

Navigating Nutrition



OSMC
ORTHOPAEDIC AND SPORTS MEDICINE CENTER

If you find yourself a bit lost when it comes to nutrition, you are not alone. It can be challenging to sort through all of the information available online, on TV, or in the news to know what is actually helpful. Luckily, nutrition doesn't have to be complicated. Read below for some general nutrition tips to help you optimize your overall health. Nutrition needs are highly individualized so we'd recommend reaching out to a registered dietitian if you'd like additional guidance.

Eat regular meals. Did you know that your body requires food about every 3-5 hours? Skipping meals throws off your internal hunger and fullness cues and can set you up for overeating and unstable blood sugar. It can also result in getting inadequate nutrients. Without adequate nutrients, your body is not only more prone to injury, but it also has a harder time recovering from injuries or surgery.

Remember snacks. Most people need 1-3 snacks daily, depending on meal times. Try to include at least 2 food groups at each snack, such as carbs with protein. See the next page for some snack ideas.

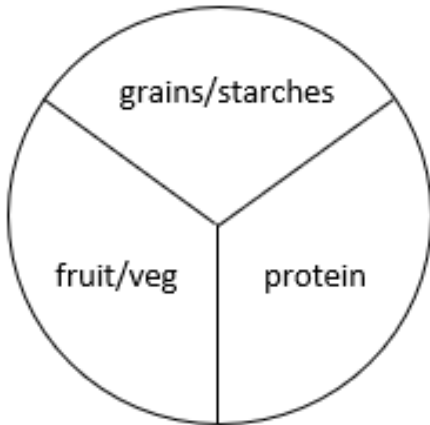
Honor your hunger. Hunger is your body's way of telling you it's out of fuel, similar to how the gas light works in your car. Ignoring hunger will lead to binge eating and, eventually, your hunger cues will stop working, making it even harder to make sure your body gets the nutrients it needs. Hunger feels different for different people. Some common signs of hunger are stomach growling, difficulty concentrating, increased thoughts about food, or a headache.

Listen to your fullness. Similarly to hunger, your body will tell you when it has had enough food for the time being. If you have a hard time knowing what fullness feels like, a few things that might be helpful are slowing down while eating, starting with less on your plate and checking in with how you feel before getting seconds, and minimizing distractions while eating. If you have a hard time stopping when you're full, remind yourself that you'll be able to eat again at your next meal or snack and can have that food again in the future.

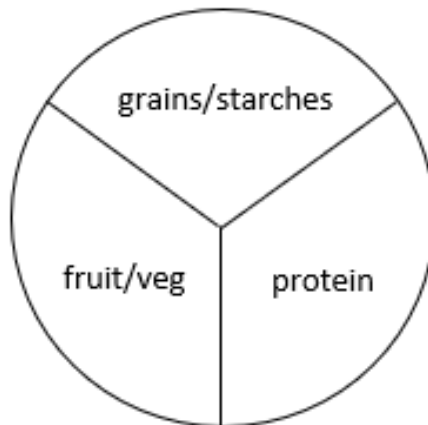
Focus on behaviors. Making changes for your overall health doesn't always result in big changes in the number on the scale. For most people, this makes them feel like the changes they've made weren't worth it, and they give up. Whether the number on the scale moves or not, adding more physical activity, eating consistently, and adding more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains are all incredibly helpful for your overall health. Rather than weighing yourself as a measure of progress, try focusing on the actual changes you're making, such as cooking more meals at home, adding a new kind of physical activity to your routine, noticing your hunger and fullness cues, or packing snacks for work so you don't get overly hungry.

Below are some general guidelines and ideas for regular meals and snacks. As a general rule of thumb, **meals should contain all of the major nutrients (carbohydrates, fats, protein)**, and snacks should contain at least two of those three.

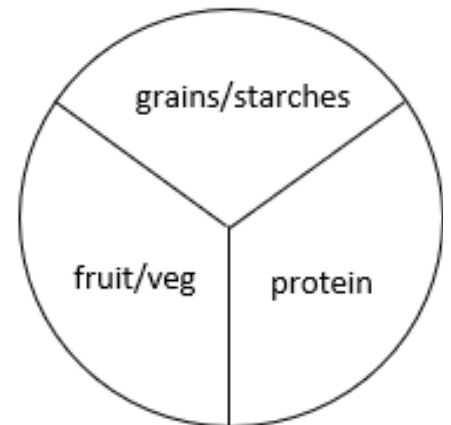
breakfast



lunch



dinner



Food Group Suggestions

carbs

(whole grain when possible) cereal, oatmeal, bread, waffles, pancakes, bagels, english muffins, pasta, rice, quinoa, crackers, tortillas, corn, potatoes, popcorn.

protein

meat, poultry, fish, eggs, cottage cheese, greek yogurt, beans, hummus, tempeh, tofu, nuts/nut butter

fruit or veg

any fresh, cooked, dried, canned, frozen, or juiced fruit or vegetable

fats

olive or canola oil, nut butter, nuts, fish, avocado, butter, etc

Snack Combination Ideas

- Fruit + peanut butter
- Chips + guacamole
- Cheese + crackers
- Greek yogurt + granola
- Granola bar + glass of milk
- Trail mix (nuts + dried fruit)
- Hard boiled egg + fruit
- String cheese + fruit
- Granola bar + string cheese
- 1/2 peanut butter sandwich
- Veggies + hummus + crackers
- Pretzels + peanut butter
- Tuna + crackers
- Cottage cheese + fruit
- Tortilla + cheese
- Oatmeal + nuts/fruit
- Greek yogurt + nuts/fruit
- Beef jerky + fruit