



Teladoc[™]
HEALTH

Your guide to

Southern American cuisine

Simple strategies
to help you thrive

Bonus:
1-day sample
menu



Welcome!

Planning healthy meals and snacks is at the heart of any wellness journey. But there is no one meal plan that is best for everyone. The colors, flavors, and aromas of food help to connect us to who we are and where we come from. Plus, we all have different nutrition needs, likes and dislikes, budgets, and more. That's why we created Your guide to Southern American cuisine.

This guide is packed with healthy-eating ideas seasoned with the flavors of the South. We'll include meal planning tools to help you create a strategy that will work for you. Use this guide to create lasting changes so you can live better.

Enjoy!
Your Teladoc Health Team

Sneak peek inside

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Understanding the basics

Food is made of three basic nutrients that provide fuel to your body: carbohydrates, protein, and fats. Knowing how the body uses each nutrient and meeting the goals below will help you build well-balanced meals that are healthy and satisfying.



Carbohydrates

Carbs are the sugars and starches that your body breaks down into glucose to use for energy. Carbs cause your blood sugar to rise. Too many of the less nutritious kinds, like added sugars, can cause weight gain and increase your risk of diabetes and heart disease. If you have diabetes, it's important to closely monitor carb intake.

Your goal: Choose moderate portions of the more nutritious carb foods. Avoid added sugars.



Non-starchy veggies

Non-starchy veggies are low in carbs and calories and a great source of fiber, vitamins, and minerals.

Your goal: 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 carb-containing foods — eat as much as you desire.



Protein

Protein helps build and keep muscle. It also helps you feel full. Protein has very little impact on your blood sugar.

Your goal: Include protein when eating carbs. This slows the rise of blood sugar following a meal or snack. Opt for lean or plant-based protein sources.



Fats

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.

Your goal: Choose foods that contain healthy fats (poly and monounsaturated). Limit saturated fats and avoid trans fats.

Curious about how these nutrients translate into the foods you eat? Keep reading to take a look at our detailed Teladoc Health food groups guide.

Teladoc Health food groups

Figuring out what to eat! Below you'll find examples of foods that fall into each group. Depending on your health needs, you may be able to eat more than one serving at a meal. Use this as a guide to build a variety of satisfying meals that help you reach your goals.



Non-starchy veggies

*One serving contains about 5 grams of carbohydrates and around 25 calories
½ cup cooked or 1 cup raw for one non-starchy vegetable choice below*

Artichoke	Green cabbage, red cabbage, bok choy
Arugula	Greens (collard, mustard, turnip, etc.)
Asparagus	Mushrooms
Broccoli	Okra
Brussels sprouts	Onions
Cauliflower	Peppers (red, green, yellow)
Cucumber	Spinach, kale
Eggplant	Summer squash (yellow, zucchini)
Green beans, wax beans, italian beans	Tomatoes



Carbohydrates (fruits)

One serving contains 15 grams of carbs and around 60 calories

Apple	<i>1 small (4 oz)</i>
Banana	<i>1 extra small or ½ large</i>
Blueberries	<i>¾ cup</i>
Cantaloupe or honeydew melon	<i>1 cup diced</i>
Dried fruit	<i>2 Tbsp</i>
Grapes	<i>17 small</i>
Mango	<i>½ cup or ½ small</i>
Nectarine or peach	<i>1 medium</i>
Orange	<i>1 medium</i>
Papaya	<i>1 cup cubed or ½ papaya</i>
Pineapple	<i>¾ cup fresh or ½ cup canned</i>
Plantain	<i>⅓ cup or ¼ plantain</i>
Raspberries or blackberries	<i>1 cup</i>
Strawberries	<i>1¼ cup whole</i>
Watermelon	<i>1¼ cups diced</i>

Teladoc Health food groups



Carbohydrates (starches)

One serving contains 15 grams of carbs and around 80 calories

Bagel	<i>¼ large bagel (1 oz)</i>
Beans (black, garbanzo, kidney, lima, navy, pinto, etc.)	<i>½ cup cooked</i> <i>also = 1 protein serving</i>
Bread slice (reduced-calorie, light)	<i>2 slices (1½ oz)</i>
Bread slice	<i>1 slice (1 oz)</i>
Corn bread	<i>1x1 square</i>
Corn	<i>½ cup or ½ large cob</i>
English muffin	<i>½ muffin</i>
Green peas	<i>½ cup</i>
Grits	<i>½ cup cooked</i>
Hamburger/hot dog bun	<i>½ bun</i>
Hard taco shell	<i>2 small taco shells</i>
Oatmeal	<i>½ cup cooked</i>
Pita (6 inches across)	<i>½ pita</i>
Plain potato, sweet potato, yam	<i>½ cup</i>
Popcorn	<i>3 cups</i>
Rice, pasta, quinoa, couscous	<i>⅓ cup cooked</i>
Succotash	<i>1/3 cup</i>
Tortilla (6-inches)	<i>1 small tortilla</i>
Winter squash (butternut or acorn)	<i>1 cup</i>



Carbohydrates (milk & yogurt)

One serving contains 6-12 grams of carbs and around 80-160 calories

Chocolate milk	<i>½ cup</i>
Cow's milk (whole, reduced fat, skim)	<i>1 cup</i>
Kefir (plain, unsweetened)	<i>1 cup</i>
Rice milk (plain, unsweetened)	<i>1 cup</i>
Almond milk (plain, unsweetened)	<i>1 cup</i>
Soy milk (plain, unsweetened)	<i>1 cup</i>
Yogurt, Greek or regular (plain, unsweetened)	<i>6 oz</i>

Note: If flavored or sweetened, read the label for more details

Teladoc Health food groups



Protein

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

Beans (black, garbanzo, kidney, lima, navy, pinto, etc.)	<i>½ cup cooked also = 1 carb serving</i>
Brisket	<i>1 oz</i>
Cheese	<i>1 oz</i>
Chicken, turkey, fish, beef, lamb, goat, pork	<i>1 oz</i>
Chitterlings	<i>1 oz</i>
Cottage cheese	<i>¼ cup</i>
Egg substitute	<i>¼ cup</i>
Egg whites	<i>2 egg whites</i>
Eggs	<i>1 egg</i>
Liver	<i>1 oz</i>
Nut spread, no sugar added (peanut, almond, soy butter) *	<i>1 Tbsp</i>
Nuts and seeds (almonds, cashews, pistachios, peanuts, flaxseeds, pumpkin seeds)*	<i>1 Tbsp</i>
Tempeh (check label for carb counts) *	<i>¼ cup</i>
Tofu *	<i>½ cup</i>
Shellfish	<i>3 oz</i>



Fats

One serving contains 5 grams of fat, around 45 calories, usually 0 carbs, but always check the label

Almonds or cashews *	<i>6 nuts</i>
Avocado	<i>2 Tbsp</i>
Bacon	<i>1 slice</i>
Butter, stick	<i>1 tsp</i>
Coconut milk, canned	<i>⅓ cup light or 1½ Tbsp regular</i>
Coconut, shredded	<i>2 Tbsp</i>
Mayonnaise	<i>1 tsp regular or 1 Tbsp reduced fat</i>
Nut butters (almond butter, peanut butter, cashew butter, etc.) *	<i>1½ tsp</i>
Oil (olive oil, canola oil, mustard oil, vegetable oil, etc.)	<i>1 tsp</i>
Olives	<i>8 black or 10 green</i>
Peanuts*	<i>10 nuts</i>
Pecans and walnuts	<i>4 halves</i>
Pistachios*	<i>16 nuts</i>
Sour cream, regular	<i>2 Tbsp</i>

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

Balance your plate

You can eat well and still enjoy yummy meals from your culture! The balanced plate model is an easy, delicious way to fuel your body. Following this format will help you fill your plate with healthy foods in the right proportions.

It's as simple as eyeballing it. A balanced plate has 50% non-starchy veggies, 25% lean proteins, and 25% carbs. It may also include a little healthy fat.

Start with a **9-inch plate**. Measure your usual plates and see how wide they are. If they're bigger than 9 inches, try using smaller plates. You can also fill your regular plates to the 9-inch mark.

Use the Teladoc Health food groups Guide on the previous pages to help you fill your plate. You'll find lots of tasty options to help create a variety of balanced and satisfying meals. Plugging different foods into the sections of the plate can even inspire creativity and get you out of a rut.

50%

Non-starchy veggies = half of your plate

Options include: Collard and mustard greens, broccoli, green beans, celery, bell peppers, cucumbers, okra, tomatoes, cabbage

25%

Carbs = a quarter of your plate

Options include: White potatoes, sweet potatoes, yams, peas, corn, succotash, plantains, squash, corn bread, cornmeal, pasta, grits, fruit, *cow's milk, and *yogurt

25%

Proteins = another quarter of your plate

Options include: Fish, chicken, quail, frog legs, alligator, *beans, cottage cheese, liver, shellfish, **pigs' feet, **boudin, **sausage, **brisket, **chitterlings, gizzards, steak, oxtail

*

Healthy fats = just a bit

Options include: Nuts (boiled peanuts and pecans), nut butters, seeds and oils



*These foods contain protein and carbs.

**These foods are higher in fat and sodium. Read food labels to stay within your goals.

Healthy portion sizes, any time

Now that you know how to balance your plate, it's important to consider how *much* you eat. When it comes to portion sizes, it can feel like the world is working against us. Restaurant servings for one can be enough for a family to share. Even the plates we use at home have gotten bigger!

Luckily, you can retrain your eyes — and your stomach — to recognize what “enough” looks and feels like. Use your hand as a guide to estimate portions that will satisfy and help you reach your goals.



Fist

Whole grains, starchy vegetables, whole fruits



Palm of hand

Meat, fish, tofu, tempeh



Thumb

Dressings, dips, desserts



Two flat hands side by side

Total amount of food per meal



Flat hand

Non-starchy vegetables

How to build a healthy meal

Knowing what to eat is only the first step. Here are some strategies you can use to enjoy healthy foods that fit your nutrition needs:



Plan and shop

- Make a meal plan and shop only for foods that are on your plan.
- Don't be fooled by discounts. "Good deal" doesn't mean "good for you."



Prep ahead

- Wash, cut, and store produce in containers right after grocery shopping.
- Cook once, eat twice: Prepare more than you need so you can enjoy leftovers, too.



Get cooking

- **Cut the fat:**
 - Simmer foods in water or vegetable stock instead of frying in oil.
 - Use a spray of extra-virgin olive oil instead of ghee or shortening.
- **Slash the sodium:**
 - Skip the salt in recipes. Replace it with your favorite herbs and spices.
 - Use lemon juice and vinegar to tone down bitterness and sharpen flavors.
- **Bump up the veggies:**
 - Double the amount of non-starchy veggies in a recipe.
 - Grill, roast or steam veggies to mellow bitterness and help bring out their flavor.
- **Include lean proteins:**
 - Make sure your meals contain lean meat, fish, eggs, beans or tofu.
 - Cook using healthier methods: Grill, roast or sauté.
- **Choose whole grains:**
 - Whole grains are also sources of carbs and calories. Portion size matters!



Eat and enjoy

- **Be mindful when eating:**
 - Avoid distractions like the TV, your phone or your tablet.
 - Slow your pace by putting down your fork between bites. Chew and savor!

Smarter snacks

Having a snack between meals can curb hunger throughout the day. Well-planned snacks can also keep you from eating too much at meals. Snacks that contain both produce and fat or protein are your best bet. That combo will help fill you up and keep you satisfied until mealtime.

Here are a few dynamic snack duos:



Watermelon + sunflower seeds



Celery sticks + peanut butter



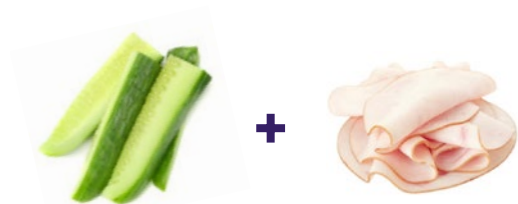
Tomato + cottage cheese



Red bell pepper + cheese stick



Lettuce cups + chicken salad



Cucumber spears + turkey breast



Mixed fruit + plain/vanilla Greek yogurt

Breakfast: shrimp & stone-ground grits

Makes 1 serving



Calories	Total fat	Sat. fat	Sodium	Cholesterol	Carbs	Fiber	Sugars	Protein	Potassium
369	17 g	2 g	421 mg	107 mg	42 g	4 g	4 g	17 g	410 mg

INGREDIENTS

1 cup grits, stone-ground
3 oz medium shrimp
1 Tbsp olive oil
¼ cup roasted, diced tomatoes
¼ cup cut mushrooms
2 Tbsp yellow onions, chopped

PREPARATION

Prepare stone-ground grits per package directions. Sauté shrimp in olive oil, add tomatoes, mushrooms, and onions. Cook 3-4 minutes.

Veggie boost:

Serve on a bed of baby spinach or other greens.

Flavor boost:

Sprinkle with scallions, chopped poblano chili peppers, minced garlic, salt, or black pepper.

1-Day sample meal plan

Lunch: black-eyed pea, chicken, corn & rice salad

Makes 6 servings



Calories	Total fat	Sat. fat	Sodium	Cholesterol	Carbs	Fiber	Sugars	Protein	Potassium
318	5 g	1 g	113 mg	57 mg	41 g	7 g	9 g	28 g	707 mg

INGREDIENTS

31 oz canned, no-salt-added or lower-sodium black-eyed peas, drained and rinsed

2 whole skinless chicken breasts, cooked

15.25 oz canned, no-salt-added or low-sodium whole kernel corn, drained and rinsed

8.8 oz packaged, cooked brown rice

2 stalks celery, chopped

1 bell pepper, seeded and chopped

1 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil

1 Tbsp water

2 Tbsp lemon juice or any type of vinegar

¼ cup chopped, fresh parsley

⅛ tsp black pepper

PREPARATION

Combine all the ingredients in a large bowl. Stir to combine and serve.



Dinner: crispy oven-fried drumsticks with baked sweet potato & broccoli

Makes 1 serving



Calories	Total fat	Sat. fat	Sodium	Cholesterol	Carbs	Fiber	Sugars	Protein	Potassium
339	7 g	2 g	670 mg	239 mg	42 g	5 g	9 g	28 g	1,267 mg

INGREDIENTS

¾ cups cornflakes
1 Tbsp Parmesan cheese, grated
2 chicken drumsticks, skinless
3 Tbsp fat-free buttermilk
Cooking spray
½ baked sweet potato
1 cup broccoli, steamed

PREPARATION

Preheat oven to 425°F. Crush cornflakes and combine with grated parmesan cheese in a resealable bag; close and shake to combine. Dip 2 skinless chicken drumsticks in fat-free buttermilk; place in bag. Seal and shake well, coating drumsticks completely. Place drumsticks on an aluminum foil-lined baking sheet coated with cooking spray. Bake for 25-30 minutes or until drumsticks are well browned and done. Serve with baked sweet potato and steamed broccoli.

Veggie boost:

Serve with a salad of tossed greens dressed with ¼ tsp olive oil and balsamic vinegar.

Flavor boost:

Add some red pepper flakes, black pepper, or garlic powder to taste.

Snack options:



Crunchy veggies
(peppers, cucumbers, celery)
with 2 Tbsp hummus



1 small apple with
1 Tbsp peanut butter

Understanding food labels

Learning how to read food labels can help you make healthier choices. Use this guide to help you make the most of the Nutrition Facts label.

Keep in mind that the healthiest foods, like fruits and veggies, don't have food labels.

Step 1: what's in a serving?

- Read the number of servings per container.
- Learn the size of each serving.
- Remember, the numbers below are for ONE serving.
- If you're eating more than one serving, multiply the numbers below by that amount.

Step 2: aim for less:

- Saturated fat
- Trans fats
- Sodium (below 2,300 mg per day)
- Sugar
- Added sugars

Step 3: aim for more:

- Fiber
- Protein
- Nutrients like vitamin D, iron, potassium, and calcium.

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%
Trans 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%

Step 4: check the ingredients list (separate from the nutrition facts panel)

- Ingredients are listed in by quantity, from highest to lowest.
- Avoid food additives like "monosodium glutamate," "sodium nitrates," and "food coloring". These are likely processed foods.
- Avoid items with ingredients that contain the word "hydrogenated", this means trans-fat. Avoid added sugars, often listed as "high fructose corn syrup," "dextrose," "sucrose," "honey," and "molasses".

Dining out tips and tricks

Going to restaurants is a part of life. While it can be a challenge to dine out healthfully, it can be done! Here's how you can set yourself up for success:

Before you go

- Review the menu online to help make better choices when it's time to order.
- Eat normally. Skipping meals just sets you up to be overly hungry when you sit down to order.
- Have a produce and protein snack an hour before the meal to curb hunger.

At the restaurant

- Choose the treat that you like best—drink, starter, bread or dessert—to go along with your meal. Enjoy it!
- Cut your meal in half. Pack up the rest to bring home as leftovers.
- Ask for lower-calorie options like salad dressing on the side, light oil on pasta and veggies, and grilled chicken instead of crispy!
- Stick with balanced plate portions: 50% non-starchy veggies, 25% lean protein, 25% carbs.
- Chew food well and wait until you have swallowed your current bite to take another one.

It's okay if one meal isn't "perfect." But by planning ahead, you'll be able to stay closer to your wellness goals!





This content is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.