Meal Planning Guide

Our day-to-day life is often hectic. Thinking about what to eat at the next meal is usually not our biggest concern.

Eating well-balanced meals can help our bodies and minds function more efficiently, making it easier to navigate through our fast paced day.

Balanced meals can boost our ability to maintain a healthy weight and prevent chronic disease.

Use this fool-proof method and you will be creating fast, nutritious and delicious meals before you know it.

THE BASICS:

- Protein: Protein keeps you full, builds and repairs tissues, and maintains lean muscle mass. Examples of protein rich foods include: meat, chicken, low fat cheese, yogurt, eggs, soy products (tofu, edemame), seafood, beans, and nuts.
- Starch: Starch is our body's most easily utilized energy source. Starch can be found in a wide variety of foods items. When planning your meals, opt for fiber-rich, unrefined/unprocessed, options. Examples of optimal starch food sources include: whole grain pastas, whole grain breads, fruit, oats, quinoa, and bulgur.

How to use the meal planner: Each meal is broken down into the components necessary to create a balanced meal. Underneath is a list of food options (these are just a few ideas to get you started, and is not an exclusive list). Check which components your meal contains. Then all you need to do is pick an item from each list, and you have created a nutritious and deliciously balanced meal.

PROTEIN	***STARCH***	***FRUIT***	***VEGETABLE***
Eggs or egg beaters	100% Whole wheat toast	Orange	Vegetable soup
Low fat cheese	100% Whole wheat English muffin	Cup of melon	Mixed green salad with tomato and radishes
Peanut butter	Mini bran muffin	Strawberries	Green beans, broccoli, asparagus, bok choy
Low fat cottage cheese	Whole wheat tortilla	Apple	Carrots, acorn squash
Nuts (ie: walnuts, almonds)	High fiber cereal	Pineapple	Spinach
Plain Greek yogurt	Plain oatmeal	Grapes	Cauliflower, onions, garlic
Low sodium cold cuts (ie: Turkey)	Oat bran	Blueberries	Portobello mushrooms, turnips
Tuna	Wild/brown rice	Pear	Tomato sauce
Firm tofu	Whole wheat pasta	Kiwi	Stir fry
Chicken breast	Baked potato	Mango slices	Grilled eggplant
Salmon	Sweet potato baked fries	Nectarine	Assorted cooked vegetables
Lean ground turkey/beef	Barley	Peach	Assorted raw vegetables
Tofu "hot dog"	Bulgur	Clementine	Spices

***BREAKFAST*:** **Starch + Protein + Fruit**

MIDMORNING SNACK: **Starch *or* Fruit + Protein**

***LUNCH*:** **Protein + Starch + Vegetable**

AFTERNOON SNACK: **Protein + Starch *or* Fruit**

***DINNER*:** **Protein + Vegetable + Starch**