta, cooked 1/3 cup
- Rice, cooked 1/3 cup
- Graham cracker 3 squares
- Crackers see label
- Popcorn 3 cups
- Potato chips 1 ounce
- Pretzels ¾ ounce
- Tortilla chips 1 ounce
- Soup 1 cup

Vegetables

Choose ___ servings per meal.

One serving is: ½ cup cooked or
canned
1 cup fresh.

5 grams carbohydrate

- Beans (green, wax)
- Beets
- Broccoli
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Cucumbers
- Greens
- Lettuce
- Mushrooms
- Peppers
- Radishes
- Tomato
- Zucchini
- Tomato or V8 juice .. ½ cup

Dairy

Choose ___ servings per day.

12 grams carbohydrate

7 grams protein

- Milk (skim, 1%) 1 cup
- Evaporated milk ½ cup
- Soy, almond, coconut milk
(unsweetened) 1 cup
- Yogurt (no
sugar added) 6 ounces

Meat & Meat Substitutes

Choose ___ ounces per meal.

0 grams carbohydrate

Each ounce of these foods, by weight,
contains 7 grams of protein.

Examples of meat:

- Beef
- Chicken
- Lamb
- Pork
- Fish
- Seafood
- Turkey

Examples of meat substitutes
(1-ounce equivalents):

- Cottage cheese ¼ cup
- Cheese 1 ounce
- Egg 1
- Greek Yogurt 1/3 cup
- Peanut butter 1 tbsp
- Tofu ½ cup
1 ounce

Fats

Choose ___ servings per day.

0 grams carbohydrate

0 grams protein

Aim to include heart-healthy options
such as nuts. Avoid saturated and trans
fats when possible. One serving of these
foods contains 5 grams of fat.

Examples of monounsaturated fats:

- Oil (olive, canola, peanut) ... 1 tsp
- Almonds/cashews 6 nuts
- Pecan 4 halves

Examples of polyunsaturated fats:

- Heart-healthy margarines .. 1 tbsp
- Oil (corn/safflower/soy) 1 tsp
- Mayonnaise, regular 1 tsp
- Mayonnaise, low-fat 1 tbsp
- Salad dressing, regular 2 tsp
- Salad dressing, low-fat 1 tbsp

Examples of saturated fat:

- Butter 1 tsp
- Cream cheese, regular 1 tbsp
- Cream cheese, low-fat 1 ½ tbsp
- Sour cream, regular 2 tbsp

Fluids

Choose ___ fluid ounces per day.

Choose calorie-free drinks most
often

- Coffee
- Tea, unsweetened or
artificially sweetened
- Diet soft drinks
- Sugar-free gelatin

Breakfast

You do not have to include
vegetables at breakfast if you
do not want to, but try to get
three of the four remaining food
groups at this meal. An example
breakfast might be toast,
scrambled eggs, and an orange.

What might you like to eat for
breakfast?
