Quick Meal Guide

Quick + Easy Tips for Building a Balanced Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, and Snacks!







Quick Meal Guide

The USC WorkWell Center is pleased to share this guide to support faculty and staff with quick, easy, and nutritious meal ideas for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks. Use this guide to create healthy meals for you and your family!





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Breakfast

Tips and Recipes



Building a balanced breakfast

in under 15 minutes



Carbohydrates: bread

Fuel for the brain and primary energy source for the body

Fiber: bread + avocado

Important for regular digestion and promotes healthy gut microbiome
Tip: look for whole grains

Fat: egg yolk + avocado

Plays a role in energy production, brain health and hormone regulation

Protein: egg whites + bread

Vital for tissue repair and growth

Micronutrients: greens

Necessary for immune function and energy production

Building a balanced breakfast

in under 15 minutes











Overnight oats

Chocolate Peanut Butter Oatmeal

- 1/2 cup oats
- 1 tbsp chia seeds
- 2/3 cup milk of choice
- 1 tsp maple syrup or honey
- 1 tbsp peanut butter
- 2 tsp cacao powder
- Top with chocolate chips



Oatmeal with fresh fruit

- 1/2 cup oats
- 1 tbsp chia seeds
- 2/3 cup milk of choice
- 1 tbsp maple syrup or honey
- Fresh fruit (strawberry, blueberry, peach, etc.)
- 2 tbsp yogurt of choice
- · Top with granola





Smoothie Ideas



Berry smoothie

- 3/4 cup frozen fruit
- · Handful of spinach
- 1/4 cup yogurt
- 1/2 cup milk of choice
- 2 tbsp oats
- 1 tbsp chia or flax seeds



Green smoothie

- 1/2 cup frozen pineapple
- 2 cups of spinach
- 1 banana
- 1 pear
- 1 cup cold water
- 1 tbsp chia or flax seeds



Butters

Peanut butter, almond butter, cashew butter, etc.

Toppings

Nuts (almonds, walnuts, etc.), granola, seeds (hemp, chia, etc.), coconut flakes, cacao nibs

Fruit

Strawberries, blueberries, mango, kiwi, peach, etc.

Base

Yogurt





Eggs and Toast: Three Ways



Pesto, avocado, tomato, egg, chives



Hazelnut spread, sliced almonds, raspberries (or fruit of choice)



Cream cheese, cucumber, smoked salmon, red onion, capers, fresh dill



Egg + Veggie Scramble

Add your favorite vegetables!

Try adding tomato, mushroom, onion, spinach, bell pepper, parsley + others



Egg muffins

Add cheese, fresh herbs + your favorite vegetables!

Try adding tomato, mushroom, onion, spinach, bell pepper, parsley + others



Omelet

Add cheese, fresh herbs + your favorite vegetables!

Try adding tomato, mushroom, onion, spinach, bell pepper, parsley + others



Foul Mudammas



20 minutes

Ingredients

• Fava beans, 1 can

- · Garlic, 1 clove
- Tomato, diced
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Chopped parsley
- 1/2 tsp cumin, salt and pepper to taste
- · Lemon juice

Rich in fiber and plant-based protein!

- Add fava beans and 1/4 cup of water to skillet to warm. Season with cumin, salt and pepper. Mash beans with potato masher.
- Add olive oil, garlic and lemon juice.
- Top with parsley and tomato. Serve with pita bread.

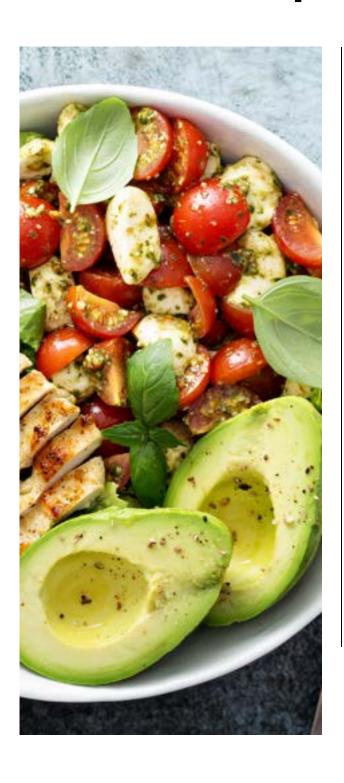


Lunch

Tips and Recipes



Lunch Tips:

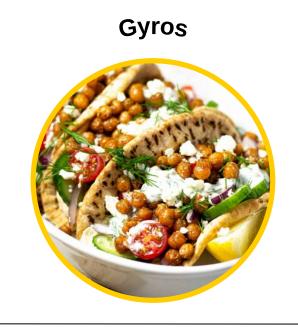


- Consider meal prepping lunches on the weekend or on your day off
- Try prepping your protein and grains ahead of time for quick assembly
- Build your own bento or lunch box
- For workday lunches, pack hardy vegetables that won't wilt (ex: broccoli slaw)

Building a balanced lunch

in under 20 minutes











Mediterranean Farro Salad



Ingredients (6 servings)

- 2 large tomatoes
- 2 Persian cucumbers
- 1/2 red onion
- 1 cup farro, dry
- 1 lemon, juiced
- 1 bunch parsley, rough chop
- 1 16 oz can chickpeas, drained
- 1/2 red onion
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1/3 cup olive oil



- Cook 1 cup of dry farro (boil, rice cooker, etc.) and let cool.
- Finely dice the red onions and tomatoes. Cut cucumber into half slices (or fine dice). Rough chop the parsley.
- In a large bowl combine chopped vegetables with the chickpea and cooled farro.
- Add olive oil and lemon juice. Salt and pepper to taste. Mix thorougly.



Gyros

Tutorial

(1) 15 minutes

Ingredients (4 servings)

- 1 can chickpeas (or protein of choice)
- Cucumbers and tomato, sliced
- Pita bread
- · Red onion, sliced
- 1/4 tsp paprika; 1/2 tsp cumin
- 1/2 tsp oregano;1 /4 tsp garlic powder; salt and pepper
- · Fresh dill and feta cheese
- 2 tbsp olive oil

- Cook chickpeas (or protein of choice) in olive oil with salt and pepper.
- Add cumin, oregano, paprika, garlic powder, and more salt and pepper.
- Paprika and cumin have flavanoids that work as antioxidants.
- Cook for a couple of minutes until chickpeas are crispy and well seasoned.
- Serve on pita bread topped with cucumber, tomato, red onion, feta and dill.



Kimchi Fried Rice



Ingredients (4 servings)

- 2 cups steamed rice (prep night before)
- 1/4 small onion, diced
- 2 tbsp olive or avocado oil
- 1/4 tsp sesame oil
- 1/2 cup kimchi, + 1 tbsp kimchi juice
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 stalk scallion
- Eggs (optional)

Instructions

- Heat wok with olive or avocado oil to sautee the onion and garlic until fragrant.
- Add kimchi and rice. Stir.
- Add sesame oil, soy sauce, scallion, salt and pepper. Stir.
 - Serve immediately. Top with a fried egg.

Great source of probiotics that support gut health!



Red Lentil Dahl



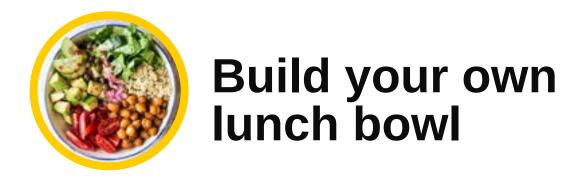
Ingredients (8 servings)

- 4 cups cooked brown rice
- 1 yellow onion, finely diced
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 1/2 cups dried red lentils
- 1 can diced tomatoes + 1 can coconut milk
- 1 tbsp garam masala + 1 tsp tumeric + 1/2 tsp chili flakes
- 1 tbsp fresh ginger
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 cups vegetable broth
- 3 cups baby spinach
- 1/2 lemon, juiced

Instructions

- Sautee onion in olive oil. Add garlic and ginger. Cook until fragrant.
- Add garam masala, turmeric, and red pepper flakes to onion.
- Add lentils, canned tomato with juices, vegetable broth, and coconut milk. Bring to boil and then lower to simmer for about 15 minutes.
- Add lemon juice and spinach, stir. Salt to taste. Serve with brown rice and naan.

Garam masala and turmeric are loaded with antioxidants that support the immune system!



Toppings

Nuts, seeds, pico de gallo, salsa, hummus, pesto, herb yogurt, balsamic, etc.

Veggies

Onion, garlic, tomato, cilantro, parsley, broccoli, bell pepper, zucchini, cucumber, sweet potato, etc.

Protein

Poultry, tofu, mushroom, fish, legume (black bean, chickpea, lentil, etc.)

Base

Grains (brown rice, quinoa, farro, etc.) or leafy greens



Pasta Salad: Three Ways



Pesto, arugula, mozzarella, artichoke, and olives



Red onion, cherry tomato, cucumber, feta, vinaigrette dressing



Red onion, cilantro, black bean, corn, cotija cheese, sour cream, and jalapeno



Build your own salad

Try prepping your salad in a mason jar strategically: greens at the top, dressing at the bottom.

Dressing

Olive oil + lemon + salt and pepper, vinegar, balsamic, etc.

Toppings

Nuts, seeds, fresh fruit, fresh herbs, cheeses, whole grains, etc.



Onion, tomato, carrot, broccoli, bell pepper, radish, zucchini, cucumber, sweet potato, etc.

Protein

Poultry, tofu, egg, fish, nuts, seeds, legumes (black bean, chickpea, lentil, etc.)

Base

Spinach, arugula, kale, endive, romaine, cabbage, etc.







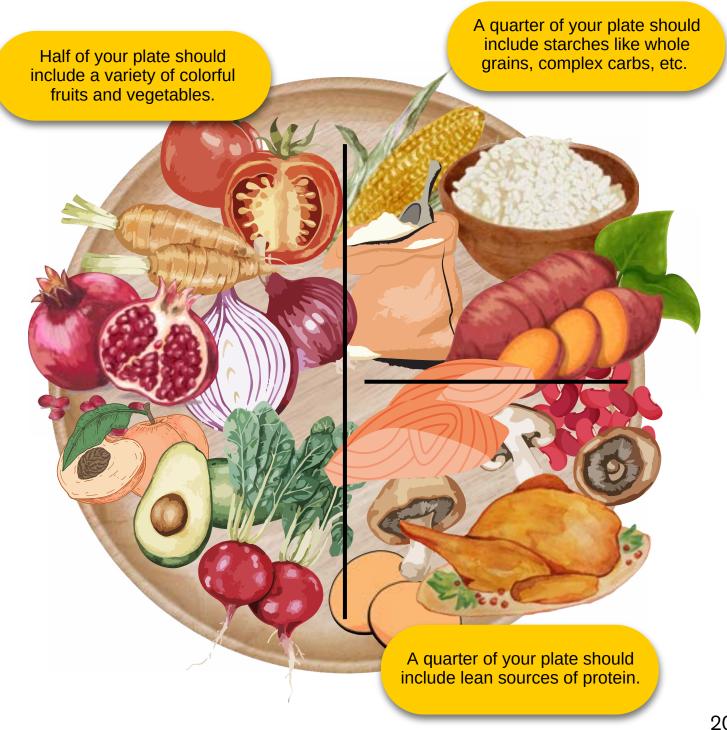
Dinner

Tips and Recipes



Balance your blood sugar

by balancing your plate!



Quick Dinner Ideas













Shredded Chicken

Add your favorite fresh herbs and vegetables!

Try adding tomato, onion, pepper, lettuce, avocado, cilantro + others

Seafood of Choice

Opt for fish/seafood lower in mercury such as salmon, cod, tilapia, shrimp, etc.





Vegetarian Taco

Vegetarian sources of protein include beans, mushrooms, tofu, lentils, seitan, etc.



Soup: Four Ways



Pozole Soup
Add your favorite fresh herbs and vegetables!

Try adding lettuce, oregano, radishes, corn, onion, pepper, avocado, cilantro + others



Pumpkin Soup



Potato Leek Soup



Chicken Noodle Soup

Add your favorite fresh herbs and vegetables!

Try adding carrots, celery, broccoli + others



Curried Butternut Squash Soup



30 minutes

Ingredients (4 servings)

- 1 tbsp coconut oil
- 2 med. shallots, thinly diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 sm. butternut squash, chopped
- 1 1/2 tbsp curry powder
- 1/4 tsp cinnamon
- 1 14 oz can light coconut milk
- 2 tbsp maple syrup
- 2 cups vegetable broth
- Toasted pumpkin seeds
- Full fat coconut milk

- Add oil, shallot, and garlic to large pot. Sauté for 2 minutes. Stir.
- Add butternut squash. Season with curry powder, cinnamon, salt and pepper. Cook covered for 4 minutes.
- Add vegetable broth, coconut milk, and maple syrup. Bring to a low boil, reduce heat and simmer for 15 minutes.
- Blend soup and add any seasonings to taste. Garnish with coconut milk and pumpkin seeds.



Fish: Three Ways



Baked Fish

Add your favorite fresh herbs like rosemary, parsley, thyme, etc!

Serve with brown rice and your favorite vegetables.



Shrimp and Pasta

Get creative with your favorite pasta of choice!

Add in your favorite vegetables, fresh herbs, olive oil, lemon, garlic, etc.



Glazed Fish

Try glazes made with gochujang, miso paste, honey, hoisin, etc.

Serve over rice and your favorite vegetables. Sprinkle with sesame seeds, furikake, green onion, etc.



Garlic Butter Tilapia



Ingredients (4 servings)

- 4 fillets of tilapia
- 1/2 tsp paprika
- 1/2 tsp dried thyme
- 1/2 tsp dried oregano
- 4 cloves minced garlic
- 4 tbsp melted butter (or olive oil)
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 1/4 tsp lemon zest
- Red pepper flakes, garnish
- · Fresh parsley, chopped
- · Slices of lemon, garnish

- Pre-heat oven to 400 °F. Season tilapia with paprika, oregano, thyme, salt, and pepper.
- Whisk melted butter, garlic, lemon juice and zest in a bowl. Pour on tilapia.
- ✓ Bake for 10-12 minutes, until fish flakes.
- Garnish with fresh parsley, red pepper flakes, and lemon slices. Serve with brown rice and favorite veggies!



Coconut Curry Salmon



35 min

Ingredients (4 servings)

- 12 oz of salmon
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1/2 med. onion, chopped
- 2 cloves minced garlic
- 2 tbsp red Thai curry paste
- 1 cup broccolini, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup carrots, julienne
- 1/2 tsp fish sauce; 1 tsp lime juice
- 1/2 tsp brown sugar
- 1 can coconut milk
- 2 tbsp fresh cilantro, chopped
- 2 tbsp fresh basil, chopped

- Add butter and oil to skillet. Once hot, cook salmon skin side down for 5 minutes. Flip and cook for another 2-3 minutes. Transfer to plate.
- Sautee onion in skillet for 3 minutes then stir in garlic and curry paste. Cook for 1 minute.
- Add fish sauce, coconut milk, brown sugar, broccolini and carrots. Simmer about 5 minutes.
- Stir in lime juice and add fish back to pan. Garnish with cilantro and basil. Serve with rice.



Korean Honey and Miso Glazed Cod



(L)

20 minutes

Ingredients (4 servings)

- 1 lb cod
- 1 1/2 tbsp rice vinegar
- 2 tbsp honey
- 1 tbsp gochujang
- 1 tsp sesame seed oil
- · Steamed broccoli
- 1 tbsp white miso paste
- 1 tsp soy sauce
- 1 tsp ginger, grated
- Beech mushrooms, optional
- Sesame seeds, green onion for garnish

- Place cod on aluminum foil lined baking sheet. Add oil to the foil and place cod on tray.
- Whisk honey, vinegar, gochujang, soy sauce, miso, sesame oil, garlic and ginger in bowl. Brush 2 tbsp of marinade onto cod. Place mushrooms on tray and broil on high for 3-5 minutes.
- Switch from broil to bake at 375 °F. Brush remaining glaze on cod and bake 5-10 minutes.
- Serve with rice, broccoli and garnish with sesame seeds and green onion.



Chili Recipes

Meat Option: Turkey Chili *Tips:*

- Consider slow cooking by prepping earlier in the day and letting the crock pot do the hard work!
- Hide some extra veggies in the chili.
- Garnish with fresh herbs like cilantro, cheese, jalapeño, avocado, sour cream, green onion, chive, etc.



Vegetarian Options

Tips:

- Same tips from above apply here.
- Vegetarian protein sources include beans (pinto, kidney, fava, navy, and black bean), tofu, quinoa, etc.
- Make sure to add some flavorful spices and garnish with peppers, herbs, cheese, etc.





Snacks

Tips and Recipes



Understanding the Labels

New Label

Nutrition Factor Servings per container Serving size 2/3 cup Amount per serving		- 1	The serving size now appears in larger, bold font and some serving sizes have been updated.
Calories 2	30	_2	Calories are now displayed in larger, bolder font.
Total Fat 8g Saturated Fat 1g	10% 5%	— 3	Daily Values have been updated.
Trans Fat Og			been apaatea.
Cholesterol Omg	0%		
Sodium 160mg	7%		
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%		
Dietary Fiber 4g	1476		
Total Sugars 12g	20%		Added sugars, vitamin D,
Includes 10g Added Sugars Protein 3g	2070	4	and potassium are now listed. Manufacturers
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%		must declare the amount
Calcium 260mg	20%		in addition to percent
Iron 8mg	45%		Daily Value for vitamins
Potassium 240mg	6%		and minerals.

 $\underline{https://www.fda.gov/food/new-nutrition-facts-label/whats-new-nutrition-facts-label}$

Understanding the Labels

Serving size 2/3 cup	(55g)
Amount per serving Calories 2	230
% Dail	ly Value'
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat Og	
Cholesterol Omg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 240mg	6%

Pay attention to the serving size. Look out for how many servings are in each package.

It is recommended to limit calories from saturated fat to < 10% total calories.
This includes food AND drinks.

It is recommended to limit calories from added sugar to < 10% total calories. This includes food AND drinks.

Try more of:

Opt for one higher in fiber and lower in sugar!







Make your own at home to reduce the

butter and salt.

Opt for lower sugar. Consider Greek yogurt for added protein.







Limit:



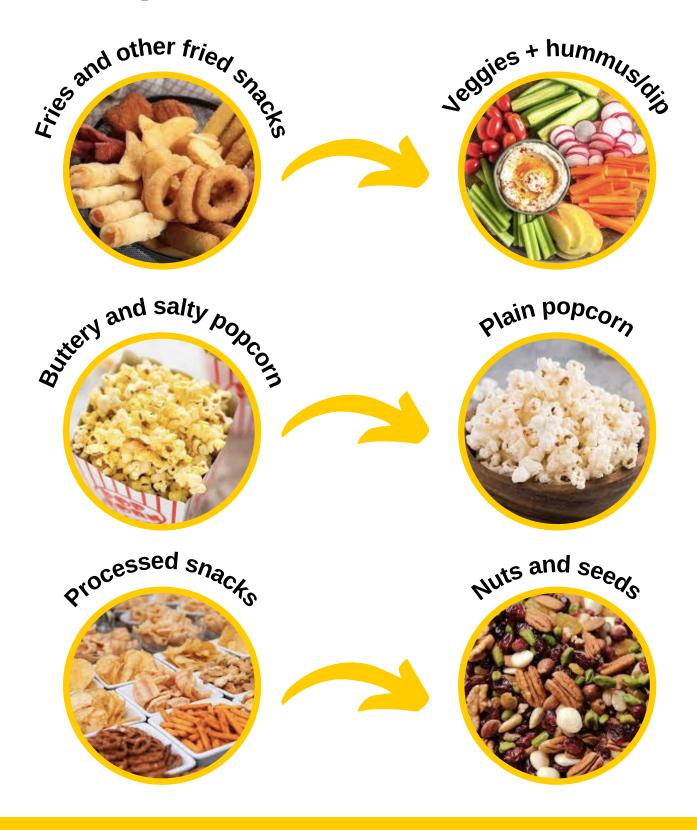
Swap this:

For this:



Swap this:

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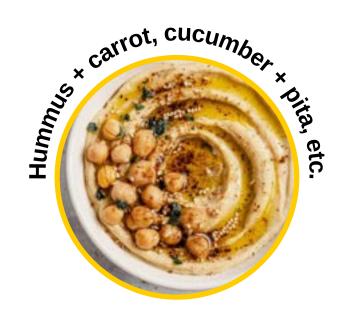


Snack Ideas











Caprese Salad



Ingredients

- 3 medium tomatoes, sliced 1/4" thick
- 12 oz fresh mozzarella, sliced 1/4" thick
- 1 bunch fresh basil
- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

- ✓ Slice tomatoes and layer on a plate.
- Layer mozzarella between each tomato slice.
- Tuck whole basil leaves in between tomatoes and cheese.
- Season with salt and pepper. Drizzle olive oil and balsamic vinegar.



Chocolate Peanut Butter Banana Bites





(I) 15 minutes

Ingredients

- 3 ripe bananas
- 1/3 cup peanut butter
- 1/2 cup dark chocolate chips
- 2 tsp coconut oil

Instructions

- Slice banana and place on parchment lined baking sheet.
- ✓ Add peanut butter to each banana and top with another banana slice.
- Let harden in the freezer for 1 hour. Next, melt chocolate and coconut oil in the microwave for 1 minute.
- Dip each banana bite into chocolate and put back in the freezer for 15 minutes.



Snack Boxes



Classic Box:

- Turkey and cheese
- Grapes
- Pretzels

Mediterranean Box:

- Carrots and celery
- Turkey
- Olives and hummus

Bagel Box:

- Smoked salmon
- Egg and cucumber
- Cream cheese and crackers



Beverage

Tips and Swaps



Beverage Ideas

Water



spa water



Tea





Try more of:



Water



spa Water



Sparkling Water

Tip: consider sweetening with monk fruit or honey.

Loaded with gut friendly probiotics!



Kombucha





Limit:



Swap this:

For this:



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