

Creative Meal Planning Guide for Health and Healing



Allina Health

**PENNY GEORGE™
INSTITUTE
FOR HEALTH
AND HEALING**

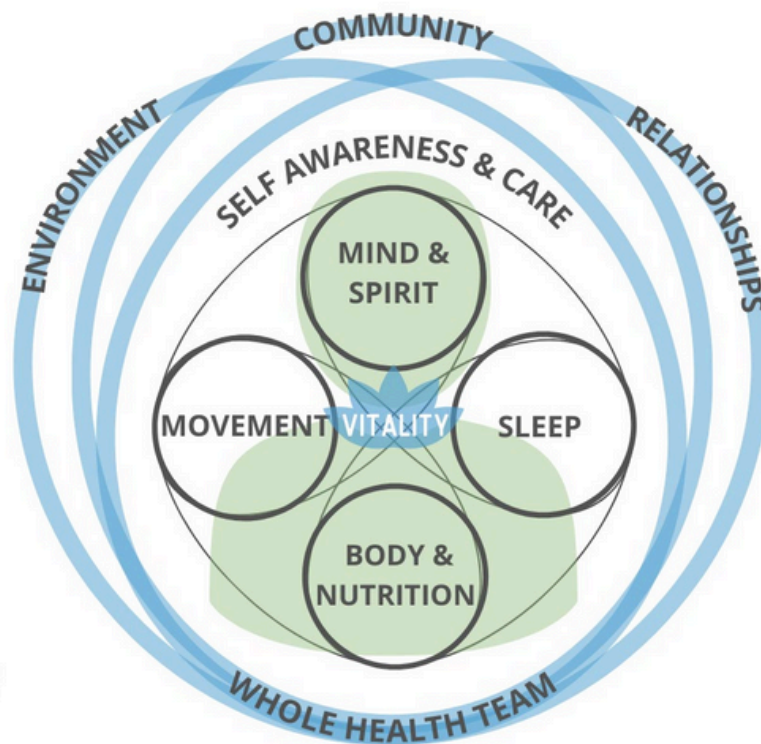
Food is an important part of health and healing.

The Penny George Institute for Health and Healing is committed to supporting you as you change your eating approach.

The information provided in these pages can help you prevent and manage chronic (long-term) health conditions.

Nutrition is an important part of health and healing. Our integrative nutritionists partner with you to make changes at your own pace that fit with your lifestyle.

Whole Person Care Model



Creative Meal Planning Guide for Health and Healing

A “how to” guide to meal planning and cooking Food for Health and Healing.

Meal planning, cooking and eating more home-cooked foods are healthful habits to practice. When you cook for yourself, you have greater ability to choose the ingredients that are put into your meals and snacks. This guide is intended to:

- Help you establish a meal planning routine that fits your lifestyle and supports your health goals,
- Give you practical and creative strategies for adopting the principles of Food for Health and Healing into your eating habits,
- And explore new ways to enjoy the food you eat!

While you’re getting in a groove with meal planning and cooking, keep in mind that it takes both practice and repetition to make a new routine. Be patient with yourself! Trust that you will become more efficient and skilled with time.

Getting Started: How to Use this Guide

Take the information in this guide at your own pace. If you feel ready and motivated to tackle it all at once - great! You can also practice the skills one section at a time. Each section has the potential to lighten your meal planning load, and together they can transform your habits.

Creative Meal Planning Guide for Health and Healing

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Skill #1:

Making a Meal Planning Routine

If answering the question, “what’s for dinner?” fills you with dread, learning how to meal plan in a way that works for you and your household is an important skill. A meal plan also gives you the opportunity to put your health goals into action. Other benefits include saving money, reducing food waste, and reduced stress at mealtimes.

To find your personal meal planning style, take these tips into consideration.

- Before sitting down to make a meal plan, **ask yourself**:
 - How many times each week am I willing and able to cook? If there are other cooks in your household, ask them the same question.
 - How many times am I willing to eat the same meal? (i.e. leftovers)
 - What meal is the easiest for me to prioritize cooking (breakfast, lunch, dinner)?
 - What is my goal for meal planning right now? (Ex: “I want to meal plan for weekday lunches and prep these for myself on Sundays.”)
- Before you start looking at new recipes, draft a list of your **go-to meals**. Most households have 10-15 recipes that take very little planning or effort to prepare. What are yours?



Modifying Your Go-To Recipes

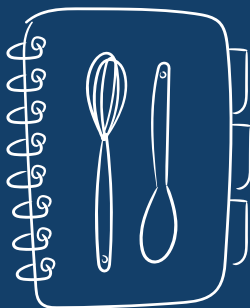
Consider how you might modify your go-to recipes to make them a better fit with your health goals. Start by considering how you can add vegetables, fruits, beans, and other plant-based foods.

Example: add mushrooms and spinach to marinara sauce to increase the veggies in your spaghetti

Skill #1:

Making a Meal Planning Routine

- **Make a themed template.** Creating a template for your weekly meal plan takes the guesswork out of the process and makes weekly meal planning more efficient. To make a themed template, assign a theme to each day of the week (Ex: Meatless Monday, Taco Tuesday, Fish Friday, etc.) and brainstorm different meals that fit into that theme. Every week when you sit down to meal plan, pull out this template to fill in the themes with the variation you want to eat in the coming week (Ex: For Meatless Monday choose Curry Tofu with Veggies and rice). Kids can also help with the decision-making process, too!
- **Where is the best place for you to put your meal plan(s)?**
 - On a whiteboard or chalkboard?.
 - On a spreadsheet?
 - In a 3-ring binder with recipes printed out?
- Include some space in your **menu plan for options like takeout, dinner with friends, or finishing leftovers.**
- **"Cook once, eat twice."** Plan for leftovers.
- If making a new recipe is part of your meal planning goals, **limit yourself to one new recipe each week.** Read the recipe through completely to make sure you have all the ingredients and equipment you need before you start cooking.



Once you have the basics of your meal plan style, you can expand on what's working for you. If you start by planning dinners, you can add in lunch or breakfast. Once you have a 7-day meal plan routine established, you can plan for two weeks at a time, or even a whole month ahead. Save your meal plans for future reference. In theory, you could make a meal plan for 4 weeks and just repeat that meal plan every month of the year!

Skill #1:

Making a Meal Planning Routine

Make a template you can follow each week. Here's an example to get you started:

Theme #1 <i>Meatless Monday</i>	Recipe #1 <i>Veggie Stir-Fry with Ginger and Tofu</i>	Recipe #2 <i>Tempeh Reuben Sandwiches with roasted broccoli</i>
Theme #2 <i>Taco Tuesday</i>	Recipe #1 <i>Black Bean Sweet Potato Tacos</i>	Recipe #2 <i>Chicken Tinga tacos with Mexican coleslaw</i>
Theme #3 <i>Crockpot Wednesday</i>	Recipe #1 <i>Beef Veggie Stew</i>	Recipe #2 <i>Arroz Con Pollo</i>
Theme #4 <i>Grain Bowl Thursday - see page 9</i>	Recipe #1 <i>Spring Veggie Quinoa Bowl with Tahini Goddess Dressing</i>	Recipe #2 <i>Chicken Salad with Manoomin</i>
Theme #5 <i>Fish Friday</i>	Recipe #1 <i>Baked Cod with cauliflower and rice pilaf</i>	Recipe #2 <i>Walnut Basil Tuna Salad sandwiches - on page 11 - with sautéed mushrooms and greens</i>
Theme #6 <i>Salad Saturday - see page 10</i>	Recipe #1 <i>Mexican Chopped Salad</i>	Recipe #2 <i>Mediterranean Salad</i>
Theme #7 <i>Sheet Pan Sunday - see page 18</i>	Recipe #1 <i>Salmon and Squash Sheet Pan</i>	Recipe #2 <i>Mediterranean Chickpea Bake</i>

Skill #1:

Making a Meal Planning Routine: Batch Cooking

Batch cooking is an efficient meal preparation method in which you make large batches of certain ingredients that you can use in the future as components of a meal. Cooking this way can be very cost effective, because it allows you time to cook dry beans in advance instead of relying on canned beans for a quick protein option. Additionally, if you have ingredients available to put together a weekday meal, you'll be less tempted to eat out or swing through a drive-thru.

Batch cooking can also make it easier to choose healthy foods because you've already made the healthy foods the most convenient option when you prepare them for your future meals!

To make mealtimes flow more effortlessly, consider setting aside an hour or two once a week to prepare some ingredients you can mix and match into tasty, balanced meals throughout the week. Whole grains, beans and meats can all be easily batch cooked. There are some resources in this guide to help you consider what ingredients to choose and how to prepare them well. See skills #2-#7 to get inspired!

Here's an example of how a weekly batch cooking plan may look:



- Choose a whole grain to prepare: brown rice, quinoa, manoomin (wild rice), bulgur, etc.
- Pick a protein: lentils, black beans, chicken thighs, etc.
- Make a flavorful dressing, sauce or dip (pages 31-36).
- Wash and prep a couple veggies: roast sweet potatoes, steam cauliflower, and/or sauté some leafy greens.

Skill #1:

Making a Meal Planning Routine: Freezer Meals

In addition to batch cooking simple ingredients to make into a meal later, you can also prepare complete meals to freeze. This approach works really well for main dishes or one-pot meals. You may opt to freeze components of meals (Ex: cut and marinated chicken) or fully prepared recipes (Ex: veggie lasagna) that can just be thawed and reheated in the microwave or oven.

Many recipes can be frozen - soups, stews, casseroles, enchiladas, rice and beans, etc. However not every ingredient will maintain good texture and flavor when it's frozen and thawed again, such as potatoes and raw vegetables with a high water content (cucumber, celery, bell peppers, summer squash, zucchini, melons, radishes, turnips, and ripe tomatoes).

How to work freezer meals into your meal planning routine:

- When cooking household staples, double (or even triple!) batches to freeze. Many whole grains, beans and meats can all go in the freezer to use later. Soups, stews and casseroles can also be frozen.
- Prep smoothie packets: put the dry ingredients for smoothies into resealable bags. When you're ready to make a smoothie, pour the contents of your baggie and the liquid portion to the blender and whirl it up!
- Set aside time once a month to prep freezer meals. This may include preparing components of a meal, like seasoning taco meat or assembling casseroles that will be cooked later in the month.
- There are many cookbooks with freezer meal recipes, as well as meal plans that can feed your household for as long as one month. Keep in mind that preparing a month's worth of food may take you 1-2 days and will require buying a month's worth of food all at once, so consider if that's an approach that will fit into your budget and lifestyle.

Skill #2:

Assembly-Style Cooking

Assembly-style cooking is a way of mixing together ingredients that you have on hand to create balanced - and delicious - meals. With assembly-style cooking, you can prepare ingredients ahead of time (Ex: cook quinoa, make salad dressing, chop carrots, etc.) or purchase ingredients to put together into a meal at a later date. If you have eaters in your household with different dietary needs or preferences, assembly-style cooking can relieve a lot of stress related to meal planning because every eater can pick and choose from the ingredients available to personalize their plate.

Try out new combinations.

Use these combination of ingredients as a jumping-off point to create assembly-style meals that work for you by using the charts on pages 9-18. As you eat them, notice your satisfaction and enjoyment of the meal. This is a starting point for you to personalize with ingredients and flavors you enjoy.

A note on serving size recommendations: Consider serving recommendations as just that: recommendations. These meals may be too little, too much, or just the right amount of food. Take ownership of personalizing each option to fit your appetite.

FASS

FASS stands for fat, acid, salt and sweet. Part of what makes a meal or recipe tasty is having a great balance of these flavors. Experiment with:

FAT: olive oil, butter, cheese, avocado, nut butter

ACID: vinegars, tomatoes, lemon or lime juice

SALT: sea salt, parmesan, fermented vegetables, sauerkraut

SWEET: honey, maple syrup, molasses, raisins, dates, sugar



Skill #2: Assembly-Style Cooking

Grain Bowls

Grain Bowl	Spring Veggie Quinoa Bowl with Tahini Dressing	Arroz con Gandules (Puerto Rican Rice and Beans)	Chicken Salad with Manoomin (wild rice)
Vegetables <i>3 or more servings</i>	Pea pods, radishes, kohlrabi, mixed greens	Zucchini, onion, tomatoes, collard greens	Celery, red onion, romaine or butter lettuce
Fruits	----	----	----
Proteins <i>1 serving</i>	Chickpeas / garbanzo beans	Gandules / Pigeon Peas	Chicken (breast or thigh)
Beans, Whole Grains, Root Vegetables <i>1-2 servings</i>	Quinoa, cooked	Rice	Manoomin / wild rice
Fats <i>1-3 servings</i>	Tahini Goddess Dressing (recipe on pg 29)	Extra virgin olive oil for cooking, green olives with pimentos	Mayo, sunflower seeds
Herbs, Spices, Seasonings <i>to taste</i>	Chevre or other cheese	Chopped cilantro, adobo seasoning	Dried cranberries, Dijon mustard

For serving size recommendations, go to pages 22-24.

Skill #2: Assembly-Style Cooking

Green Salad

Green Salad	Steak Salad with Winter Squash	Mediterranean Salad	Mexican Chopped Salad
Vegetables <i>Greens 1-3 servings</i> <i>Other vegetables 1-2 or more servings</i>	Romaine lettuce Brussels sprouts, red onion	Spinach Cucumber, tomato	Mixed greens Bell pepper (any color), radishes, tomato
Fruits	Dried currants	----	----
Proteins <i>1 serving</i>	Steak	Falafel, feta cheese	Black beans
Beans, Whole Grains, Root Vegetables <i>1-2 servings</i>	Delicata or other winter squash	Quinoa or whole wheat bulgur	Corn
Fats <i>1-3 servings</i>	Olive oil	Kalamata olives, olive oil	Avocado or guacamole
Herbs, Spices, Seasonings <i>to taste</i>	Olive oil vinaigrette (recipe on page 28)	Lemon juice	Cilantro, lime juice

For serving size recommendations, go to pages 22-24.

Skill #2: Assembly-Style Cooking

Protein-Rich Side Salad

Use as the “protein” serving in a meal-sized Green Salad, Grain Bowl, or enjoy on a sandwich or wrap.

Protein-Rich Side Salad	Walnut Basil Tuna or Salmon Salad	Avocado Chicken Salad	Three Bean Salad
Vegetables	----	----	----
Fruits	----	----	----
Proteins <i>1 serving</i>	Tuna or salmon	Chicken thigh or breast	Cannellini, chickpeas, kidney beans
Beans, Whole Grains, Root Vegetables	----	----	----
Fats <i>1-3 servings</i>	Mayonnaise	Avocado, smashed	Olive oil
Herbs, Spices, Seasonings <i>to taste</i>	Basil, red onion	Garlic powder, black pepper, lime juice, cilantro	Red onion, celery, parsley, apple cider vinegar

For serving size recommendations, go to pages 22-24.

Skill #2: Assembly-Style Cooking

Smoothie

Start with a liquid base of water, coconut water, tea, milk or dairy-free beverage (8-16 fluid ounces).

Smoothie	Banana Peanut Butter Smoothie	Mixed Berry Kale Smoothie	Morning Glory Smoothie
Vegetables 1 serving or more	Cauliflower, frozen	Kale	Carrot
Fruits 1-2 servings	Banana, frozen	Mixed berries, frozen	Orange (any kind)
Proteins 1 serving	Peanut butter (also fat)	Protein powder (vanilla or unflavored)	Tofu (silken) or Greek yogurt (unsweetened, dairy or dairy-free)
Beans, Whole Grains, Root Vegetables	----	----	----
Fats 1-3 servings	No additional fat needed	Flaxseeds, ground	Coconut, shredded
Herbs, Spices, Seasonings <i>to taste</i>	Cinnamon and/or unsweetened cocoa	Mint or basil (fresh)	Cinnamon, clove, ginger, and/or nutmeg, or pumpkin pie spice

For serving size recommendations, go to pages 22-24.

Skill #2: Assembly-Style Cooking

Chia Pudding

Chia pudding is a delicious, high fiber snack. To prepare, simply mix ingredients together and place in the refrigerator for 3-5 hours or overnight.

Chia Pudding	Apple Cranberry Chia Pudding	Cherry Chocolate Chia Pudding	Lemon Turmeric Chia Pudding
Vegetables	----	----	----
Fruits <i>1-2 servings</i>	Apples, cranberries (frozen)	Sweet or sour cherries (fresh or frozen)	Lemon juice and zest
Proteins <i>1 cup</i>	Soy milk Optional: protein powder	Milk of your choice Optional: protein powder	Milk (any kind)
Beans, Whole Grains, Root Vegetables	----	----	----
Fats <i>3 Tbsp</i>	Chia seeds	Chia seeds	Chia seeds
Herbs, Spices, Seasonings <i>to taste</i>	Cinnamon	Unsweetened cocoa	Turmeric powder

For serving size recommendations, go to pages 22-24.

Skill #2: Assembly-Style Cooking

Overnight Oats

Overnight Oats are prepared by soaking rolled oatmeal in a liquid with additional ingredients to make a cold cereal that can be eaten for a meal or snack. To prepare, simply mix all the ingredients together and place in the refrigerator overnight - no cooking involved!

Overnight Oats	Peanut Butter and Jelly	Spiced Apple Raisin	Strawberry Banana
Vegetables	----	----	----
Fruits <i>1-2 servings</i>	Raspberries	Apple, raisins	Strawberry, banana
Proteins <i>1 cup</i>	Soy milk Optional: protein powder	Milk of your choice Optional: protein powder	Greek yogurt (dairy or dairy-free)
Beans, Whole Grains, Root Vegetables <i>1 servings</i>	Oatmeal	Oatmeal or rolled rye	Oatmeal
Fats <i>1-2 servings</i>	Peanut butter (unsweetened)	Pecans	Flaxseed
Herbs, Spices, Seasonings <i>to taste</i>	Cinnamon	Pumpkin pie spice	Ginger

For serving size recommendations, go to pages 22-24.

Skill #2: Assembly-Style Cooking

Breakfast Veggie Hash

This is a dish that can be prepared on a day off for a workday breakfast. Sauté or roast the vegetable, proteins and cook the whole grains and root vegetables. Mix ingredients together be reheated when you're ready to eat. Cook eggs before serving.

Breakfast Veggie Hash	Turkey Kale Hash	Southwest Veggie Hash with Fried Egg	Vegan Tempeh Hash with Broccoli and Potato
Vegetables <i>1 serving or more</i>	Carrot, red onion, kale	Bell pepper (any color), zucchini, onion	Broccoli, onion, garlic
Fruits	----	----	----
Proteins <i>1 serving</i>	Ground turkey	Black beans, egg	Tempeh
Beans, Whole Grains, Root Vegetables <i>1 serving</i>	Sweet potato	Quinoa	Potato
Fats <i>1-3 servings</i>	Olive or avocado oil for cooking	Olive or avocado oil for cooking, avocado	Olive or avocado oil for cooking
Herbs, Spices, Seasonings <i>to taste</i>	Thyme, turmeric, cinnamon	Cumin, salsa, cilantro	Soy sauce or tamari, rice vinegar, nutritional yeast, srirach or other hot sauce

For serving size recommendations, go to pages 22-24.

Skill #2: Assembly-Style Cooking

Egg Bake or Bites

These combinations can be baked in a 9x13 casserole dish or in muffin tins. Bake at 350°F for 25-35 minutes (9x13 casserole) or 15-18 minutes (muffin tin). Cook whole grains and root vegetables before mixing with the other ingredients and baking.

Egg Bake or Bites	Potato, Kale, Kalamata Egg Bake	Smoked Salmon, Manoomin, Asparagus Egg Bake	Mushroom, Quinoa, Spinach Egg Bake
Vegetables <i>1 serving or more</i>	Green onions, kale	Asparagus, green onions	Mushrooms, spinach, onions
Fruits	----	----	----
Proteins <i>1-2 serving</i>	Eggs, feta cheese	Eggs, smoked salmon	Eggs, cheese (optional)
Beans, Whole Grains, Root Vegetables <i>1 serving</i>	Potatoes (any color)	Manoomin / wild rice	Quinoa
Fats <i>1-3 servings</i>	Olive oil, kalamata olives	Olive oil	Olive oil
Herbs, Spices, Seasonings <i>to taste</i>	Garlic	Dill	Thyme, garlic

For serving size recommendations, go to pages 22-24.

Skill #2: Assembly-Style Cooking

Stir-Fry

To prepare a stir-fry, follow the instructions on page 27 to sauté the vegetables, proteins and any herbs, spices or seasonings you choose in the stir-fry sauce (recipe on page 31). Serve over cooked whole grains (see page 23 for directions, or follow directions on the package).

Stir-Fry	Ginger Spring Chicken Stir-Fry	Mushroom and Tofu Stir-Fry	Lemongrass Beef and Broccoli Stir-Fry
Vegetables <i>3 servings or more</i>	Scallions, snap peas, radishes, baby bok choy	Mushrooms, cabbage (napa or other)	Broccoli, onion
Fruits	----	----	----
Proteins <i>1 serving</i>	Chicken (breast or thighs)	Tofu (firm)	Beef (steak or roast, cut into strips)
Beans, Whole Grains, Root Vegetables <i>1 servings</i>	Brown rice	Rice noodles (Asian-style)	Brown rice
Fats <i>1-3 servings</i>	Stir-fry sauce	Stir-fry sauce	Stir-fry sauce
Herbs, Spices, Seasonings <i>to taste</i>	Sliced ginger	Chili flakes	Garlic, sesame seeds, lemongrass

For serving size recommendations, go to pages 22-24.

Skill #2: Assembly-Style Cooking

Sheet Pan Meal

Sheet pan meals can be an efficient way to put together a meal while making few dirty dishes. Mix the ingredients together with some oil and spread out on a sheet pan (aka cookie sheet) and bake at 400 degrees in the oven until done (30-40 minutes). Before serving, add fats and/or herbs, spices, seasonings for more flavor.

Sheet Pan Meal	Mediterranean Chickpea Bake	Xawaash Spiced Chicken (or Goat)	Salmon and Squash
Vegetables <i>2 servings or more</i>	Artichoke hearts, roma tomatoes, zucchini, oninos	Eggplant, bell pepper (any color)	Brussels sprouts, red onion
Fruits	----	----	----
Proteins <i>1 serving</i>	Chickpeas	Chicken (thighs or wings) or goat	Salmon
Beans, Whole Grains, Root Vegetables <i>2 servings</i>	Potatoes (any color)	Potatoes (any color)	Delicata or other winter squash
Fats <i>1-3 servings</i>	Olive oil vinaigrette (recipe on page 28)	Olive oil	Olive oil, Tahini goddess dressing (recipe on page 29)
Herbs, Spices, Seasonings <i>to taste</i>	Za'atar	Xawaash, cilantro	Garlic

For serving size recommendations, go to pages 22-24. Learn more about spices and spice blends on page 37-38.

Skill #3:

Your Turn! Assembly-Style Cooking

On pages 8-17 you were able to practice assembly-style cooking with our examples. Here you get to practice mixing and matching the ingredients and flavors that you love to eat. Following are a list of ingredients. Include traditional whole foods that fit with your culture if you do not see them listed here. For more ideas on how to put together meals with a plant-forward focus, visit pages 12-13 in the Food for Health and Healing Guide.



Prep Ahead

- Prep a pot of beans and/or whole grains once a week, which can be added to salads, assembled into grain bowls, made into breakfast porridge, etc.
- If you're turning on your oven or grill, fill it! Prepare several chicken breasts or thighs, root vegetables, broccoli and/or other vegetables once a week.
- Chop hearty veggies like carrots, celery, kohlrabi, cauliflower, broccoli, etc. for raw additions to meals or for snacking.
- Prep dressings, sauces and dips that make simple ingredients tasty and encourage you to eat more veggies (some recipes are included in this guide on pages 28-33!).

Skill #3:

Your Turn! Assembly-Style Cooking

Vegetables

*1 serving =
½ cup cooked or a handful,
or 1 cup leafy greens*

Artichoke hearts
Asparagus
Baba ganoush
Bamboo shoots
Bell peppers
Broccoli
Brussels sprouts
Carrots
Cauliflower
Celeriac
Celery
Corn
Cucumbers
Daikon radish
Eggplant
Fennel
Green beans
Jicama
Kohlrabi
Mushrooms
Nopales
Okra
Peppers
Radishes
Salsa
Sauerkraut, kimchi or
other fermented
veggies
Seaweed and sea
vegetables

Snap peas, snow peas
Summer squash
Taro
Tomato
Turnips
Water chestnuts
Zucchini

Leafy greens

Arugula
Beet
Bok choy
Cabbage
Chard
Collards
Dandelion
Chinese/napa
cabbage
Endive
Escarole
Kale
Lettuce
Microgreens
Mustard
Radicchio
Spinach
Sprouts
Turnip
Watercress

Fruits

*1 serving =
½ cup or a handful
or ¼ cup dried*

Apple or applesauce
Apricots
Banana
Blackberries
Blueberries
Cherries
Cranberries
Currants
Grapefruit
Grapes
Kiwi
Mango
Melon (all kinds)
Nectarine
Orange
Papaya
Peach
Pear

Persimmon
Pineapple
Plums
Pomegranate seeds
Prunes
Raisins
Raspberries
Strawberries
Sultana / golden
raisin
Tangerines
Watermelon

Skill #3:

Your Turn! Assembly-Style Cooking

Proteins

1/2 cup or palm-sized serving

Beans

Adzuki
Anasazi
Bean pastas
Black/turtle
Black-eyed peas
Cannellini
Chickpeas/garbanzo
Cranberry
Edamame
Fava
Great Northern
Kidney
Lentils (brown, green,
French, red, yellow)
Lima
Mung
Navy
Pinto
Split peas
Tempeh 4 oz
Tofu 6 oz

Meat, Poultry & Fish

Fish or shellfish
Meat: beef, bison,
goat, lamb
Poultry: chicken, duck,
turkey

Eggs

Nuts & Seeds

Almonds
Almond butter
Brazil
Cashews
Chia
Flax, ground
Hazelnuts
Hemp
Mixed nuts
Nut or seed butter
Peanuts
Peanut butter
Pecans
Pine nuts
Pistachios
Pumpkin
Sesame
Sesame butter/Tahini
Soy nuts
Sunflower
Walnuts

Dairy

Cheese
Cottage cheese
Greek yogurt

Protein powder
1-2 scoops

Beans, Whole Grains, Root Vegetables

1 serving =

1/2 cup cooked or a handful

Beans

Adzuki
Anasazi
Bean pastas
Black/turtle
Black-eyed peas
Cannellini
Chickpeas/garbanzo
Cranberry
Edamame
Fava
Gandules/pigeon peas
Great Northern
Kidney
Lentil, brown, green,
French, red, yellow
Lima
Mung
Navy
Pinto
Split peas

Root Vegetables

Beets
Cassava
Parsnips
Potatoes (all colors)
Pumpkin
Rutabaga
Sweet potatoes
Winter squash
Yams

Whole Grains

** gluten-free*
***can be gluten-free*
Amaranth*
Barley
Bread
Buckwheat/kasha*
Bulgur
Couscous
Corn*
Crackers
English muffin
Manoomin/wild rice*
Millet*
Muesli, granola
Oats**
Pasta
Pita bread
Quinoa*
Rice, brown*, white*,
pink*, Forbidden*,
basmati*, jasmine*,
pilaf**
Spelt
Teff*
Rye berries
Tortilla (flour, corn*,
almond flour*,
cassava*)
Wheat berries

Skill #3:

Your Turn! Assembly-Style Cooking

Fats

1-2 Tbsp or 1-2 thumb-sized servings

Nuts & Seeds

Almonds
Almond butter
Brazil
Cashews
Chia
Flax, ground
Hazelnuts
Hemp
Mixed nuts
Nut or seed butter
Peanuts
Peanut butter
Pecans
Pine nuts
Pistachios
Pumpkin
Sesame
Sesame butter/Tahini
Soy nuts
Sunflower
Walnuts

Oils

Avocado
Butter or ghee
Flax oil
Olive oil, extra virgin
Sesame
Sunflower
Walnut

Other

Avocado
Guacamole
Chocolate, dark
Coconut flakes or
shreds (unsweetened)
Coconut milk (canned)
Mayonnaise, aioli
Olives, black or green
Salad dressings

Herbs, Spices, Seasonings

to taste

Fresh or Dried Herbs

Basil
Bay
Cilantro
Parsley
Cilantro
Dill
Lemongrass
Mint
Oregano
Rosemary
Sage
Tarragon
Thyme

Spices

Anise
Black pepper
Cayenne
Cinnamon
Coriander
Cumin
Fenugreek
Marjoram
Nutmeg
Saffron
Turmeric

Spice Blends

Curry powder
Za'atar
Berbere
Others on page #35

Onions, shallots,
garlic, green
onions/scallions,
chives
Ginger
Mustard
Nutritional yeast

Cheese

Parmesan
Cotija
Feta

Vinegar

Balsamic
Apple cider
Red wine
Rice wine

Lemon or lime juice
Soy sauce, tamari,
liquid aminos
Liquid smoke
Hot sauce
Fish sauce

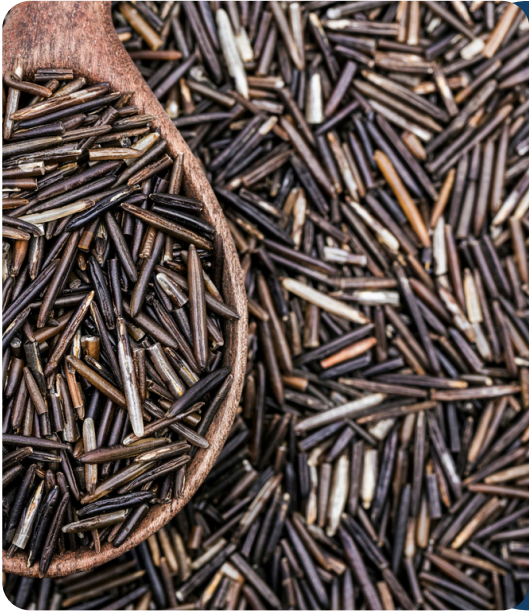
Sauerkraut, kimchi,
cortido, or other
fermented vegetable

Sesame or poppy
seeds

Skill #4:

Cooking Whole Grains and Dry Beans

To cook whole grains and dry beans is as easy as 1, 2, 3...



1. Measure out 1 part grain or bean (Ex: 1 cup). Place in a saucepan.
2. Measure out 2 parts cooking liquid (Ex: 2 cups water, broth, etc.). Add this to the saucepan. Cover the pot and bring to a boil on the stovetop. Once your cooking liquid comes to a boil, reduce the heat to a simmer and cook until done (time varies depending on the grain or bean you cook).
3. Keep in mind that the volume of your grain or bean will triple when cooked (Ex. 1 cup of dry lentils will cook into 3 cups cooked lentils).

Soaking dry beans before cooking them may improve their digestibility. Soaking also reduces the amount of time it takes for dry beans to cook. All beans benefit from being soaked, with the exception of lentils, split peas, black-eyed peas, adzuki and mung beans, which will fall apart if soaked before cooking. Using canned beans is also a good option.

- Cover big beans (black beans, cannellini, chickpeas, cranberry, fava, great northern, kidney, lima, navy, pinto, etc.) with 4 inches of water and allow to soak on your countertop for 6 or more hours.
- Drain and rinse the beans, discarding the soaking water.
- Place the soaked beans in a pot and add water to cover by 1-2 inches or twice the volume of the beans (1 cup of bean to 2 cups water). Cook as directed above.



Skill #4:

Cooking Whole Grains and Dry Beans

Cooking times will vary based on the age of the whole grain or bean you are cooking (fresher = shorter cooking time) and if you have soaked the grain or bean in advance of cooking.

Whole Grains <i>* indicates gluten-free</i> <i>**can be gluten-free</i>		Beans	
Amaranth*	20-25 min	Adzuki	40-70 min
Barley	55 min	Anasazi	60 min
Buckwheat/kasha*	15-25 min	Bean pastas	varies
Bulgur	15-20 min	Black/turtle	60-90 min
Couscous	15 min	Black-eyed peas	20-60 min
Corn polenta*	20 min	Cannellini	90-120 min
Manoomin/wild rice*	20-40 min	Chickpeas/garbanzo	120-180 min
Oats, steel-cut**	40-45 min	Cranberry	60-90 min
Oats, rolled**	10 min	Fava	60-90 min
Millet	35-40 min	Gandules/pigeon peas	60-90 min
Quinoa*	15 min	Great Northern	90-120 min

Skill #4:

Cooking Whole Grains and Dry Beans

Whole Grains <i>* indicates gluten-free</i> <i>**can be gluten-free</i>		Beans	
Rice, brown*, pink*, Forbidden*, basmati*, jasmine*	45 min	Kidney	60-90 min
Rice, white	15-20 min	Lentils, brown, green, French, yellow	30-45 min
Rice, pilaf	varies	Lentils, red, yellow	15-20 min
Rye berries	50-60 min	Lima	60-90 min
Rye, rolled	15-20 min	Mung	60 min
Spelt	40 min	Navy	60-90 min
Teff*	20 min	Pinto	90 min
Wheat berries	50-55 min	Split peas	45-60 min

Skill #5:

How to Cook Fish

These instructions can be followed whether you are cooking salmon, tilapia, cod, tuna, walleye, or another fish filet.

On the stovetop:

Pan Seared

Pat the fish dry with a paper towel. Season with salt and pepper. Heat a cast iron or other skillet over high heat. Add oil to the pan and place the fish filet in the hot oil with skin-side down (if there is skin on your filet). Cooking time will vary, but you'll know it's time to flip the filet when it easily comes away from the pan without sticking. Flip and cook until the fish is "fork tender" or starting to brown on the second side.



Poached

To poach fish, you'll cook it on the stovetop in liquid (seasoned water, broth, wine or a mixture of these liquids). The trick to poaching fish well is to cook it slowly over low heat, without a lid. Start by heating the liquid (keep the heat below a simmer), then add the fish filet. Cook at a low temperature until the inner temperature of the fish reaches 140°F.

In the oven:

Baked

Heat the oven to 400°F. Drizzle fish with oil and season to your liking. Place on a rimmed baking sheet, skin side down (if your filet has skin). Roast for 10 minutes or until the inner temperature of the fish reaches 140°F.

Skill #6:

How to Cook Chicken

On the stovetop:

Pan Cooked

Use this method for cooking chicken breast or thighs (bone-in or boneless). Pat the chicken dry, then season with salt and pepper or other spice blends. Heat a skillet over medium-high heat. Add cooking oil and carefully place chicken in the pan. Leave the chicken undisturbed for 5-7 minutes. Flip the chicken and cook until it reaches an internal temperature of 165°F. Transfer the cooked chicken to a plate or cutting board and let rest for 3 minutes before cutting.

Poached

Use skinless chicken for this preparation method, though breasts or thighs work well. Place chicken and any flavorful ingredients you are using (garlic, bay leaf, citrus peel, fresh or dried herbs, wine or beer, etc.) in a single layer in a saucepan. Cover the chicken with water and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat to low, cover the pot and cook until the internal temperature of 165°F (10-15 minutes, or longer depending on the thickness of the chicken).

In the oven:

Baked

Use breast or thigh, bone-in or boneless, skin on or skinless. Heat the oven to 400°F. Grease your baking dish with a thin layer of oil. Pat the chicken dry and season with salt and pepper (or other seasonings of your choice). Place the chicken in a single layer in the baking dish, spaced slightly apart. Bake until the internal temperature of 165°F (30-40 minutes; start checking the inner temperature after 20 minutes).



Skill #7:

How to Cook Vegetables

On the stovetop:

Steamed

Cut vegetables into uniform sizes. You can mix vegetables, but keep in mind that harder vegetables (beets, carrots, potatoes, winter squash) will take longer to cook than softer vegetables (asparagus, green beans, broccoli). Add 1-2 inches of water to a saucepan and place your steam basket inside (you do not want water in the steam basket). Cover the pot and bring your water to a boil. Place the vegetables in your steam basket, cover, and turn the heat down to medium. After 3 minutes, check the vegetables by piercing with a fork. They are done cooking when they have reached a softness that is appealing to you. Remove from heat when they still have some firmness because they will continue cooking with the residual heat.

Sautéed

Cut vegetables into uniform sizes. Heat a large skillet or wok over medium heat. Add enough oil to thinly cover the bottom of the pan. Add vegetables and stir to coat with oil. Stir occasionally until vegetables are cooked through.



In the oven:

Roasted

Heat oven to 425°F. Cut vegetables into uniform sizes. Toss with oil, salt and pepper. Spread out evenly on a rimmed baking sheet and place in the oven. Cook until easily pierced through with a fork and slightly browned on the outside. Cooking time will vary depending on the vegetables you choose and the size of the vegetables. Start checking after 10 minutes. Stir the vegetables occasionally during the cooking process.

Skill #8:

Simple Recipes for Adding Flavor

Dips, sauces and dressings can bring a lot of flavor and nutrition to meals. Instead of buying premade dressings, sauces and dips, consider adding one or two of the following to your weekly meal prep routine for dressing salads, dipping raw or cooked veggies, or drizzling over a Grain Bowl for added flavor.

Olive oil is suggested in the recipes below, however other oils can be substituted.

Dressings

Olive Oil Vinaigrette

Ingredients:

- ¼ cup red or white wine vinegar, apple cider vinegar, lemon or orange juice
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground pepper or red pepper
- ¾ cup extra virgin olive oil

Optional additions:

- 1 tablespoon jam, honey or maple syrup
- ½ teaspoon dry mustard, chopped garlic or garlic powder, dried herbs (basil, oregano, rosemary, tarragon, thyme)
- or 1-2 teaspoons minced fresh herbs

Directions:

In a mason jar, combine all ingredients, cover and shake well. Serve immediately or refrigerate up to 1 week.



Skill #8:

Simple Recipes for Adding Flavor

Tahini Goddess Dressing

Ingredients:

- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp sea salt
- 1/4 cup tahini
- 2 tsp soy sauce
- 2 Tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 2 tsp honey
- 1/3 cup water
- 2 Tbsp chopped fresh parsley



Directions:

In a small bowl with the back of a spoon (or with a mortar and pestle), mash the garlic and salt together until they form a paste. Add the tahini, soy sauce, vinegar, and honey and combine. Add the water 1 tsp at a time – just enough to make it pourable. Stir in the parsley. Refrigerate in a glass jar and use within 1 week.



Honey Mustard Dressing

Ingredients:

- 3 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 tsp white wine vinegar
- 1 tsp honey
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- sea salt
- freshly ground black pepper

Directions:

Whisk all ingredients together.

Skill #8:

Simple Recipes for Adding Flavor

Sauces



Spiced Yogurt Sauce

Stir the following into unsweetened, plain yogurt (dairy or dairy-free) to drizzle over roasted vegetables or tofu, or as a dip for fresh produce

- Ground cumin, salt and black pepper
- Curry powder, garam masala, za'atar, or any of the other spice blends listed on page 35.
- Nut butter (peanut, almond, sunflower, or other), cinnamon, and maple syrup for fruit dip.

Chimichurri

Try this traditional Argentinian herb sauce with grilled meats or vegetables.

Ingredients:

- ½ cup packed flat leaf parsley
- ½ cup packed cilantro
- 2 Tbsp. oregano leaves
- 2 cloves garlic
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 3 Tbsp. red wine vinegar
- ½ tsp. Kosher salt
- ¼ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes



Directions:

Add all ingredients to the bowl of a food processor, pulse until blended.

Skill #8:

Simple Recipes for Adding Flavor



Stir-Fry Sauce

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup soy sauce or tamari
- 2 Tbsp rice vinegar
- 2 Tbsp toasted sesame oil
- red pepper flakes, to taste
- 2 Tbsp sesame or avocado oil

Directions:

Whisk all the ingredients together.

Satay Sauce

Use the sauce as a dipper for chicken, tofu, or veggies, or try tossing it with rice or soba (buckwheat) noodles or spaghetti squash for a fun veggie-based take on peanut noodles. This recipe contains peanuts, but you can substitute sunbutter or almond butter for peanut butter, if desired.

Ingredients:

- ½ cup canned coconut milk
- ¼ cup peanut butter, almond butter or sunbutter
- 1 Tbsp. lime juice
- 2 tsp. coconut aminos or tamari
- 2 tsp. rice wine vinegar
- 2 tsp. sriracha
- 1 tsp. grated ginger or ¼ tsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp. fish sauce (optional)
- ½ tsp. minced garlic

Directions:

Combine all ingredients in a blender. Blend until smooth.



Skill #8:

Simple Recipes for Adding Flavor

Dips

Bean Dips

Bean dips are very versatile. Use them as spreads or dips with fresh or lightly cooked vegetables or whole-wheat pita bread or gluten-free crackers.



Ingredients:

- 1 15-oz can of beans or 1 1/2 cup cooked beans (chickpeas, black beans, edamame, etc.)
- 2-6 Tbsp fat (including olive oil, tahini, etc.)
- 4-6 Tbsp liquid (or more to reach desired consistency)
- Herbs, spices, and seasonings, to taste

Options:

- Traditional hummus: chickpeas, lemon juice, tahini, garlic, olive oil
- Black Bean Dip: black beans, lime juice, garlic, cilantro, jalapeno
- Pesto White Bean Dip: white beans or cannellini beans, basil, garlic, lemon juice, olive oil
- Curry Hummus: chickpeas, olive oil, curry powder, garlic

Directions:

Add all ingredients to the bowl of a food processor, pulse until blended.

Skill #8:

Simple Recipes for Adding Flavor

Guacamole

Ingredients:

- 2-3 ripe avocados
- ¼ cup chopped onions
- 1 Tbsp water
- 1 small garlic clove, chopped
- ½ cup chopped cilantro
- 1-2 limes, juiced



Directions:

1. Cut the avocados in half, remove the pits, then scoop the flesh into a blender or food processor.
2. Add the onions, water, garlic, cilantro and lime juice. Process until smooth.
3. Transfer to a small bowl, cover and chill. Use within 2-3 days.
4. To prevent browning, cover the top with a layer of oil.
5. For a chunky version, mash the avocado with a fork and finely chop the onion, garlic, and cilantro.

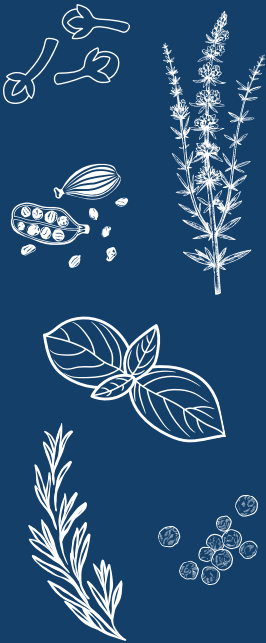
Herbed Yogurt Dip

Add 1-2 Tbsp chopped fresh herbs to a cup of unsweetened, plain yogurt (dairy or dairy-free) for dipping raw vegetables, fruits, or as a dressing for beans or Grain Bowls.

Skill #9:

Using Herbs and Spices

Herbs and spices not only make food taste good, they contain compounds that reduce inflammation, enhance the immune system, support digestion, and much more. When you make a flavorful meal, you are using the power of plants! Not only that, but seasoning foods with herbs and spices makes it easy to reduce added sugars and salt that you might find in condiments at the store.



What's the difference?

What's the difference between an herb and a spice? Herbs are the leaves of plants, whereas spices are the seeds, flowers, barks, fruit or roots.

As a general rule, dried herbs and spices are more flavorful than fresh. If a recipe calls for fresh herbs, you can substitute dried by dropping the serving size from tablespoons to teaspoons (Ex: If a recipe calls for 1 Tbsp fresh thyme, substitute 1 tsp dried thyme).

When cooking with dried herbs, add them to the dish at the beginning of cooking. Add fresh herbs at the end.

Here are some simple ways to use herbs and spices in your meals:

- Mix fresh or dried herbs, spices, or seasonings into ground meat for burgers, meatballs, satay, kebab, or meatloaves.
- Add fresh herbs with lettuce for an herby salad.
- Add curry dishes to your menu planning.
- Sprinkle roasted vegetables with any combination of spices or spice blends, like those below.
- Sprinkle cinnamon, cardamom, nutmeg, clove, pumpkin pie spice or other spice or spice blend on toast, fruit slice, oatmeal, yogurt, smoothies, etc.
- Incorporate flavorful sauces, dips and dressings (recipes on pages 28-33)
- Marinades, dry rubs on meat, tofu, or tempeh
- Drink herbal tea

Skill #9: Using Herbs and Spices

Spice Blends

Having a few tried and true spice blends in your pantry can bring flavor to even the simplest ingredients.

- **Berberé:** garlic, cumin, coriander, cinnamon, chili, nigella, fenugreek, and ajwain
- **Cajun Seasoning:** black pepper, paprika, cumin, cayenne, thyme
- **Chili Powder:** ancho chili, paprika, cumin, oregano
- **Chinese Five Spice:** cinnamon, clove, fennel, star anise, szechuan peppercorns
- **Curry Powder:** turmeric, coriander, cumin, fenugreek, red pepper
- **Herbs de Provence:** rosemary, tarragon, marjoram, sage, oregano, thyme
- **Furikake:** dried fish, seaweed, sesame seeds
- **Garam Masala:** cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, cardamom, mace, peppercorns, coriander, turmeric, cumin
- **Jerk:** Scotch bonnet peppers, cayenne pepper, pimento, allspice, nutmeg, cinnamon, garlic powder, onion powder, and thyme
- **Ras el Hanout:** cardamom, clove, cinnamon, paprika, coriander, cumin, nutmeg, peppercorn, turmeric
- **Xawaash:** cinnamon, cumin, coriander, black peppercorns, cardamom, clove, turmeric
- **Za'atar:** thyme, sesame seeds, sumac

Skill #10:

What Makes a Snack?

To match the goals for Food for Health and Healing, snacks can be considered as “mini meals.” Incorporate a source of fat and/or protein, as well as a vegetable and/or fruit to support blood sugar and hormone balance, prevent cravings and emotional eating, and help you meet your daily food goals.

Below are a number of balanced and nutritious snack ideas based on qualities. Having a variety of flavors and textures helps us feel more satisfaction when we eat. Consider what you crave to get information from your body about what it needs and wants to eat when you're ready for food.



A Note About Snacking

Snacking needs vary from one person to another, so how do you know if you need a snack? When eating balanced, nutritious meals you may find that you have less of an appetite for snacks. That's ok! Snacks may also be completely appropriate, especially if more than 4 hours goes by between meals. To eat Food for Health and Healing does not require that you are overly hungry or full. Listen to your body and feed yourself according to your body's needs.

Hunger cues from your body may be recognizable by low energy, difficulty concentrating, anxiety, lightheadedness, a hollow feeling in your stomach and other signs.

Skill #10:

What Makes a Snack?

Creamy

Half batch of a smoothie (page 11)
Yogurt with berries and slivered almonds
1/2 an avocado with whole grain crackers
Bean Dip (page 32) with fresh veggies
Mashed sweet potatoes with coconut oil or butter
Cottage cheese and fruit

Crunchy

Celery and carrot sticks with almonds
Apples with peanut or other nut butter
Frozen grapes with walnuts
Rice cakes with nut butter
Raw veggies with Herbed Yogurt Dip (page 33) and/or Bean Dip (page 32)
Nuts and dried fruit

Salty

Salt and vinegar almonds
Olives and fresh veggies
Pickled or fermented veggies with cheese
Tinned fish (salmon, tuna sardines), olives, and crackers
Steamed edamame with soy sauce
Guacamole (page 33) with corn chips and celery

Sweet

Roasted sweet potato wedges sprinkled with cinnamon
Applesauce with pumpkin pie spice
Green juice with nuts and/or seeds
Fresh fruit with Spiced Yogurt Sauce (page 30) or nut butter
Dried fruit with nuts and/or dark chocolate

Savory

Meat “roll-up” with dill pickles
Seasoned almonds and bell pepper
Cheese and cucumber
Hard boiled eggs with radishes
Bean dip with carrots

Skill #10:

What Makes a Snack?

Sour

Unsweetened yogurt with blackberries
Salt and vinegar almonds
Pickled vegetables and olives
Stuffed grape leaves with cucumbers

Cold

Smoothie
Frozen grapes with nuts

Warm

Miso soup with tofu cubes
Pureed vegetables and bean soup
Warm edamame beans
Roasted veggies with Tahini Goddess Dressing (page 29)



Skill #11: Making a Snack Board

The qualities we love in a snack can be assembled into a balanced and delicious meal that promotes health and healing. Here are some examples, but mix and match ingredients from Tip #10 on pages 37-38 to customize your own.

Snack Board	Buffalo Chicken Board	Vegan Charcuterie Board	Mexican Snack Board
Creamy	Blue cheese	Tahini	Black bean dip, guacamole
Crunchy	Celery sticks, roasted cauliflower, rye crisps	Whole grain crackers, raw veggies	Bell pepper, radishes
Salty	Chicken strips	Tapenade, roasted almonds	Corn chips
Sweet	Pear slices	Dried apricots	Mango (fresh or dried)
Sour	Buffalo sauce	Marinated gigante beans, pickled vegetables, dolmades	Lime wedges
Cold/Warm	Serve with a cold or warm beverage.		

Skill #12:

A Note on Desserts and Treats

Sweet desserts and savory treats can be included in Food for Health and Healing.



Include treats in your meal plan! Give yourself permission to enjoy these foods. Doing so can help alleviate any negative feelings about eating these foods and relieve food fixations or obsessive thoughts.



Enjoy desserts as part of a balanced meal. Treat yourself to this experience and serve yourself this treat in a bowl or plate.



When choosing a treat to enjoy, pick the one that is most delicious and satisfying for you, instead of eating a treat that is just available (Ex: donuts at work that don't look appealing).



Savor your treat, eating slowly and mindfully to experience the pleasure of it.

Skill #13:

Tips for Eating Out

Finding more plants can be possible in a number of eating environments. Here are some combinations for eating out that give you some examples to guide you the next time you eat out.

Meal	Fruits and vegetables	Protein	Beans, whole grains and root vegetables
Pizza (veggie and sausage) with salad (romaine lettuce, cucumbers, tomatoes, and balsamic vinaigrette)	Salad, veggies on pizza, pizza sauce	Cheese and sausage on the pizza	Pizza crust
Pulled pork sandwich with coleslaw and mustard with roasted brussels sprouts	Coleslaw, brussels sprouts, radishes	Pulled pork	Bun
Black bean tacos served with hot sauce, onions and cilantro, with a side of Mexican coleslaw	Coleslaw, onions and cilantro	Black beans	Tortillas
Chicken fried rice with stir-fried broccoli	Carrots, onions and other veggies in the fried rice, broccoli	Chicken, egg	Rice
Classic breakfast (hashbrowns, eggs, breakfast sausage - hold the toast) with a side salad and/or fruit	Side salad and/or fruit	Eggs, breakfast sausage	Hashbrowns

Skill #13:

Bringing Mindfulness to Meals



How we eat is as important as what we eat. As you're planning meals, don't forget to taste and enjoy the food you eat.

Here are some simple ways you can practice mindful eating:

- **Eat sitting down.** If you can, eliminate distractions so you can focus on the enjoyment of your food.
- **Eat slowly.** Allow enough time for you to eat. Eating slowly helps you tune into your body's signals letting you know that you've had enough or need more to eat.
- **Chew thoroughly.** Put your food down between bites and chew well before swallowing.
- **Engage all your senses.** What do you smell/see/taste/hear/feel with each bite?
- **Reflect:** how did you feel before, during and/or after eating?