

My meal guide

5 Option Meal Planning



1,600-calorie level

- This meal guide gives you food choices with healthy portion sizes, all within the three main sections of a balanced plate: Carbohydrates, Non-Starchy Veggies, and Protein. It may also include a little healthy fat.
- There is no guesswork! **You simply select items from each column to make a balanced meal.**
- When you are ready for more options, you can get more ideas from [Your guide to healthy eating](#).
- Don't forget about snacks! One to two [balanced snacks](#) per day are part of your meal guide, and included in your estimated caloric needs.

This is a general guide to give you ideas on how to use the healthy eating plate for your daily meals. This is not a one-size-fits-all plan and may include foods that do not fit into your unique needs based on allergies, medical restrictions, and/or personal taste. This guide is simply meant to support you in planning with a balanced approach in mind.

Balanced plate sections



Carbohydrates (or carbs)

About 25% of your meal or plate: Carb-rich foods include grains, fruit, starchy veggies (sweet potatoes, turnips, winter squash), dairy, and baked goods. Carbs are the sugars and starches that your body breaks down into glucose to use for energy. Too many of the less nutritious types, like added sugars, can cause weight gain and increase your risk of diabetes and heart disease. It's important for people with prediabetes and diabetes to closely monitor carb intake due to the impact on blood sugar. This meal guide includes suggestions for more nutritious carbs, including whole grains, starchy veggies, and low-fat dairy. Both the amount and type of carbs consumed in a meal is what impacts blood sugar.

One serving contains 15 grams of carbs and about 60-90 calories



Protein

About 25% of your meal or plate: Protein helps build and keep muscle. It also helps you feel full. Protein is the main nutrient in chicken, beef, eggs, and fish. It is also found in nuts, seeds, and beans. The best way to prepare these foods is to bake, broil, grill, or sauté them with minimal oil, rather than frying or sautéing with lots of oil.

One serving contains 7 grams of protein and about 35-100 calories



Non-starchy vegetables

About 50% of your meal or plate: Non-starchy vegetables are listed in this section to fill up 50% of your plate or make up half the volume of your meal. Non-starchy veggies (such as asparagus, spinach, sprouts, etc.) are low in carbs and calories, and a great source of fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Fill half of your plate with a variety of non-starchy veggies at each meal. It's not necessary to limit portion sizes like you do with other foods — eat as much as you like! If you are feeling hungry or in need of more food, it's best to add more servings of non-starchy vegetables to your meal.

One serving contains about 5 grams of carbs and around 25 calories per ½ cup cooked or 1 cup raw



Fats

Just a bit of your meal or plate: Fats help your brain and nervous system work, and add great flavor and texture to food. When eaten alone, fats will not raise your blood sugar. Healthy fats are found in olive oil, avocado, olives, nuts, seeds, sunflower oil, and fatty fish like salmon. Choose foods that contain healthy fats (poly- and monounsaturated are better for you). Limit saturated fats and avoid trans fats.

One serving contains 5 grams of fat — around 45 calories — but always check the label

My meal planning options

1,600-calorie meal plan

Breakfast

Choose ONE option under each section.

Find even more options with the [Teladoc Health food groups handout](#).

Protein

Choose one of the below combinations. All options are 4 servings of protein, approximately 190-220 calories and 28 grams of protein.



2 eggs + 4 egg whites

Looking for a vegan option? Go with your favorite nut butter instead. 1-2 tablespoons would be best.



1 cup low-fat cottage cheese

Watching your blood pressure? Swap out cottage cheese (which can have higher sodium) with Greek yogurt and some unsalted almonds.



2 cups
tofu*



2 Tbsp
nut butter*
(2 servings)



¼ cup
almonds*

Carbs

Choose one of the below combinations. All options are 2 servings of carbs, approximately 120-180 calories and 30 grams of carbs.



1 slice whole grain bread + 17 small grapes

For a gluten-free protein punch, swap out the bread for ½ cup of chickpeas.



½ cup oatmeal (cooked) + 2 Tbsp raisins

Gluten-free? Swap the oatmeal for roasted buckwheat or some flavorful kasha.



1 apple
(medium)



½ whole grain
English muffin
+ ¾ cup blueberries



¾ cup Greek yogurt
(plain, nonfat)
+ ½ banana

Non-starchy veggies

All options are 3 servings of non-starchy veggies, approximately 60 calories and 15 grams of carbs.



At least 1½ cup steamed or sautéed or 3 cups raw:

Asparagus	Eggplant	Onion
Bamboo shoots	Green beans	Parsnip
Cauliflower	Kale	Peppers
Cucumber	Lettuce	Radish

Healthy fats

Choose zero to one of the below options. All options are 1 serving of healthy fats, approximately 45 calories and 5 grams of fat.



1 tsp
olive oil



2 Tbsp
avocado



1 Tbsp
pumpkin
seeds



4 pecan
halves*



1½ tsp
nut butter*

*Plant-based protein foods provide quality protein, healthy fats, and fiber. They vary in how much fat and carbs they contain, so make sure to read labels.

My meal planning options

1,600-calorie meal plan

Lunch / dinner

Choose ONE option under each section.

Protein

Choose one of the below combinations. All options are 4 servings of protein, approximately 190-220 calories and 28 grams of protein.



3 oz turkey breast + 1 oz low-fat cheese

If you're keeping an eye on your blood pressure, use the Nutrition Label to find lower-sodium turkey and cheeses.



1½ cups black beans, drained and rinsed* (3 protein & carb servings)

Black beans are a great source of fiber and plant-based protein. If you're watching your blood sugar, be mindful that 1½ cups of black beans has about 45 grams of carbs.



4 oz chicken or salmon, skinless



4 oz steak, lean (such as flank steak or sirloin)



2 cups tofu*

Carbs

Choose one of the below combinations. All options are 2 servings of carbs, approximately 120-180 calories and 30 grams of carbs.



1 slice whole grain bread + 17 small grapes

For a variety of fruits, mix up your single servings with choices like 1 cup berries, 1 small apple, or 12 cherries.



1 whole grain tortilla (6") + ½ cup mango

Go gluten-free by replacing whole grain tortillas for tasty corn tortillas.



⅔ cup brown rice



⅔ cup quinoa



⅔ cup polenta

Non-starchy veggies

All options are 3 servings of non-starchy veggies, approximately 60 calories and 15 grams of carbs.



1½ cups roasted green beans



1½ cups grilled peppers & onions



1½ cups sautéed kale



2 cups mixed greens & 1 cup veggie salad



1½ cups steamed vegetables

Healthy fats

Choose zero to one of the below options. All options are 1 serving of healthy fats, approximately 45 calories and 5 grams of fat.



8 black or 10 green olives

Protect your heart and dodge extra sodium by rinsing olives before you eat them.



1 tsp olive oil



2 Tbsp avocado



10 peanuts*



4 walnut halves*

*Plant-based protein foods provide quality protein, healthy fats, and fiber. They vary in how much fat and carbs they contain, so make sure to read labels.