

MEAL PLANNING: SENIOR NUTRITION

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BUILDING YOUR PLATE

- Eat a variety of foods throughout each day including whole grains, fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy, and protein.
- Focus on fresh, whole foods vs. processed to decrease added sugars, saturated fats, and sodium.
- Choose pre-chopped or sliced fruits and vegetables if you are limited in mobility. Choose a variety of colors each day.
- To maintain strong muscles, include protein foods such as beans, chicken, fish, lean meats, nuts, and eggs.
- If larger meals are too much, focus on 6 mini meals throughout the day.

DIET + CHRONIC DISEASE

- High Blood Pressure: Flavor foods with herbs and spices in place of salt. Ditch the salt shaker and use what you have on hand to add flavor to your foods. Be aware of the amount of sauces, canned foods and processed meats that can have high amounts of sodium.
- Diabetes: Carbohydrates are found in grains, fruit, dairy, beans, and starchy vegetables. Read food labels to monitor total carbohydrates in each serving, 1 carb choice is 15g, limit carbs in each meal to 2-4 servings. Limit added sugars as they provide no nutritional value.
- Heart Disease: Focus on choosing lean meats, which usually have round or loin in the name. Cut away excess fat and remove skin on poultry. Read food labels, and choose options with minimal to no saturated fats. When looking at whole grains, aim for sources that are 5g of fiber or more. Include grains such as quinoa, buckwheat, bulger, farro, brown rice, and oats.





5 STEPS TO EASY MEAL PREP

- Check what you have in your pantry before going to the store. Use items you have to keep foods fresh and save money.
- Write down meals for the week to keep track and help with meal preparation.
- Always create a grocery list before going shopping. Stick to the list unless you can stock up on sale items. If additional items are purchased, make a plan for them.
- When you run out of a food you use often, write it down to ensure it makes it on your next grocery list.
- Write down recipes you want to try; this will mix up your meals and give you a chance to try new combinations.

DINNER BUILDERS

Keep your pantry stocked at all times with these items. They can be key ingredients in building simple and healthy meals.

- Canned or dry beans
- Canned or pouch tuna, salmon or chicken
- Canned tomatoes and pasta sauce (no salt added)
- Nut butters
- Low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
- Whole grains

