

# Some Tips for Health Eating

At the Sargent Choice Nutrition Center, we love food. As Registered Dietitians, we are often asked how to make healthy eating work, especially when life gets in the way. We recognize that most people want eating well to taste delicious and for healthy food to be accessible for all, regardless of busy schedules or conservative budgets. Odds are, you probably want this too. Here are some of our favorite tips for making it all work.



**Stock Up.** One of the best ways to assure you have the necessary tools for healthy eating is to be prepared with ingredients on hand. Weeknights are tough, especially with Boston's traffic. If you arrive home famished and lack healthful ingredients to prepare a quick meal, you might find yourself turning to something that's more convenient, but less nutritious.

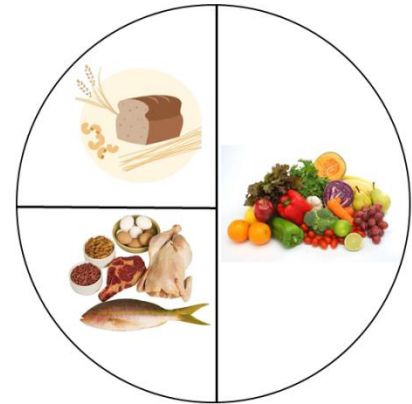
Set yourself up for success by stocking a healthy kitchen and grocery shopping weekly. Our [healthy shopping list](#) is a good place to get started. If you find it difficult to get to the grocery store, utilize a delivery system, like [Peapod](#), which will help eliminate one of the barriers to healthy eating. Don't underestimate the helpfulness of prepping your produce ahead of time! If the carrots are peeled or the red peppers are julienned, you're more likely to make a choice that aligns with your goals. When we are hungry, we usually aren't in the mood for chopping veggies!

**Supersize It.** Consider areas where you can bump up the nutrition of your regular meal. Frozen veggies can help. Take pasta, for example – you can double the size of the entrée, keep the carbs to a reasonable amount and increase the nutrient value by adding frozen veggies you have on hand. Frozen berries are available year round and can add a bit of oomph to your cozy bowl of oatmeal. And when take-out is a must, mixing in a bag of frozen veggies can also add filling power and help you feel satisfied with the right proportion of food.

**Get Inspired.** It's ok to ask for help as you find your inner Chef – we love the blog [The Kitchn](#). Using their how-tos, (with step-by-step visual aids!), you can roast an affordable whole chicken, which can provide you with multiple meals for the week. Repurpose the chicken meat into weekday lunches such as chicken sandwiches on whole grain bread, chicken fajitas, or chicken soup.

**Make it Taste Good!** Get creative with your spices. It can be tough to cut down on salt and butter without adding something else. Often overlooked, spices can boost flavor and as a bonus, are packed full of health promoting antioxidants. Turmeric, cayenne, cinnamon, and oregano, just to name a few, can amp up the flavor of your meals, which makes it so much easier to forget what you're missing.

**Plate it Up.** Now that you've prepared a nutritious, tasty meal, aim for the right proportions and consider three guidelines. **Fill ½ your Plate with Colorful Fruits & Vegetables.** Produce provides health promoting nutrients in a filling package. **Add Whole Grains or Starchy Vegetables to ¼ of the Plate.** These carbohydrates will provide your body and brain with energy. For starchy vegetables, think potatoes, peas, squash and corn. **Add Protein to Round It Out.** Fill the last quarter of your plate with lean or plant protein – this will help you feel satisfied and will make your satisfaction and energy last until your next meal or snack.



Check out [this chart](#) to help simplify matters! With this approach, you can be confident that you're maximizing nutrition and satisfaction and there's no need to worry that you're getting too much of any one thing.

We hope these tips help to kick start your nutritious habits or give you the encouragement you might need to keep going. As always, the Registered Dietitians at the SCNC are more than willing to help you work toward your goals. Let's simplify healthy eating. SCNC RDs offer a variety of services including individual nutrition counseling and specialized seminars. Common referrals include overweight and obesity, blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes, polycystic ovary syndrome, eating disorders, celiac disease, food allergies and digestive disorders/FODMAP. Participating insurance providers are Aetna, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, Tufts Health Plan and United Healthcare. Additional specialty areas include healthy meal planning, vegetarian and vegan meal planning and sports nutrition. To schedule a time to talk to one of our Nutritionists, [contact us](#) or call 617-353-2721. Be well!

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