

Most of the time, choose the nutrient-dense foods listed here. These foods nourish your body and help optimize energy, manage appetite, and promote health.

Vegetables

Fresh vegetables
Frozen vegetables
Canned vegetables, no or low sodium
Vegetable juice, low sodium

Carbohydrates

each serving size listed = 80 calories & 15 g carbs

Cooked whole grains such as whole wheat pasta, brown or wild rice, quinoa (1/3 cup cooked)
Whole grain breads, crackers, cereals (1 oz.)
Starchy vegetables including corn, potatoes, green peas, acorn or butternut squash (1/2 cup cooked)
Oats (1/4 cup dry, or 1/2 cup cooked)
Popcorn (3 cups popped)
Beans (kidney, pinto, etc.), peas (black-eyed, split), and lentils (1/2 cup cooked) - also a good source of protein
Hummus (1/3 cup) - also a good source of protein
Fresh fruit (6 oz. or 3/4 cup)
Dried fruit (2 TB)
Applesauce, unsweetened (1/2 cup)
Canned fruit, in its own juice or frozen fruit, unsweetened (1/2 cup)
Plain yogurt, non-Greek style (6 oz.)
Flavored yogurt, Greek style (6 oz.) - also a good source of protein
Cow's milk, soy milk, or rice milk, unsweetened (8 oz.)

Proteins

each serving size listed = 50 calories & 7 g protein

Chicken, turkey, beef, lamb, and pork products, including deli meats and meat jerky (1 oz.)
Seafood, including canned tuna, salmon, and sardines (1 oz.)
Cheese, including cottage cheese and ricotta cheese (1 oz. or 1/4 cup)
Eggs (1)
Edamame (1/2 cup shelled or 1 cup unshelled)
Tofu (4 oz.)
Tempeh and seitan (1.5 oz.)
Beans (kidney, pinto, etc.), peas (black-eyed, split), and lentils (1/2 cup cooked) - also a good source of carbohydrates
Hummus (1/3 cup) - also a good source of carbohydrates
Peanut butter, or other nut butter (1 TB) - also a good source of healthy fats
Plain yogurt, Greek style (6 oz.)
Flavored yogurt, Greek style (6 oz.) - also a good source of carbohydrates

Fats

each serving size listed = 50 calories & 5 g fat

Avocado (2 TB or 1/4 of a whole)
Olives (10 or 1/4 cup)
Nuts, including peanuts, cashews, almonds, walnuts, pecans, pistachios (1/3 oz. or 1.5 TB)
Seeds, including pumpkin, sesame, sunflower, flax, chia, hemp (1 TB)
Tahini (1.5 tsp)
Vinaigrette-type salad dressing (1 TB)
Nut or seed based milks, includes almond, cashew, hemp, unsweetened (8 oz.)
Oils, including olive, canola, and peanut oils (1 tsp)
Peanut butter, or other nut butter (1 TB) - also a good source of protein

Less often, choose the lower-nutrient foods listed here.

Other Carbohydrates

Refined pasta and rice (1/3 cup cooked)

Refined breads, crackers, cereals (1 oz.)

Snack foods such as pretzels, pita chips, baked chips, etc. (1 oz.)

Flavored yogurt, non-Greek style (6 oz.)

Other Proteins

Processed cheeses, including American, Velveeta, and queso (1 oz.)

Sausage, including pork, bratwurst, chorizo, Italian, knockwurst, polish, smoked, summer (1 oz.)

Higher fat deli meats, including bologna, salami, pastrami (1 oz.)

Bacon (2 slices)

Hot dog (1)

Other Fats

Butter, light butter and butter-type spreads (1 TB)

Creamy salad dressing (1 TB)

Half-and-half and heavy cream (2 TB)

Cream cheese (1 TB)

Sour cream (2 TB)

Mayonnaise (1 tsp)

"Play Foods"

Eating certain foods simply for pleasure is part of a sustainable and balanced diet.

If you love any of the "play foods" below, make some room for them.

Enjoy these foods intentionally, mindfully, and moderately.

Sweetened, caloric beverages (sweet tea, soda, energy drinks, fruit juice, etc.)

Sweets (candy, desserts, baked goods, ice cream, etc.)

Fried foods (French fries, mozzarella sticks, onion rings, etc.)

Traditional snack chips (potato chips, tortilla chips, cheese puffs, etc.)

Alcohol (beer, wine, liquor, etc.)