

Patient information

Healthy Meal Ideas

Department of Nutrition and Dietetics - Aintree Hospital

It is important to eat Regular Meals when trying to manage your weight.

Here are some ideas for healthy balanced meals:

Breakfast

- Cereal (e.g. Weetabix, Branflakes, Shredded Wheat, Shreddies, Cheerios, Cornflakes, Rice Krispies) with semi- skimmed milk or low-fat/ diet yoghurt. Try adding chopped fresh or dried fruit.
- Toast with a scraping of margarine/low- fat spread and/or marmalade, jam, marmite or yeast extract.
- Toast with grilled tomatoes and mushrooms.
- Baked beans, scrambled/poached/boiled egg on toast.
- Grilled lean bacon with grilled mushrooms and tomatoes, plus toast.
- Mixed fruit and diet yoghurt.
- Bagel or teacake with a scraping of margarine/butter/low-fat spread.
- Wholegrain cereal bar and a piece of fruit.
- Glass of skimmed or semi-skimmed milk and a cereal bar.
- Glass of skimmed or semi-skimmed milk and a banana.

Light Meals

- Sandwiches using medium sliced bread or try bread rolls, pitta bread, tortilla wraps, chapattis or crusty bread. Use fillings such as tuna, salmon, lean ham or pork, chicken, turkey, egg, cottage cheese, or low-fat cheese spread. Include lettuce, tomatoes and cucumber, onion or a small side salad with your sandwich.
- Toast with one of the following: baked beans, grated cheese and tomato, sardines, mackerel, cottage cheese, poached/boiled/scrambled egg or mushrooms.

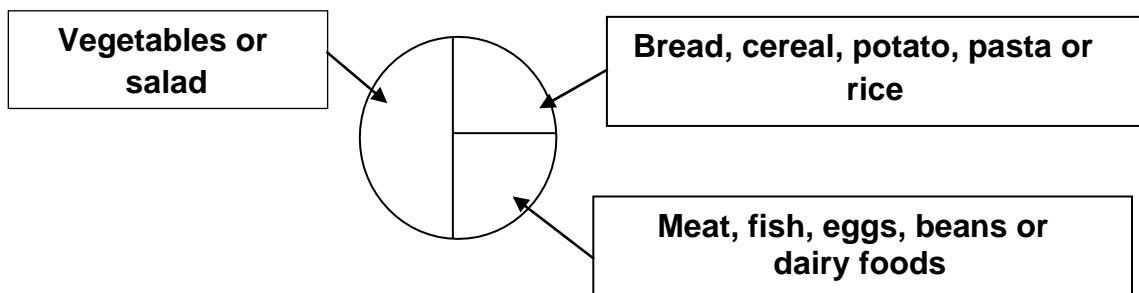
- Medium-sized jacket potato. Try the following fillings: baked beans, stir fry vegetables or cottage cheese (plain, with pineapple or chives), sweetcorn and/or tuna.
- Pasta or rice salad.
- Soup with bread. Try adding extra vegetables to the soup. If possible, go for a soup that contains pulses or meat as this might help to keep you feeling fuller for longer.
- Omelette - try with tomato, sweetcorn, mushroom, onion and herb, stir fried vegetables, or cheese. Serve with bread, new potatoes or home-made potato wedges.
- Large mixed salad with lean meat or fish. Add bread, potato, rice or pasta.

Main meals

Should consist of foods from the following food groups (see the balance of good health)

- Bread, cereal, potato, pasta, rice, chapatti, cous cous, yam, sweet potato, tortillas.
- Fruit, salad or vegetables.
- Meat, fish or alternatives; or milk and dairy foods.

Approximately half of the plate at a main meal should consist of fruit, vegetables or salad and the smallest portion should be the meat, fish or alternative, or milk/dairy portion. The plate below shows this.



- Lean chop/small chicken breast/lean cooked meat or steak/fish. Cook meat or fish preferably by baking, grilling, microwaving, pressure cooking or dry frying.
- Serve with vegetables/salad and boiled/mashed/jacket potato.
- Minced beef or turkey, or chicken breast cooked with herbs, onion, mushroom, carrots and/or other vegetables, plus tinned tomatoes and tomato puree, or tomato based sauce. Serve with rice, pasta, jacket potato and extra vegetables/salad.
- Stir fry with vegetables and chicken/meat/fish and rice/noodles.

- Chicken, turkey, lean pork or beef casserole. Add vegetables, beans and/or pulses. If adding pulses/beans reduce the meat quantity. Serve with potato, rice or pasta.
- Grilled breaded fish/chicken with vegetables/salad and potatoes.
- Lasagne (using lean mince, dry fried and low fat cheese) with vegetables or salad.
- Ratatouille (mixed tomato, onions, mushrooms, peppers, carrots and courgettes simmered together with tinned tomatoes and tomato puree until tender) and pulses or beans with rice/pasta.
- Kebabs made with pitta bread, lean meat and salad.
- Tuna pasta bake with salad/vegetables.
- Fish/Shepherds/Cottage pie with vegetables/salad.
- Chicken or fish skewers: alternate pieces of chicken breast or fish with tomatoes, onions, peppers and mushrooms, grill, bake or BBQ these and serve with a jacket potato.

How would you use these meal ideas to make up a daily eating plan?

Select a meal from each category: breakfast, lunch and dinner. Spread these out evenly through the day for example, 8am, 1pm and 6pm.

In between, you could choose two healthy snacks to prevent you becoming over hungry during the day, plus one treat food each day or every other day (approx. 100-150kcal).

See the example plan below:

Breakfast - 7.30am

- Porridge made with skimmed or semi-skimmed milk topped with raisins and 1 teaspoon of honey. 150mls orange juice and a cup of tea or coffee with milk.

Mid-morning - 10.30am

- Coffee made with semi skimmed or skimmed milk and no sugar and an apple.

Lunch - 13.30pm

- 1 Pitta bread packed with tuna mixed with 2 teaspoons of light mayo and half a can of sweetcorn. Serve this with a side salad of lettuce, cucumber and tomatoes, 2 tablespoons of reduced fat hummus and carrot sticks. Followed by 1 medium banana and a diet yoghurt. 1 bottle of low sugar fruit squash.

Mid-afternoon Snack - 4.00pm

- Cup of tea and 1 slice of malt loaf with 1 teaspoon of low-fat spread.

Evening Meal - 6.30pm

- Cottage pie with vegetables, followed by a small tin of peaches in juice, a low calorie jelly and 1 tablespoon of crème fraîche. Glass of water or low calorie fruit squash.

Supper - 8.30pm

- Glass of flavoured or plain sparkling water and a fun sized chocolate bar or a slice of toast with low fat spread.

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Further information

Department of Nutrition and Dietetics

Aintree Hospital

Lower Lane

L9 7AL

Tel: 0151 529 5980

Author: Therapies Department

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