

Making Balanced Choices About Food

When it comes to food, I often get confused about what I should eat. How do I make good choices and still eat meals I enjoy?

Deciding what to eat every day can be a challenge! Rather than focusing on always making perfect choices, think about balancing your diet with foods you love and foods that are nourishing.

It's generally a good idea to refuel every three to four hours and avoid waiting until you are hungry to eat something. Protein- rich foods like lean meats, beans, eggs, and nuts will fill you up and last longer (great for late-night studying!). Keep in mind that fish, chicken, and turkey are healthier choices than beef because they are lower in fat. Also, meat can be substituted by tofu and other soy-based foods as a vegetarian option.

Some ideas to get you started:

When eating in...

- Stock your fridge with yogurt, baby carrots, apples, and cheese for a quick snack or breakfast on the go
- Choose simple recipes that can be easily prepared such as: oatmeal with fruit or nuts, steamed vegetables, and bean salads
- Use a [grocery list](#) for inspiration when shopping at the store
- Cook with a friend; you can share the chef's responsibilities and the leftovers

When eating out...

- Order an appetizer or side dish as an entrée
- Share a main dish with a friend
- Eat a sensible portion of your meal and take the rest home
- Avoid creamy sauces or gravies
- Add little or no butter to your food
- Use lemon juice and spices to add taste instead of salt
- Choose fresh fruit for dessert most often

When out and about...

- Seek out vending machines stocked with healthy options such as granola bars, baked chips, animal crackers, and pretzels
- Grab a piece of fruit. A banana comes in its own natural container; great for mess-free snacks.

| Online & Off-Campus Resources | On-Campus Resources |
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| Columbia Health – www.health.columbia.edu Go Ask Alice! – www.goaskalice.columbia.edu Get Balanced! – www.health.columbia.edu/nutrition C.R.O.W.N. - http://www.dining.columbia.edu | After Hours Clinician On Call – 212-854-9797 Counseling & Psychological Services – 212-854-2878 Public Safety – 212-854-5555 (or x99 from a campus phone) |

Last Reviewed/Updated August 23, 2011