

# A Beginner's Guide to Nutrition

9 SIMPLE TIPS  
FOR GETTING STARTED

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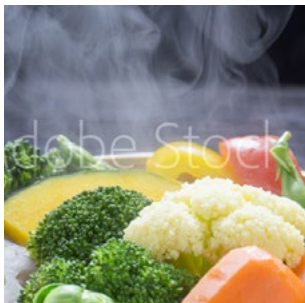
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## TIP 01

# EAT FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Get (at least) 3 to 5 servings of fruits and 3 to 5 servings of vegetables each day. These are your vitamin and mineral powerhouses of your diets and can help to reach your daily fiber goals.



Steam veggies for dinner (& double the portions)



Increase the amount of veggies in pasta dishes/soups/stir-fries



Enjoy raw veggies with hummus or salsa instead of chips



Add fresh fruit to plain yogurt for a natural sweetener



Have fresh fruit as a snack in between meals



Try fresh berries or other fruit for dessert



## TIP 02

### DRINK WATER

Drink water! While technically all fluids contribute to your total daily fluid intake, aim to get *at least* 64 to 80 ounces a day of just plain water. Water supports a healthy metabolism, can prevent us from eating when we're not actually hungry, and is essential to recovery from exercise.

- Look for a 24-32 ounce water bottle; depending upon the size, figure out how many bottles you need to drink each day, and set goals: 1 bottle by lunch time, 1 by dinner, etc.
- Always have an 8-16 ounce glass of water with meals.
- Try sparkling water for more fizz which can decrease soda consumption (if applicable).

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## TIP 03

# EAT FISH

Eat fish at least 2-3 times a week.



Tuna counts – chunk light tuna is a healthier option than other types.



Look for wild caught fish, these tend to be lower in mercury and other contaminants.



Try fish tacos if you're still warming up to fish, or individually wrapped frozen fillets that can be baked easily and quickly. Fish tacos are a great introduction to individuals who have a hard time eating a large piece of fish individually.



Many grocery stores sell salmon and other fish 'burgers', as well as individually wrapped fish fillets that can be kept frozen and cooked quite easily; this takes away the hassle of always having to buy fresh fish!



## TIP 04

### EAT SNACKS

Eat every 3 to 5 hours. Whether it 5 to 6 small meals, or 3 meals with snacks in between, eating regularly throughout the day prevents overeating later in the day and helps to meet nutrient needs.

- This does not mean grazing all day!
- Snacks can help with this, and at a minimum should combine a carbohydrate and a protein (and is not a candy bar from the vending machine!) – examples include banana with peanut butter, apple with string cheese, veggies and hummus, hard-boiled egg with sugar-snap peas, plain Greek yogurt mixed with berries. Plan for these with your meal planning to ensure you always have healthy snacks on hand.

# Other tips with 'implementation'

We may know **what** to eat, in  
the next page are some tips for  
making it happen!



# **Eat the food that you enjoy!**

## **BALANCE**

It's all about balance. There is no need to cut out entire food groups and restrict foods that you enjoy. Your approach to nutrition should be sustainable: something you can see yourself doing for the rest of your life. Diets and other fads typically don't last and we are no better off when we get burnt out on these restrictive approaches. Rather, develop balanced eating habits you can continue for life.



## TIP 06

# USE THE PLATE METHOD

Always use the plate method. As simple as this sounds, if you make your plate at every meal in alignment with the plate method you are likely eating balanced meals with appropriate portions. Here is an outline of what this looks like:



If your goal is weight loss, aim to have about half of your plate coming from non-starchy vegetables, one-fourth of your plate coming from whole grains and starchy vegetables (potatoes/sweet potatoes, peas, corn, winter squashes), and one-fourth of your plate coming from lean protein sources (fish, chicken, pork tenderloin, eggs, dairy, nuts/seeds, legumes, soy)



If your goal is to increase muscle mass, think one-third: one-third of your plate coming from non-starchy vegetables, one-third coming from whole grains & starchy vegetables, and one-third coming from lean protein sources.





# Track your intake to accomplish goals

Do you have weight management goals? Consider tracking your intake. MyFitnessPal (there is a website and corresponding app) that is free and allows you to track everything you eat and drink each day. For individuals that are fairly to highly active you will want to aim for no more than a 1lb weight gain or loss each week (1/2 lb is even better! Slower weight loss/gain is associated with preserving muscle and promoting fat loss compared with drastic weight loss that compromises muscle mass). If you are going to track your intake, be sure to track everything, and every day – occasional tracking is not very useful.



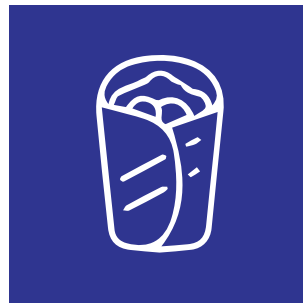
## TIP 08

# MAKE A MEAL PLAN

Meal plan. If we plan out our meals we tend to eat healthier, save money, and save time. Who doesn't want that?



Start with planning out one meal a day, such as dinners. You can always plan to make extras and then you have lunch for the next day.



Make sure you have good pantry staples so you can make a 10 to 15 minute meal if you need to (if you have whole wheat tortillas in the fridge, tuna in the cupboard, and frozen veggies you can quickly make a tuna wrap with steam veggies for a last minute dinner. Healthier than drive-thru and you will feel a lot better!).



The slow cooker/crock-pot can be your best friend on those busy days!



TIP 09



## TIMING

Time your nutrition around your workouts. Make sure you have eaten 1 to 4 hours before a workout and include carbohydrates – fruits, vegetables, starches, whole grains. Eat within an hour after a workout, focusing on carbohydrates, protein and fluids.

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