

# MAKEOVER YOUR MEALS



**YOUR CHALLENGE:** Choose at least one meal a day (breakfast, lunch, or dinner) to make over into a healthier option. Report the completion of your goal at [www.dmba.com](http://www.dmba.com) with a simple “yes” or “no.”

## EATING HEALTHY

Take a good look at how you currently eat, and identify which meal could use the most “lift.” When choosing your meal to make over, consider this:

- Do you skip meals? If you do, maybe start here. Skipping meals slows your metabolism and reduces energy. Often, those who skip meals overeat later in the day.
- Do you eat large portions? Portion control is one of the most important components of healthy eating. Cut back if necessary.
- Is your meal balanced? Do you have whole grains, produce, and lean protein at every meal? Create a balanced meal for maximum nutrition.



- Do you eat fried foods or refined foods? The more we eat natural foods, the more vitamins and minerals we'll take in. Pay attention to the way your food is prepared, and read food labels!

## A BALANCED PLATE

- Too often, our plates are piled high with the wrong foods. When planning your meals, keep these goals in mind: maximum nutrition, flavor, and variety.
- Balance your meals: half of your plate should be reserved for fruits and vegetables, one-fourth for whole grains, and one-fourth for protein. Let's break it down even further, meal by meal.

## A HEALTHY START

A good morning meal sets you up for a successful day. It can boost your metabolism, increase your energy, and help you maintain a healthy weight.

If you're making over breakfast, aim to include lean protein, whole grains, and produce in every breakfast. If you don't feel hungry, don't worry. A healthy start doesn't have to be huge. The key is to pick the right foods.

Here are a few ideas to help you get started:

- Yogurt: High in calcium, yogurt is a nutritious addition to breakfast. Be sure to choose a low-fat variety without added sugar. You can sweeten it by adding fresh or frozen fruit.
- Fruit: Whether it's half a grapefruit, berries sprinkled on your oatmeal, or banana sliced into your whole-grain cereal, fruit is a delicious part of breakfast that provides vitamins and antioxidants.
- Eggs: Eggs got a bad rap for their cholesterol content, but recently they're getting the nutritional thumbs up. They're a good source of protein and when prepared without added fat, they're low in calories.
- Vegetables: Veggies for breakfast? Sure thing! Try adding bell peppers and onions to scrambled eggs or mushrooms and broccoli in an omelet. A glass of 100 percent veggie juice is also a tasty breakfast addition.
- Oatmeal: Skip the instant and opt for old-fashioned or steel-cut oats. As a whole grain, oats are a slow-burning source of energy. They're also a soluble fiber, which helps carry bad cholesterol out of your bloodstream.
- Peanut butter: Top a slice of whole grain toast with a tablespoon of peanut butter. While relatively high in fat, if you keep an eye on portion size, the protein and other nutrition benefits make it well worth it.

## PERFECT LUNCHES & DINNERS

When you're trying to eat healthily, preparing meals at home is your best bet. While you can certainly find a healthy restaurant lunch or dinner, the meal you make offers economic and nutritional benefits.

Remember, you want to try to include lean protein, whole grains, and produce in your lunches and dinners.



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So whether you're preparing a new recipe or an old favorite, simple swaps here and there can make a meal healthier. When you add more nutrient-dense ingredients, you're boosting the health value of your meal.

Remember to pay attention to cooking methods—try baking, grilling, or broiling rather than frying. Here are a few more simple substitutions to use in your makeovers:

- **Lean meats:** Instead of fattier cuts, try swapping ground turkey for hamburger or making stir-fry with chicken instead of beef.
- **Whole-wheat pasta:** Besides being significantly healthier than refined versions, whole-wheat pasta is more flavorful.
- **Healthier fats:** When sautéing or stir-frying, choose olive oil. It's also great in salad dressings—and it's good for your cholesterol levels.
- **Baking swaps:** Replace half the butter or oil with no-sugar-added applesauce or half the all-purpose flour with whole wheat.
- **Less meat:** A few times a week, fix a vegetarian meal for reduced calories and fat as well as a boost in vitamins and minerals.
- **Brown rice:** Refined white rice has lost its fiber, essential fatty acid, and vitamins/minerals. Use brown rice, which retains its nutritional value.
- **Whole-wheat breads:** Opt for whole-wheat rolls and breads. Don't be fooled by packaging claims. Phrases like "multigrain" and "seven-grain" can be misleading. Make sure 100 percent whole wheat is the first ingredient.
- **Healthy seasoning:** Instead of high-sodium packaged marinades or seasoning blends, use fresh herbs, citrus, or Italian dressing.

With a few easy measures, you can ensure restaurant meals won't throw off your healthy eating habits. If the restaurant has a website, check it before you go, and review the posted nutritional details.

Healthy eating doesn't have to be boring. In fact, it can be diverse and delicious. Challenge yourself to

try new recipes, explore different ingredients, and put a healthier twist on old favorites.

## TIPS TO HELP YOU SUCCEED

- Keep it fun and interesting; explore ways you can incorporate this new healthy practice into your daily routine.
- When you finish a challenge, maintain the new healthy habit for lifelong health.
- Think of it as an investment in your good health, not a requirement.
- Keep notes on ways you feel better and share them with your family and friends.
- Invite someone to participate with you—or form a team.
- Touch base with your partner or team regularly, so you can offer encouragement and support to each other.





## WANT MORE INFORMATION?

- Features ideas for seasonal recipes, complete meals and makeovers: [www.eatingwell.com](http://www.eatingwell.com)
- Includes articles on food and a wonderful recipe section: [www.cookinglight.com](http://www.cookinglight.com)
- American Heart Association <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living>
- WebMD <https://www.webmd.com/living-healthy>
- CDC Healthy Living <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyliving/index.html>

Source: Health Enhancements Systems

*Note: If you can't complete this challenge because of a medical condition, let us know and we'll come up with an alternative for you.*



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