

HOW TO BUILD A MEAL



Here are some examples to get you started:

Proteins:

chicken, eggs, pork, beef, turkey, lamb, shrimp, tuna, sardines, tempeh, peanut butter, almond butter, tofu

Veggies:

asparagus, green beans, bell peppers, kale, spinach, lettuce, beets, brussels sprouts, cauliflower, carrots, celery, cucumber, collard greens, mushrooms, broccoli, tomatoes, eggplant, zucchini, jicama

Grains/Carbs:

brown rice, quinoa, sweet potato, whole grain couscous, whole grain pastas, corn, barley, whole grain bread, wild rice, potato, butternut squash, acorn squash, pumpkin, parsnips, hominy

What about beans, peas, and lentils?

Beans contain a unique combo of nutrients! (protein, carbohydrates, fiber, vitamins and minerals) So - they don't fit neatly into one of the above food groups. They are very nutritious and can be added to plenty of meals!

Hey, where's the fruit?

Fruits have similar nutritional properties to vegetables (water, fiber, vitamins, and minerals) but have more natural sugars. You can add fruit into your diet by making it part of breakfast, part of a snack, or by having it for dessert - yum!

What about dairy?

Dairy products have variable nutritional content, depending on how they are sourced and processed. They may contain protein, fats, or carbohydrates as well as vitamins and minerals. They aren't strictly necessary if you don't enjoy or tolerate them well. If you choose not to eat dairy, consume other sources of calcium such as dark leafy greens, oily fish such as sardines, or calcium fortified dairy substitutes.

Does everything really have to be whole grain?

No. If you find whole grain foods that you enjoy, eat them. If only refined grain foods are available, or you just prefer them, you can increase the fiber and nutrients in your meal by adding more vegetables instead, along with proteins and healthy fats.

Want to talk more about this?

Schedule an appointment with a SHOP Health Educator at shop.ucsc.edu