

# Eat Right

Food, Nutrition and Health Tips from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics



## Personalizing Your Plate To Include Foods from Other Cultures – Middle Eastern Cuisine

The foods we eat are often influenced by our family's history and culture. They're also influenced by where we live, our budgets, and our tastes. Many cuisines feature dishes which include a variety of foods from all of the food groups.

Fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy come in all sizes, shapes, and colors. The combination of foods and amounts will depend on you.

### Personalize Your Plate

by including foods that you prefer from each food group. Including a variety of foods can help you get all of the nutrients that are needed for good health.

These tips can help you get started:

- **Fill half your plate with fruits and veggies.** Get creative with produce by trying an assortment of colors and textures.
- **Experiment with different grains.** Try substituting whole grains for refined grains in recipes.
- **Choose lean protein foods.** Vary your choices to include beans, peas and lentils as well as eggs. If you eat meat, choose seafood and lean cuts of meat and poultry that are prepared in a healthful way, such as baked or grilled instead of fried.
- **Complete your meal with dairy.** Include low-fat or fat-free options like milk, yogurt, cheese or calcium-fortified soymilk.

A healthful eating style can be as unique as you!



## Meal Planning Tips

Eating healthy doesn't have to be complicated or boring. Think about the foods you like from each food group – mixed dishes count, too!

These are just a few examples of how different foods can be eaten as a meal to personalize your plate. If a food you enjoy is not listed here, consider which food group it meets when planning your meals.

### Breakfast:

- Keshek (powdered sun-dried yogurt with stir-fried lean ground beef, and garlic) with whole wheat pita bread, radish slices and a piece of fruit
- Zaatar mixed with a little olive oil and spread on whole wheat pita bread, then topped with tomato slices, olives, cucumber, and mint
- Mujadara (rice, lentils and spices topped with sautéed onions) with yogurt and a non-starchy vegetable like roasted cauliflower
- Chicken breast roasted in the oven with potato slices, lemon juice, garlic, and olive oil
- Grilled chicken, koresh bademjan (eggplant and tomato stew), brown rice, pomegranate and yogurt

### Lunch or Dinner:

- Mahshi (stuffed zucchini) and fattoush (lettuce, fresh parsley, diced tomato, radish, cucumber, and onion with sumac dressing)
- Stuffed cabbage leaves, roasted cauliflower, yogurt and fruit
- Musaquaa (roasted halved eggplants with tomato sauce, diced tomatoes, onions, garlic and spices)
- Baked kibbeh (bulgur, ground meat and pine nuts rolled into balls) served with hummus and raw vegetables
- Grilled fish with lemon, spinach and haloumi salad, and whole grain bread

### Snacks:

- Baba ganoush with bread
- Dried fruit and nuts
- Yogurt or labneh (a thickened yogurt) with fresh fruit
- Dates and tahini
- Hummus with cucumber and carrots

### Consider your nutrient needs when planning your meals and snacks!

If you have special nutrition needs, consult a registered dietitian nutritionist. An RDN can create a customized eating plan that is unique to you.

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**For a referral to a registered dietitian nutritionist and for additional food and nutrition information, visit [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org).**



The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is the world's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals. The Academy is committed to improving health and advancing the profession of dietetics through research, education and advocacy.

This tip sheet is provided by:

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