

Men'sHealth

BREAKTHROUGH

**Nutrition
Plan**

FOR EVERY MAN

FROM THE EDITORS OF **Men'sHealth** MAGAZINE

EXPERT ADVICE YOU CAN TRUST— FROM MEN'S HEALTH!

Men's Health is committed to offering responsible, practical advice for the intelligent man—supported by professionals and legitimate scientific research.

Before you undertake a new health program or fitness regimen, we encourage you to discuss your plans with your health care professional, especially if you have not exercised for several years, are over 35, or are overweight.

The information here is designed to help you make informed decisions about your health. It is not intended as a substitute for any treatment prescribed by your doctor. If you suspect that you have a medical problem, please seek competent medical care.

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PRIME-TIME NUTRITION

Reading that french fries aren't as good for you as a baked potato is hardly startling. By the time you are an adult, you know that eating well is an important contributor to how you look and feel. But what is prime-time news is how what you eat can help you accomplish certain goals—for example, losing weight, building muscle, or keeping your immune system strong and healthy. That's the genesis of the *Breakthrough Nutrition Plan for Every Man*—we give you the very latest research on how your food choices affect your health, growth, and well-being.

Crash course in weight loss. In the first section of this booklet, we present powerful help for those of you who want to drop a couple of pant sizes. More than just flashy stories on morning talk shows, this information includes the latest on low-carb diets and tells you why they really work.

Strong muscles need strong food. Are you lifting weights in hopes of building a sculpted body? You probably already know that eating meat is essential for building muscle. But did you know that fats are important as well? Get the latest news on how to build a lot of muscle without adding a lot of fat—and, conversely, how to hold onto the muscle you've already got if you're pudgy around the waist. We simplify it with formulas that will tell you exactly how many calories you need to consume to gain muscle or to lose fat. Then we make it even easier by supplying you with sample eating plans.

Stop disease before it starts. This section provides groundbreaking news on the mystery of inflammation—the cause of many major conditions. Scientists are finding that chronic inflammation can cause the body to attack itself with friendly fire. Learn how the wrong kind of diet can set that spiral in downward motion, increasing the risk of heart attack, stroke, and other disease. Then learn which foods offer protection, lowering risks for the major diseases men are prone to, especially as they grow older. And because guys like to eat, but not necessarily to cook, we've thrown in some great ways to make meals taste better while giving you a healthy dose of nutrition.

Last but not least, in case cooking is your thing, there is a bonus section of great recipes, each annotated for its particular nutrition benefit. Each is easy to make and hard to put down.

Here's to your health!

Goal: Weight Loss

There is no one thing that causes men to gain weight. For some, it may be a lack of exercise or lifestyle choices; for others, it's genetics or family history, or a combination of any or all of those factors. But the overriding reason we get fat is simply because we consume too many calories.

Wait a minute, you say—there's nothing *simple* about it. Hey, if it were that easy to deny ourselves, we'd all look like gods. But probably one of the most interesting breakthroughs in dieting is that calories aren't the primary focus of some new and very successful weight-loss plans. In fact, how *much* you eat may not be as crucial to weight loss as *what* you eat.

For starters, fats are no longer the bad boys of the food world, lurking in the food aisles with lots of calories and not much more. And eating lots of carbohydrates—even healthy vegetables and grains—may pack on the pounds as readily as cheese and steaks do. In fact, researchers are finding that certain carbs cause more metabolic problems in weight control than any other food you put in your mouth.

There are low-carb diets helping people lose weight and cure their cravings for the first time in their lives. The Atkins Diet was the first to focus on fats and protein as the basis of its success. More recently, the South Beach Diet, which is a modification of the protein-good carbs/bad carbs premise, has had amazing success.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MUSCLE IN WEIGHT LOSS

According to *The Testosterone Advantage Plan*, a diet-and-exercise book written by Lou Schuler with Jeff Volek, RD, PhD, Michael Mejia, and Adam Campbell, you want to add as much muscle to your body as possible because that will speed up your metabolism and lead the assault on your body's fat. And protein will speed up your metabolism and slow down your appetite. It will also make you feel full faster than either carbohydrates or fats.

Need more convincing? Your body uses more energy to digest protein than it does to process carbohydrates or fat, according to Douglas Kalman, RD, a spokesperson for the American College of Sports Medicine. "That means that the more protein you eat, the harder your body has to work to digest it, and the more calories you'll burn in the process," he says. When researchers at Arizona State University compared the benefits of a high-protein diet with those of a high-carbohydrate diet, they found that people who ate a high-protein diet burned more than twice as many calories in the hours following their meal as those eating carbs.

Finding the Good Carbohydrates

You don't have to forgo carbohydrates, but there are good ones and bad ones. The carbohydrate foods you should concentrate your diet on are those that keep your blood sugar steady for a few hours after you eat them.

Here's how it works: All carbohydrates, including the lactose in milk, the starch in a bagel, the sucrose in table sugar, are converted by your body into glucose, or blood sugar. This is our primary source of energy. All of the carbs you eat turn into glucose, but only

WHAT TO EAT

Breads: Pumpernickel, sourdough

Grains: Barley, parboiled rice, bulgur, kasha

Pasta: Angel hair, linguine, and other thin strands; bean threads (cellophane noodles); whole grain spaghetti

Cereals: Rice bran, unsweetened high-fiber (all bran) cereals

Vegetables: Sweet potatoes, yams, green peas, tomatoes

Fruits: Mangoes, bananas, kiwifruit, oranges, grapes, apples, pears, strawberries, dried apricots, peaches, plums, cherries

Snacks: Cheese, nuts, olives

Protein foods: Unsweetened peanut butter, beans, eggs, unsweetened soy milk

Miscellaneous: Low-fat yogurt, foods sweetened with sucralose, saccharin, fructose, or aspartame

WHAT TO EAT

- Lean beef
- Chicken breast
- Turkey breast
- All types of fish

58 percent of the protein and 10 percent of the fat you eat is converted. So carbohydrates are often regarded as energy foods. Carbs also turn into sugar very fast, faster than protein or fat. That's why when you down a candy bar when you are hungry, you feel full quickly. You are raising your blood sugar.

Now it gets really interesting. Although all carbohydrates are converted to glucose and raise your blood sugar, not all do it at the same rate. And it's not as simple as saying it's the refined carbs that do it the fastest. Researchers have found that this isn't always the case. They have developed a system called the glycemic index (GI), which ranks carbohydrate-containing foods according to how quickly they raise your blood sugar (with pure glucose given the highest ranking of 100) within a 2- to 3-hour period after consumption. The higher the GI, the quicker the food breaks down and jacks up your blood sugar. The lower the number, the more gradually the food is absorbed and the more slowly it raises your blood sugar. The result is that it keeps you feeling fuller longer, and you are less likely to start hitting chips and dip a couple of hours after eating. These are good carbohydrates.

Also playing a role in this chemical reaction is insulin. Insulin is

a hormone that is fine in moderation, but not in excess. Glucose stimulates the release of insulin by the pancreas. The function of insulin is to grab the glucose and deliver it to your body's cells, where it's either converted into energy or stored as fat (which it will be if there is already more than enough glucose available to meet current needs).

Fats That Fit Your Diet

Until recently, fat was considered the primary culprit in making people fat, and high-carb diets were the standard. The result? Americans have just gotten fatter. In addition, adult-onset diabetes has become more widespread.

What went wrong? First, it was thought that the new low-fat American diet would mimic the low-fat, high-carb regimen of countries like China and Japan, which had very low heart attack rates. But the U.S. food industry stepped in to provide us with low-fat foods that tasted good. It created delicious, highly processed foods, including cookies and baked goods prominently (and accurately) advertised as low fat, no cholesterol. This is the source of the “empty calories” nutritionists decry. In whole foods, the sugars and starches are bound up with the fiber and nutrients, so when we eat whole grain rice, we get the entire package. Processing removes the fiber (and hence, the nutrients) in order to make that rice easier and faster to cook. But as a result, all we get is the starch and the calories—empty of the necessary fiber and nutrients.

In addition, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) diet pyramid was built on a base of the so-called “complex carbohydrates”—bread, pasta, rice. Americans took it to mean that they could eat these foods in abundance and still live thin, healthy, and happily ever after.

Make that *fat* ever after. It turns out that the United States and the northern European countries with the high fat intake and high heart attack rates also had the lowest levels of fiber in their carbohydrates. By contrast, less-developed countries with high-carbohydrate, low-fat diets had *lots* of fiber in their carbs. In the 1990s, the Harvard School of Nutrition, under the guidance of Dr. Walter C. Willet, looked at the correlation between fiber and heart attack rates. The finding: When people eat high-fiber carbs such as vegetables and unprocessed grains and flour, the danger of

THE GOOD OILS

They've all got the same number of calories (120 per tablespoon), but they aren't all equal in other aspects. Here's a breakdown of their monounsaturates (best), polyunsaturates (good), saturates (bad), and how to use each oil in cooking.

> Olive oil. 77 percent monounsaturates, 9 percent polyunsaturates, 14 percent saturates. This is your healthiest choice, but the different types have their own advantages and disadvantages when it comes to cooking. **Extra-virgin** is very rich in flavor and expensive, so it's best for uncooked dishes and flavoring, such as on salads. **Virgin** olive oil is slightly more acidic and tolerates heat better, so it's good for sautéing. **“Light”** refers to the oil's color, not its fat content; use it for frying and baking.

> Canola oil. 62 percent monounsaturates, 31 percent polyunsaturates, 7 percent saturates. It's flavorless but holds up fairly well in heat, making it ideal for frying, sautéing, and baking.

> Corn oil. 25 percent monounsaturates, 62 percent polyunsaturates, 13 percent saturates. It has a mild flavor and doesn't hold up well in heat, so it's best used in dressings or light frying.

> Walnut oil. 24 percent monounsaturates, 66 percent polyunsaturates, 10 percent saturates. It has a rich flavor but breaks down in heat. It's best used in dressings, sauces, and baking.

> Soybean oil. 24 percent monounsaturates, 61 percent polyunsaturates, 15 percent saturates. The flavor is bland, but it tolerates heat well; use it for sautéing and frying. **Note:** This is labeled as “vegetable oil” on packaging.

most dietary fat becomes minimal. Only saturated fat remains a predictor of heart attacks, and even then not a very impressive one.

Sure, ounce for ounce, fats have more calories than carbs. We've always known this, but we've misunderstood the significance. We took it to mean that carbs are less fattening. In reality, the opposite may be true. When we eat fats, we become satiated. As a result, we know when to stop eating.

Fill Up on Whole Foods

Here's an incontrovertible fact: To lose 1 pound, you need to burn an extra 3,500 calories or take in 3,500 less than usual (or do a combination of both). That's total calories, not just fat calories. Somewhere along the line, people came to believe that low-fat and reduced-fat foods are magic weight-loss remedies. Not so. For example, switching to low-fat chocolate chip cookies will only save you 8 calories per 1-ounce serving.

For a dietary strategy that works better than any reduced-fat plan, eat low-calorie, high-density foods—bulky foods that fill you up without adding tons of calories. The easiest way to do that: Pick whole foods rather than processed foods whenever possible. Rich in fiber, they take longer to digest and make you feel fuller longer, so you'll eat less. Studies show high-fiber diets help people curb hunger, absorb fewer calories, and lose weight.

HOW TO LOSE 1 POUND A WEEK

Here are eight great examples of how to shave 200–300 calories in a day. Simple daily subs like these can shed 10 pounds in 16 weeks. Add in calories burned by bike riding just 30 minutes a day (250–300), and you'll lose a pound a week.

Instead of	Eat	and Save (calories)	while Gaining (grams of fiber)
Apple juice (8.5 oz.)	Apple	42	4.0
Potato chips	Boiled potato	40	0.0
Corn chips (1 oz.)	Corn on the cob (w/salt and pepper)	46	6.0
Blueberry pie (1 packaged)	Blueberries and Grape-Nuts (½ cup each, w/water nuked)	103	0.8
Klondike Bar	Frozen fruit bar	79	2.7
Peanut butter crackers (6-pack)	Whole wheat bread with peanut butter (1 slice, 2 teaspoons)	42	5.0
Eggo banana waffles (2)	Banana	95	0.3
White pasta (1 cup)	Bulgur (1 cup)	205	0.0

THE 3-COUNT PLAN

Maybe you don't want to be bothered with counting calories or points or know you won't be satisfied with puny portions. If you're committed to losing weight, but can't commit to giving up your favorite foods, try the "three-food rule." Instead of focusing on all the things you can't have, this revolutionary approach actually encourages you to eat more. And it *actually* works.

Developed by Orlando-based nutrition counselor Karen Beerbower, RD, the three-food rule is simple: **Every time you eat, choose a combination of three food items. Each item should come from a different food group,**

and one item must be a protein. That's it. "It's a rule with no exceptions—and exceptional benefits," says Beerbower, author of *Setting Places* (Nutritional Guidance, Inc., 2000), who developed the rule to teach her clients how to eat more healthfully. Unexpectedly, many of them also lost weight—sometimes a lot of weight—as a result.

How It Works

The rule works because it gives you structure, satisfies your appetite with a healthy variety of foods, and allows you to eat all the foods you crave. Want a doughnut? Fine, but also have a glass of milk and an orange. Macaroni and cheese for dinner? Great. Just include two more items, such as fresh green beans and an apple. If you want seconds on the mac and cheese, that's okay too, but you must have seconds on the beans and apple as well. Pick from these food groups: fruits, vegetables, dairy, grains, and meat (includes fish, eggs, nuts, legumes).

"People can't believe I'm actually telling them to eat **more** food,

WHAT TO EAT

Here are examples of quick three-food snacks:

- > String cheese, cherry tomatoes, grapes
- > Yogurt, crackers, carrot sticks
- > Hard-cooked egg, banana, trail mix

but the idea is to satisfy your hunger and dissuade you from eating when you're just bored," Beerbower says. When midmorning hunger pangs hit, for instance, you may try to satisfy yourself with just an apple. But if that doesn't do the trick, you grab some pretzels, then a muffin, and then some M&M's. "You'll actually eat fewer calories in the long run by having a well-thought-out snack."

Likewise, say it's 3 PM, and you're just bored. Normally, you might take a vending machine break. But with the three-food rule, you can't just grab a Snickers for instant gratification. You have to do a little work to come up with two other foods, one of which is a protein. You're forced to think about what and why you're eating. "If you're not hungry, you'll be more likely to decide the snack isn't worth the fuss and skip it and the calories," Beerbower says.

And even if you eat all three food items (sure, it's more calories than if you just had the candy bar), you'll be fuller longer and more likely to eat less later. So over time, you're eating fewer calories.

Protein Power

It's the secret of protein, once again. The three-food rule also helps you feel more satisfied and less hungry because you're eating the proper amounts of protein, says Beerbower. Protein slows digestion and increases satiety.

"Clients never come in and say, 'I just ate six broiled chicken breasts, boy, am I stuffed,'" she says. When you overeat, it's almost always on starchy, sweet, or salty snacks. With the three-food rule, you can still have those treats, but the addition of a protein food breaks the craving and stops you from falling into a carbohydrate fog.

Protein also helps maintain lean body tissue, and it assists in the formation of important compounds that supply energy and sharpen your mental focus and cognitive skills. Good sources include meat, eggs, dairy products, fish, seeds, nuts, and legumes.

SO LONG TO SUDS

If you are serious about losing weight, you should know that people who drink the most alcohol have larger waistlines in relation to their hips than those of teetotalers. In other words, the beer belly is not a myth. Apparently, alcohol deposits fat in the midsection, which puts men at risk for liver disease and increased risk for heart disease.

TURN UP THE BURN

These foods are like speed for your metabolism. Eat them, and you're guaranteed to burn more calories, just by sitting there. Although the boost is temporary, if you eat a few of these snacks during the day, in time you will lose weight. And that's if you're doing nothing.

Whole grain cereals. These are complex carbohydrates and fiber that pump up metabolism by keeping insulin levels low after you eat.

That's good, because spikes in the production of insulin send a signal to the body that it's time to start storing fat. And in order to stockpile fat, your body has to slow down your metabolism, causing you to burn fewer calories, says Margaret McNurlan, PhD, a professor of nutrition and medicine at the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

Besides helping to keep insulin production down, eating breakfast can also help stoke your daily calorie burn. When the U.S. Navy studied the metabolisms and eating habits of a group of its personnel, it found that eating breakfast helped raise the men's metabolisms by as much as 10 percent. "By skipping meals, you slow down your metabolism and prime your body to store fat," says McNurlan.

Calcium. This mineral is a metabolic trigger as well. A University of Tennessee study found that dieters who consumed between 1,200 and 1,300 milligrams (mg) of calcium a day lost nearly twice as much weight as dieters getting less calcium. An 8-ounce glass of milk contains about 200 mg of calcium.

Jalapeño, habanero, and cayenne peppers. These contain capsaicin—the chemical that gives them their bite. A study from the late '80s found that eating a single spicy meal can boost your metabolism by up to 25 percent, with the spike in calorie burning lasting for up to 3 hours after you finish eating. More recently, a study from Laval University in Quebec found that men who consumed coffee plus red pepper—packed snacks and meals were able

to burn nearly 1,000 more calories a day than a control group.

Green tea and coffee. These beverages contain caffeine, which helps speed up your heart rate. The faster your heart beats, the more calories you burn.

The EGCG in these drinks works in a similar way, but instead of revving up your heart, it causes your brain and nervous system to run more quickly—again helping you burn more calories.

In studies, researchers found that a combination of caffeine and a 90-mg dose of EGCG taken three times a day can help you burn an extra 80 calories a day. And that's just when your body's at rest. A study conducted by the Canadian

government found that soldiers who consumed caffeine in the 12 hours prior to a physical-fitness test not only were able to work out longer before becoming exhausted, but also consumed more oxygen while working out. The body's oxygen requirements are directly related to the speed of your metabolism, so the more oxygen you use, the more calories you burn during your workout.

WATER AND WEIGHT LOSS

If you are increasing your protein intake, you should be aware that you will lose a few pounds of water almost instantly. This is one reason why high-protein diets have such dramatic results in the early stages.

There's a vanity angle at play too. When you don't drink enough water, your body actually retains fluid, making you look tired and puffy. But when your body gets enough water, it doesn't bother holding on to any extra.

Most guys need 5 to 6 pints of fluid a day. That's 80 to 96 ounces. The easiest way to make sure you get enough is to get yourself a quart container, fill it up, and down it three times a day.

Goal: Bigger Muscles

To build your muscles, you need a strength training program. You also must give your muscles extra calories—that is, you must eat more calories than you burn off. There isn't any magic ratio of protein, carbohydrate, and fat that will optimize muscle gain. Simply eat enough food while working out regularly, and you will gain weight.

Some newcomers to strength training find that their bodies respond so rapidly to the muscle-building workout stimulus that they build muscle and lose fat simultaneously, with a gain or no change in overall body weight. Most guys aren't so lucky. If you've been training consistently for at least a year, you'll have to accept that when you increase your calorie intake to gain muscle, you'll also gain some fat. So at some point, you'll need to concentrate on pure fat loss by creating a calorie deficit.

You decide how to schedule your muscle-building and fat-loss phases. You do a workout program while eating more, switching to a fat-loss phase only after completing your program. Or you can eat less during your program, to cut weight throughout. A third option is to jump-start fat loss by cutting calories when you first start a program, increase calories in the second and third (hypertrophy and strength) stages to bulk up a bit, and then cut again in the fourth, power phase.

Looking for news on losing weight fast? Check the [Weight Loss Bulletin](#) for the latest info on breakthrough diets.

HOW MUCH TO EAT

It's easy for us to say "Eat more to gain muscle" and "Eat less to lose fat." That still leaves you with a big question: more or less than what? You need a baseline number to start with.

So whip out the calculator, and let's figure out that magic number.

Step 1:

Your weight in pounds ____ \times **11** = ____ **Your Basic Calorie Needs**

This calculation tells you the amount of energy you'd burn without eating or exercising. It reveals your basic calorie needs—the caloric cost of being you.

Step 2:

Your Basic Calorie Needs ____ \times **caloric cost of your activity level (see chart below)** ____ % = ____ **Your Metabolic Rate**

Since you do eat and exercise, the total number of calories your body burns in a day is higher than your basic calorie needs. How much higher depends on your age, the amount of muscle you have, and the intensity at which you make that muscle work. Multiply your basic calorie needs by one of the following percentages to estimate the number of calories you burn metabolically. (Note that these percentages are averages; your actual metabolism may be faster or slower than these typical rates.)

ACTIVITY LEVEL	AGE		
	< 30	30-40	> 40
Mostly sedentary	30%	25%	20%
Moderately active	40%	35%	30%
Dedicated exerciser or athlete	50%	45%	40%

Your basic caloric needs ____ \times caloric cost of your activity level ____ % = ____

Step 3:

Your Basic Calorie Needs ____ + **Your Metabolic Rate** ____ = ____ **Your Maintenance Total**

This sum reveals how many calories you need just to maintain your current body composition, without growing muscle or shedding fat.

Step 4:

Your Maintenance Total ____ + **500** = ____ **To Gain Muscle**

To build muscle, increase your daily calorie intake by 500 calories.

Step 5:

Your Maintenance Total ____ - **500** = ____ **To Lose Fat**

To lose weight, subtract 500 calories a day.

The amount of energy in a pound of fat equals 3,500 calories, so in a perfect world, creating a daily surplus or deficit of 500 calories would allow weight gain or weight loss of 1 pound a week. This equation is most accurate when you try to lose weight. Muscle gain is less predictable than fat loss, because adding calories and moving a heavier body both speed up your metabolism.

Let's run an example. Say you weigh 165 pounds, you're under 30, and you're extremely active, lifting 3 days a week and playing sports or doing some other type of intense exercise on other days. You want to gain some solid muscle mass.

Step 1: $165 \times 11 = 1,815$

Step 2: $1,815 \times 0.5 = 907.5$

Step 3: $1,815 + 907.5 = 2,722.5$

Step 4: $2,722 + 500 = 3,222.5$

In other words, you need to eat more than 3,200 calories a day to gain muscle mass.

Now say you're a 45-year-old, 230-pound guy who's mostly sedentary and wants to lose weight aggressively—2 pounds a week.

Step 1: $230 \times 11 = 2,530$

Step 2: $2,530 \times 0.2 = 506$

Step 3: $2,530 + 506 = 3,036$

Step 4: $3,036 - 1,000 = 2,036$

WHAT TO EAT

During a strength-training regimen, your first dietary consideration is to get enough protein, either to build muscle or maintain muscle while shedding fat. We recommend close to a gram of protein per pound of body weight.

If you're a lean, very active guy trying to pack on muscle, you should hedge your bets with more than a gram of protein per pound, since extra dietary protein increases protein synthesis in the body.

At the same time, you need plenty of easily available fuel in the form of carbohydrate. (The more intense the activity, the more carbohydrate your body uses for energy.) Without a lot of carbs, you run the risk that your body will dip into your protein reserves for the energy it needs. Those protein reserves are in your muscles—the last place from which you want to donate energy.

Finally, you need enough fat to help produce testosterone and other anabolic hormones. And the fat can be used for energy, too, especially during any low-intensity activities—shooting hoops, playing golf, riding a bike.

When trying to shed fat, you have a slightly different set of concerns. You need protein to maintain your muscle even though you can't expect to gain muscle mass while trying to lose 2 pounds a week. You want those pounds to come entirely from your fat stores, so you shouldn't eat a lot of carbohydrate. Eating carbs signals your body to burn carbs. Eat fat, though, and your body will be more willing to use fat for energy.

However, you shouldn't completely forgo carbohydrates. You need some for energy during exercise; you need fruits, vegetables, and whole grains for health reasons; and you don't want to feel deprived of the foods that comprise the vast majority of the available calories in the food chain. You're already cutting out a large chunk of your daily calories—don't pile on needless suffering by eating like a freak.

Does all this mean you have to follow a formal diet, counting every calorie? We think the answer is yes. If you're trying—and failing—to grow muscle or lose fat, you probably do need to follow a carefully calculated diet, at least for a while. Start by determining your actual food intake: Keep a 3-day food diary, making a list of

everything you eat during that 72-hour period. Use a good calorie-counting Web site, such as www.usda.gov, to figure out your average daily calorie intake. Then you'll be able to cut or add calories as necessary to reach the total you calculated back on page 16.

A simpler strategy is to examine your diet for less healthful foods and replace those with better ones, using the chart below.

Bad Foods	They're Bad Because . . .	Except . . .	Better Foods
PROTEIN			
Beef or pork ribs Brisket Ground beef Pork sausage	Very high in saturated fat, which is linked to heart disease; goes down so fast your body doesn't have time to activate its appetite-controlling mechanisms		Eggs Fish, including water-packed canned tuna Lean cuts such as sirloin, flank, or tenderloin 90% lean ground beef or turkey, chewed slowly Reduced-fat lunchmeats (roast beef, turkey, ham) Skinless chicken or turkey breast Turkey sausage Whey-protein or whey-and-casein-protein supplements
STARCHES			
Pasta Potatoes	Quickly digested, leaving you feeling hungry again soon after. Best to eat carbohydrate that packs some fiber, because fiber slows the emptying of food from your stomach, making you feel fuller longer; fiber is also linked to a lower risk of heart disease	Immediately before or after a workout, when you can combine them with good protein such as eggs or low-fat dairy products	Rye bread Sweet potatoes Whole grain breads, pastas, rice Whole wheat baked tortillas Whole wheat pitas All-Bran Fiber One Grape-Nuts Plain old-fashioned oatmeal (not instant) Raisin bran Shredded Wheat Shredded Wheat 'N Bran White rice
Sugar-laden or low-fiber breakfast cereals			
White bread			

Bad Foods	They're Bad Because . . .	Except . . .	Better Foods
DAIRY			
Whole milk and other full-fat dairy products	High in saturated fat		2%, 1%, or fat-free milk and other dairy products
FRUITS			
Dried fruit, such as raisins and prunes	Too easy to eat too much at one sitting		Apples Bananas Blackberries Blueberries Cherries Grapefruit Kiwifruit Oranges Pears Plums Raspberries Strawberries
VEGETABLES			
Carrots Corn	Relatively high in sugar and low in nutrients		Asparagus Avocado Broccoli Brussels sprouts Cauliflower Eggplant Green beans Lettuce (the darker, the better) Mushrooms Onions Peas Peppers Spinach Tomatoes Zucchini
NUTS AND SEEDS			
Macadamia nuts			Almonds Brazil nuts Peanuts (technically a vegetable, but are usually included in this category) Pecans Sunflower seeds Walnuts

Bad Foods	They're Bad Because . . .	Except . . .	Better Foods
SNACKS			
Chips, pretzels	Even low-fat chips are nothing but extra carbohydrate, usually laden with salt that causes your body to retain water and look fatter than it actually is	At a party, a few chips can go a long way if you dip them in guacamole, which is rich in monounsaturated fat (the same good fat found in olive oil)	Apples, peanut butter, string cheese—foods with as many (if not more) calories but with fat and protein to help you feel fuller longer
BEVERAGES			
Apple juice Flavored iced tea Juice drinks	Apple juice is high in fructose, the one sugar that doesn't trigger an insulin response, meaning it doesn't shut off your appetite; plus, fructose is more easily stored as fat		Coffee (limited amounts) Crystal Light Diet soda Herbal tea Pure fruit juice (limited quantities) such as orange juice or grape juice Tea Unsweetened seltzer Water
Soda	Most sodas are sweetened with high-fructose corn syrup		
FATS AND OILS			
Butter Coconut oil Corn oil	High in saturated fat High in omega-6 fatty acids, which can trigger inflammation	Used sparingly, butter can turn a slice of whole grain toast into a decent snack since it's flavorful and the fat helps you feel full longer	Benecol spread Canola oil Flaxseed oil Olive oil Peanut oil Sesame oil Smart Balance spread
Margarine	High in trans fats, thought to be even more unhealthy than saturated fat		
Vegetable shortening			

WHEN TO EAT

The benefits of eating the right foods diminish if you don't get the frequency and timing right. These two factors can be summed up pretty easily: Eat five or six small meals throughout the day, whether your goal is pure muscle growth (without significant fat accumulation) or pure fat depletion (without significant muscle loss).

Think of your body as a fireplace, suggests Douglas Kalman, RD, a spokesperson for the American College of Sports Medicine who helped compile the preceding charts. Would you expect a fireplace to burn consistently throughout the day, keeping your living room at a steady temperature, if you threw logs into it two or three times a day and left it alone the rest of the time? Hell, no. If you wanted the room to remain at a consistent, comfortable temperature, you'd replenish the tinder every couple of hours. And you'd never throw a huge stack of wood on the fire at any one time—the room would get too hot.

Now you know why it seems that lean, muscular people are always eating. When you're trying to build muscle, frequent small feedings allow you to get enough calories throughout the day without ever wolfing down 1,000-calorie meals. When you're trying to lose fat while sparing muscle, five or six small meals and snacks at regular intervals let you eat less overall without feeling ravenous and deprived.

Here's the best, simplest way to schedule your meals.

- › Eat your first meal as soon as you can after getting up in the morning—you want your fire to start burning as quickly as possible.
- › Try to eat every 3 hours after that.
- › Have a pre-workout snack or drink about an hour prior to exercise and a post-workout snack or drink within 1 hour of completing your exercise.

Your body needs carbohydrate and protein right before a workout and then again soon after. Most research shows that a carbohydrate-protein ratio of between 2-to-1 and 4-to-1 works best. You don't need fat, since it could blunt the fat-burning, muscle-building effects of growth hormone.

You can eliminate macronutrient guesswork by using the prepackaged powders and bars you find in GNC and other sports-supplement outlets—these products are formulated to the proper ratios. You just have to read (and understand) the nutrition information on the labels. Here's a quick tutorial: The first number in the chart is always fat, and the last is protein. Carbohydrate is listed in the middle, and total calories are listed to the left or above the chart.

A post-workout shake is one of the greatest pleasures of the muscle-building process—provided, of course, that your shake tastes like something other than chalk. Here are a few recipes we like, courtesy of Kalman. Each has a 2-to-1 carbohydrate-protein ratio, with just enough fat to provide some flavor and texture.

The Basic Bodybuilder (187 calories)

- 1 teaspoon protein powder in the flavor of your choice
- 1 cup 1% milk
- 1 banana

The Grapeful Blend (330 calories)

- 1 scoop vanilla-flavor Met-Rx Protein Plus
- 1 teaspoon flaxseed oil
- ½ cup fat-free, sugar-free plain or vanilla yogurt
- 1 cup grape juice

The PB Shake (245 calories)

- 1 teaspoon protein powder
- 1 teaspoon natural peanut butter
- 1½ cups fat-free milk
- 1 banana

SAMPLE MEAL PLANS

Muscle-Building Plan

Here's an example of a 1-day muscle-building meal plan featuring the healthful foods and schedule that we recommend, again provided by Kalman. Its 3,271 calories include about 44 percent carbohydrate (a whopping 358 grams per day), 24 percent protein (an aggressive 192 grams), and 33 percent fat (a reasonable 119 grams). Note that it doesn't include a pre- or post-workout shake, so if you choose to take advantage of those, you'll have to cut back on some of the other food.

Breakfast

Omelette made with 1 whole egg and 3 egg whites, ½ cup diced mushrooms and peppers, and 1 ounce reduced-fat cheese
2 slices whole grain toast
6 ounces orange juice
Water

Mid-Morning Snack

1 cup reduced-fat yogurt

Lunch

Grilled skinless chicken breast
½ cup brown rice
1 cup steamed mixed Italian-blend vegetables
Small side salad with 1 tablespoon olive oil-and-vinegar salad dressing
Water

Dinner

8 ounces grilled sirloin steak
1 baked sweet potato
1 cup steamed mixed vegetables, such as broccoli and cauliflower

Small mixed-green salad with 1 tablespoon olive oil-and-vinegar salad dressing
Water

Nighttime Snack

1 apple
1 tablespoon natural peanut butter

Fat-Trimming Plan

Here's a day's worth of fat-trimming, muscle-maintaining meals totaling 2,039 calories, with 30 percent carbohydrate (150 grams), 40 percent protein (209 grams), and 30 percent fat (67 grams, which will help you stay fuller longer and maintain your testosterone levels).

Breakfast

Scrambled eggs made with 1 large egg and 4 egg whites
2 links turkey sausage
1 cup 1% milk

Mid-Morning Snack

1 packet Meso-Tech meal-replacement supplement
1 apple

Lunch

Sandwich made with 2 slices multigrain bread, 6 ounces fat-free turkey lunchmeat, 1 tablespoon mustard, 2 slices tomato, and ½ cup spinach or other dark green leafy vegetable
1 cup fat-free milk

Mid-Afternoon Snack

3 pieces string cheese
1 cup 1% milk

Dinner

Hamburger made with ½ pound 90% lean ground sirloin on multigrain roll with 1 teaspoon mustard, 1 teaspoon ketchup, 2 slices dill pickle, and 1 large slice tomato

Water

The preceding chapter is adapted from The Book of Muscle, by Ian King and Lou Schuler, © 2003 by Rodale Inc. Available at menshealth.com or wherever books are sold.

WATER AND MUSCLE

Because muscle is approximately 80 percent water, “even a change of as little as 1 percent in body water can impair exercise performance and adversely affect recovery,” says Jeff Volek, RD, PhD.

If you are working out, you’ll need to increase your hydration needs because of sweat. On an ordinary day, you would need 5 to 6 pints of fluid per day; on workout days, you’ll need an additional 2 to 3 pints, or about a gallon. So fill a quart container with water four times a day, and chug it.

Want to get the most out of your muscle-building workout? Just [Ask the Muscle Guy](#). Lou Schuler, the *Men’s Health* fitness expert, can solve your workout dilemmas.

Goal: Preventing Disease

It’s time to turn the spotlight on fruits and vegetables. You’d think that, after reading about how good protein and fats are at making your body look and feel strong, these card-carrying carbohydrates aren’t worth a second look. But these are the foods that can really help you live longer because they contain vitamins, minerals, and other vital nutrients that you can’t get from other foods or in a pill.

While an all-around healthy diet—one that’s rich in fruit and vegetables, whole grains, lean meats, but avoids sweets and processed foods—makes sense for the average guy, other factors can be at play in determining your health. One is genetics—you may have inherited a condition that’s compromising your well-being, or you may worry that you’ll develop the same high cholesterol levels or blood pressure levels your father had. While you have some control over environmental or lifestyle factors, you **always** can control what you pile on your plate. These are the latest reports from researchers on what might just help you overcome your parents’ legacy.

THE MYSTERY OF INFLAMMATION

Any assault on your body, large or small—from a razor burn to a rattlesnake bite—puts your immune system on sudden, high alert.

You see one result: a red, painful, hot wound. What you can't see is infection-gobbling macrophages and natural killer cells and T cells that blast infectious invaders with a lethal burst of toxic chemicals.

Short-term inflammation is a good thing. It heals a cut, for example, in a few days and does a good job of it. But in a dramatic series of discoveries from the frontiers of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and cancer, scientists have uncovered inflammation's dark side. Chronic inflammation can't turn itself off, and it attacks the tissues it's trying to save. "Our own defense mechanisms bombard us with friendly fire," says Peter Libby, MD, chief of cardiovascular medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, and a professor at Harvard Medical School.

"We already knew that inflammation was a key player in more famously inflammatory conditions, such as rheumatoid arthritis, asthma, multiple sclerosis, and inflammatory bowel diseases such as Crohn's disease," says Libby. "Now, we were finding it in some surprising places." This discovery is opening up phenomenal new ways to predict, prevent, and treat heart attacks, strokes, and diabetes.

What's gone wrong? Our diet, for one thing. People eat too much fat, too many calories, and too much of the wrong foods. Here's what happens.

Heart-Stopping Plaque

A man can have healthy cholesterol levels (total below 200, LDLs under 100) and clean-as-a-whistle arteries—yet still have dangerous plaque deposits growing inside his artery walls. In fact, half of all heart attacks happen to people with normal or low cholesterol—and two out of three happen without major artery blockages.

The inflammation link: A fatty, foamy sludge, plaque is formed when bad-guy LDLs are attacked by macrophages (the infection-

gobbling Pac-Men of the immune system).

"Plaques can grow for decades, undetected," Libby says. Eventually, immune chemicals inside plaque can erode its protective covering, releasing substances that create blood clots. A big clot can cause a heart attack or stroke.

A Cancer Trigger

Many long-accepted causes of cancer, including exposure to toxic chemicals, the sun's ultraviolet rays, and some infections, may actually work by keeping the immune system switched on for months or years. An "overcooked" immune system may end up feeding and protecting young cancer cells.

This insight could lead to promising new treatments: COX-2 inhibitors—anti-inflammatory drugs first used as arthritis painkillers—could help prevent and treat colon, uterine, and some lung cancers. COX-2s are also being studied against cancers of the breast, esophagus, skin, prostate, and bladder. These drugs block an enzyme that prompts inflammation and cancer growth.

Some cancers seem to start in cells already damaged by inflammation: For example, esophageal cancer risk is higher in people with severe heartburn; colon cancer rates are higher in people with inflammatory bowel diseases; and prostate cancer risk rises if you have prostatitis, for example, says Lorne J. Hofseth, PhD, a National Institutes of Health cancer researcher.

Instigator of Diabetes

At the 2003 American Diabetes Association meeting, researchers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention predicted that one in three people born in 2000 will develop diabetes in his or her lifetime. Currently about 90 percent of diabetes cases are type 2 (non insulin-dependent variety), associated with poor lifestyle choices.

What makes a person with type 2 diabetes stop responding to insulin, the hormone that sends blood sugar into every cell?

The inflammation link: Recently, Steven E. Shoelson, MD, PhD, of the Joslin Diabetes Center and Harvard Medical School, and others have used that clue to find the link. In new research, they've seen that cytokines—proteins that help orchestrate inflammation—

also interfere with insulin's own signals. Cells cannot absorb blood sugar. Eventually, blood sugar levels begin to rise, leading to diabetes. Even more disturbing: These aren't normal cytokines but extra ones produced by body fat itself, says Shoelson.

And instead of limiting their interference to areas where the immune system is repairing damage, these extra cytokines can cause your body to resist the effects of insulin even in places with no other signs of inflammation.

The Foods That Inflamm

These are some of the dietary triggers for chronic inflammation.

High-fat, high-calorie meals. When researchers from the University at Buffalo, State University of New York, fed volunteers a 900-calorie fast-food breakfast (hash browns and two egg-and-English-muffin sandwiches), then examined their blood, they found high levels of inflammatory markers for the next 4 hours.

"If people eat fast food—type meals every 3 to 4 hours, as many do, they're constantly setting the stage for more inflammation," says lead researcher Paresh Dandona, MD. Refined carbohydrates (think doughnuts and sugary soft drinks) play a role too.

The body's own fat cells. These fat droplets churn out more of those pro-inflammatory proteins known as cytokines. "I'm convinced that some of the inflammation we see in overweight people can be traced back to fat tissue itself," says Libby.

LDLs. Experts once believed that LDL cholesterol clogged arteries the way rust builds up inside a pipe. The truth is far worse: LDLs burrow into artery walls, setting off a massive, prolonged immune-system counterattack that leads to heart attacks and strokes and contributes to high blood pressure. In some people, this may happen even when LDLs are at what's considered a healthy level (100 mg/dl or lower).

Add in other factors—stress, lack of exercise, and low-grade, long-term infections such as gum disease, the flu, herpes simplex cold sores, and ulcer-causing *Helicobacter pylori* infections that all churn out inflammatory substances that may keep the immune system on high alert—and it's a wonder a guy can make it through each day.

You can start with what you put in your mouth. While scientists search for medicines that can prevent or treat the inflammation that

fires up heart attacks, stroke, diabetes, and cancer, you can start taking preventive measures today—beginning with your diet.

Strategy: Pump up the produce

Produce is loaded with protective, inflammation-stopping phytonutrients, including antioxidants, which disarm cell-damaging free radicals. Brightly colored fruits and vegetables are packed with flavonoids, antioxidants that also block production of inflammation-promoting hormones. Meanwhile, raspberries, raisins, and prunes also contain small amounts of salicylates, aspirin-like compounds that can slow down the efforts of an enzyme called COX-2 to make inflammatory pain messengers.

What to eat: Eat five to nine servings of fruits and vegetables a day. Make sure you get a variety—nine apples won't do the trick.

Quick and easy ways to get them in:

- ▶ Frozen flavonoids. Wintertime berry-lovers can head for the supermarket's frozen-food case for blueberries, blackberries, cherries, and strawberries.
- ▶ Broccoli, zucchini, and green peppers in tomato sauce. All contain salicylates, which, even in tiny amounts, may calm inflammation.

Strategy: Choose good fats, lose the bad

Healthy omega-3 fatty acids help your body make anti-inflammatory substances called eicosanoids (eye-kah-sa-noids). They're chemical messengers that tell the immune system what to do.

What to eat: Walnuts, canola oil, cold-water fish such as salmon and sardines, and pumpkin seeds and flaxseed.

Quick and easy ways to get them in:

- ▶ A tablespoon of ground flaxseed on breakfast cereal
- ▶ A handful of walnuts (10 halves) for a snack
- ▶ A salmon salad sandwich for lunch (salmon from a can or pouch, reduced-fat canola-oil mayo, a little pickle relish); eat fish at least twice a week
- ▶ Cook with canola oil
- ▶ Omega-3-enriched eggs, such as Eggland's Best

Eat less of these: Corn, safflower, sunflower, and sesame oils. They're full of omega-6 fatty acids, the building blocks for the inflammation-promoting variety of eicosanoids. "When humans started to evolve, we ate about equal amounts of omega-3 and

omega-6 fatty acids,” says Ruth DeBusk, PhD, RD, a geneticist and clinical dietitian practicing in Tallahassee, FL. “Today, we eat 10 to 25 times more omega-6s, because they’re found in so many processed foods. The idea is to strike a better balance.”

Skip these: Hydrogenated fats, or trans fats, often used in crackers, cookies, and other baked goods, interfere with the body’s ability to produce and use healthy fats. To judge a food’s trans-fat content, look for the words “hydrogenated” or “partially hydrogenated” on the label. Typically, stick margarine contains a lot of this “hard” fat. The good news is that by 2006, the FDA will require nutrition labels to include the amount of trans fat, in addition to saturated fat.

Strategy: Go with whole grains

A small study of overweight people found that those eating whole wheat bread, brown rice, and oatmeal—instead of white bread, white rice, and breakfast cereals made from refined grains—reduced their blood levels of C-reactive protein, a sign of inflammation, by 30 percent.

What to eat:

- › 100% stoneground whole wheat bread
- › Fast whole grains, such as quick brown rice, whole wheat couscous, whole wheat pasta, and bulgur
- › Old-fashioned oats

WATER AND HEALTH

If you become dehydrated, you become more susceptible to colds, flu, and other infections. On the other hand, real health benefits accrue when you keep downing water. A study of more than 47,000 men sponsored by Harvard University found that for every 8 ounces of fluid downed, the risk of bladder cancer is lowered by 7 percent. The study also found that high fluid intake reduces risk for kidney stones. And researchers at Loma Linda University found that men who drank five or more 8-ounce glasses of water a day were 54 percent less likely to suffer a fatal heart attack than those who drank two or fewer.

You can tell if you are dehydrated by the color of your urine. If it is dark and has a strong odor, you are running low on fluids. However, if you have to take a bathroom break every 15 minutes, you can safely guess you’re overdoing it.

Strategy: Drink smarter

Lots of beverages contain flavonoids—powerful antioxidants.

What to drink:

- › Green or black tea
- › Orange or cranberry juice
- › Red wine, which contains the powerful antioxidant resveratrol. Up to two glasses a day for men can be protective; also, purple grape juice made from Concord grapes

Strategy: Serve up soy foods

Two soy compounds—genistein and daidzen—are anti-inflammatory, soaking up free radicals. They also help blood vessels stay flexible (which lowers risk of blockages from clots).

What to eat:

- › Soy crumbles instead of ground meat
- › Tofu cutlets instead of chicken
- › Soy sausage and burgers in place of the beef- and pork-based varieties

For the latest news, check out the [Health Bulletin](#), updated daily with up-to-date health news and medical breakthroughs.

MAGIC RATIO PLAN: 2 TO 1

Before dishing out your next meal, try this amazingly simple concept: divvying up your plate. By dividing it into two sections, you may help lower your risk for cancer, heart disease, and other common killers.

The American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR) in Washington, DC, recommends starting with a standard 9- or 10-inch dinner plate. “Plant-based foods such as vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and beans should cover two-thirds or more of the plate. Meat, fish, poultry, or low-fat dairy should cover one-third or less of the plate,” explains Melanie Polk, RD, director of nutrition education at AICR.

These plate strategies fight disease because of all the fruits and vegetables they include, says James Shikany, DPH, assistant professor of medicine, division of preventive medicine, University of Alabama at Birmingham. “Studies of diet and disease indicate that the quarter of the population with the lowest intake of fruits and vegetables has double the rate of the most common cancers, such as colon, breast, and prostate,” he says. Be sure to include cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli and cabbage; spinach, kale, and other dark, leafy greens; orange-fleshed fruits and vegetables such as sweet potatoes, carrots, peaches, and citrus fruits. “Each of these groups contains its own disease-fighting compounds,” Shikany explains.

Use these tips whenever you eat.

Breakfast plates

- › Fruit-topped whole grain cereal with milk and a glass of orange juice
- › Vegetable-stuffed three-egg-white omelette with whole grain toast and fruit or juice
- › Two whole grain waffles smothered in chopped fruit with yogurt or milk
- › Fruit or juice with a small bran muffin and low-fat milk

Lunch plates

- › Sandwich filled with two or three slices of lean meat, poultry, a few spoonfuls of reduced-fat tuna salad, or a veggie burger patty, with a salad, fruit salad, or vegetables
- › Black bean, lentil, or other bean-based soup with a salad or side dish of vegetables or fruits
- › Baked potato with a cup of broccoli or other vegetable and reduced-fat cheese
- › Large salad topped with grilled chicken/lean beef/seafood (deck-of-cards-size portion) and one or two slices of whole grain bread
- › Burrito. One tortilla stuffed with beans and chicken with a salad or large side dish of vegetables or fruits

Dinner plates

- › Traditional meat and potatoes. About half of the plate: salad or cooked vegetables; one-third to one-quarter of the plate: deck-of-cards-size fish, poultry, or lean meat; final quarter: rice, roll, polenta, or other starch.
- › Lasagna, tuna noodle casserole, or other starchy mixed dish. Make it about one-third of the plate total, no more than a cup’s worth, and fill the other two-thirds with salad or vegetables.
- › Stir-fry. Make it three-quarters vegetables and one-quarter meat, poultry, or seafood. Fill the plate three-quarters with stir-fry and one-quarter with rice.
- › Pasta. Stretch 1 or 1½ cups of pasta with an equal amount or more of vegetables. Throw in a few pieces of shrimp, chicken, or soy “meat” for protein and flavor. Sprinkle Parmesan or low-fat cottage or ricotta cheese on top.

Need a healthy snack? [The Nutrition Bulletin](#) gives the latest tips on what’s good for you.

EAT TO BEAT PROSTATE CANCER

Eating beans of all kinds, as well as soybean-derived foods, cruciferous vegetables (like broccoli, cauliflower, brussels sprouts), and yellow-orange vegetables (like corn and carrots) appears to help protect men from prostate tumors or elevated prostate-specific antigens (PSA).

In a recent study, the protective effects of eating certain vegetables cut across ethnic and racial lines. The dietary habits of more than 1,600 white, African-American, Japanese, and Chinese men in the U.S. and Canada with prostate cancer were compared with age-, race-, and ethnically matched healthy men. The men who ate more vegetables of all sorts were much less likely to be among the cancer patients.

Interestingly, this study replicated the results of several others in finding little protective effect from tomatoes, or for any kinds of fruits. (The jury's still out on the issue of tomatoes' protective effect, though.) This doesn't mean you should trade fruits for vegetables; just be sure to get between five to nine servings of both vegetables and fruits every day.

Soy. A small study at the UC Davis Cancer Center suggests that eating soy may help lower PSA levels in men diagnosed with prostate cancer. Sixteen men who were not receiving treatment, instead practicing "watchful waiting," were given 5 grams a day of genistein-concentrated polysaccharides for 6 months. Of the 13 men who stayed in the program, eight men's PSA levels dropped anywhere from 3 percent to 61 percent.

Fish. Eating fish three or more times per week may lower risk of prostate cancer. Compared to men who ate fish less than twice a month, men eating the higher amount had 44 percent less risk of metastatic prostate cancer. The results were from a 12-year study of nearly 48,000 men.

EAT TO BEAT HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

When the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute tested the DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diet, the results were dramatic. Blood pressure reductions showed up within 2 weeks.

Here's an overview of the diet. The number of servings given is per day, unless noted otherwise.

Grains and grain products

7–8 servings

Good choices: Whole wheat bread, cereal, popcorn, oatmeal

Vegetables

4–5 servings

Good choices: Tomatoes, squash, broccoli, spinach, green beans, sweet potatoes

Fruits

4–5 servings

Good choices: Apricots, bananas, grapes, oranges, orange juice, raisins, strawberries

Dairy foods (low-fat or fat-free)

2–3 servings

Good choices: Fat-free or low-fat milk, cheese, buttermilk, yogurt

Meats, poultry, and fish

2 servings or less

Good choices: Lean meat, skinless chicken, fish

Nuts, seeds, and dried beans

4–5 servings per week

Good choices: Almonds, peanuts, sunflower seeds, kidney beans, lentils

Fats and oils

2–3 servings

Good choices: Soft margarine, vegetable oil, low-fat mayonnaise, light dressing

Sweets

5 servings per week

Good choices: Sugar, jam, jelly beans, hard candy, fruit punch, ices, sorbet

Shake off sodium

To get even better results from the DASH diet, cut back on sodium. Certain groups of people—the elderly, African-Americans, and those with a family history of high blood pressure—are more likely than others to have blood pressure that's particularly salt (or sodium) sensitive. But since there's no way to tell whether any one individual is sodium sensitive, everyone should lower his sodium intake.

What to eat: Whole, unprocessed foods, which typically contain small amounts of sodium; most dietary sodium is added when foods are processed

Serving size: 1,500 mg (half a teaspoon of salt contains about 1,200 mg of sodium)

Good choices: Cutting sodium means more than going easy on the saltshaker. Season foods instead with spices, herbs, lemon, and salt-free seasoning blends.

Need help achieving a goal? Take a look at the [Men's Health Toolbox](#), for tips and tricks on fitness, nutrition, and weight loss.

NUTRITION TO BOOST ENERGY

Here's a license to snack all day. Keeping your blood-sugar levels steady throughout the day is the best way to stoke up your energy. The type of meal you eat depends on the time of day, but you should aim to feed your face every 2 to 3 hours, or about five meals a day.

Get Going

Your blood-sugar level will be at its lowest in the morning, because you won't have eaten anything for at least 8 hours. The perfect breakfast to get you going is a bowl of crunchy, high-fiber cereal. If you think that sounds a bit fuddy-duddy, consider this: In a study of 139 people, those who started eating cereal packed with 6 to 12 grams of fiber daily reported feeling more energetic than those who began eating a look-alike, low-fiber cereal. Asked to rate their energy levels, the high-fiber crowd gave themselves scores 10 percent higher than the low-fiber pack. They also reported feeling better, even thinking more clearly (*Appetite*, December 2001).

The researchers who conducted the study speculate that the extra fiber may help by alleviating that common little problem that no one likes to talk about: constipation. Previous studies have found that people who switch to high-fiber diets and leave constipation in the dust feel more energetic, possibly because they feel lighter and more comfortable.

Heads up: It may take your system a few days to adjust to a higher fiber level, but stay with it. The high-fiber group in the study had some stomach discomfort and bloating at first, but that eased during the second week.

Stay Energized

If you feel pooped by afternoon, it's most likely the foods you're eating—or not eating. It's a matter of the right nutrition, in the right amounts, and in the right combinations.

What to eat: The ideal energy mix is high protein, moderate carbs,

and low—but not no—fats. Examples are a turkey sandwich with low-fat mayo or a serving of spaghetti and meatballs.

How much to eat: Distribute your calories equally among breakfast, lunch, and dinner. A skimpy breakfast, a hurried lunch, and a huge evening feast is about the least energy-efficient eating schedule imaginable.

When to eat: By skipping breakfast or lunch—or both—not only are you depriving your body of calories just when it needs them the most, you're also likely to compensate with a lethargy-inducing pig-out later.

Keeping the Power

Try to satisfy these recommendations for the best energizing meals of the day.

Breakfast: Sweet breakfasts are an energy disaster, since nothing plummets your blood sugar faster (after an initial boost) than concentrated forms of simple carbohydrates like maple syrup and jellies. Instead, have whole grain bread or waffles, topped with fruit, or eggs. Add a glass of milk for protein.

Lunch: Avoid pasta (unless you're exercising that afternoon) and other refined carbohydrates at noon. Instead, have fiber-rich whole grain bread, brown rice, beans, or lentils. For protein, which will ramp up your afternoon energy level, eat a beef or chicken burger.

Snacks: Avoid sugar, and reach for a steady source of energy instead. Have peanut butter on whole wheat, apples smeared with peanut butter, or fruit and cheese. Or grab an energy bar—these can be a minimeal unto themselves.

Check out [What's for Dinner Tonight](#), for a quick and easy meal every night of the week.

Bonus Section: Great Eats

One-Pot Chicken and Rice

Good for: building muscle, and rich in nutrients that promote energy and help prevent colds and flu, depression, stroke

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1¼ cups brown rice
- 4 chicken thighs, skin and visible fat removed
- 1 14½-ounce can diced tomatoes, drained
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme, crushed
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1. Preheat the oven to 325°F. Heat the oil in an ovenproof Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the garlic and onion, and cook, stirring frequently, for 4 minutes, or until softened.
2. Add the rice, and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes, or until it starts to brown. Stir in the chicken, tomatoes, broth, thyme, and pepper. Bring to a boil over high heat.
3. Cover the pot, and place in the oven. Bake for 1 hour and 15 minutes, or until the rice is tender and the liquid is absorbed.

Makes 4 servings

Per serving: 392 calories, 20 g protein, 52 g carbohydrate, 11 g fat, 2 g saturated fat, 4 g fiber, 537 mg sodium

Broiled Chicken Diavolo

Good for: losing weight, and rich in nutrients that promote energy

- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon ground black pepper
- $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground red pepper
- $3\frac{1}{2}$ –4 pounds skinless chicken parts, legs separated from thighs, and breasts cut into 2 pieces

1. Place the broiler rack 5" to 6" from the heat source, and preheat the broiler.
2. In a large bowl, combine the lemon juice, oil, salt, black pepper, and red pepper. Add the chicken, and toss to coat.
3. Arrange the chicken, skin side up, on a broiling pan. Cook, turning, until the chicken is browned, the juices run clear, and a meat thermometer registers 170°F for breasts, 18 to 20 minutes, and 180°F for thighs and drumsticks, 26 to 30 minutes.

Makes 4 servings

Per serving: 286 calories, 40 g protein, 1 g carbohydrate, 12 g fat, 3 g saturated fat, 0 g fiber, 683 mg sodium

Turkey Burgers on 'Shrooms

Good for: building muscle, and rich in nutrients that promote energy, immunity, and sperm production

- $\frac{1}{2}$ 11-ounce can reduced-fat cream of mushroom soup
- 2 pounds 95% lean ground turkey (not pure turkey breast)
- 1 6-ounce can sliced mushrooms, drained and finely chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Italian-seasoned bread crumbs
- 1 beaten egg
- 1 teaspoon poultry seasoning
- 8 hamburger buns

1. Fire up your grill to medium-hot. Pour the soup into a big bowl. Add everything else except the buns.
2. Wet your hands with cooking spray, and shape the turkey mix into 8 burgers, each about $\frac{1}{2}$ " thick. Coat the burgers with cooking spray. If your grill isn't medium-hot yet, refrigerate the burgers until it is.
3. Once the fire is ready, put the burgers on the rack, and close the lid (with the vents open). Grill for 6 to 8 minutes per side, or until the meat is no longer pink in the center. Serve burgers with buns.

Makes 8 burgers

Per burger: 345 calories, 26 g protein, 29 g carbohydrate, 14 g fat, 4 g saturated fat, 2 g fiber, 770 mg sodium

Turkey and Bean Soft Tacos

Good for: building muscle, and rich in nutrients that promote energy and immunity and help prevent memory problems, heart disease, cancer

- 8 corn tortillas (6" diameter)
- 8 ounces (2 cups) shredded cooked turkey breast
- 1 cup drained and rinsed canned kidney or pinto beans
- 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups mild or medium-spicy salsa + additional for topping
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups finely shredded cabbage
- 1 large carrot, shredded
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup finely chopped sweet white onion
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup reduced-fat cucumber ranch dressing

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Stack the tortillas, and wrap them in foil. Place the tortillas in the oven, and heat for 10 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, heat a large skillet coated with cooking spray over high heat. Add the turkey, beans, $\frac{1}{4}$ cups of the salsa, and cumin, and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer, stirring, for 10 minutes, or until heated through.
3. In a medium bowl, combine the cabbage, carrot, onion, and ranch dressing. Spoon about $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of the turkey filling into a tortilla. Top with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the cabbage mixture, and fold over. Repeat with the remaining tortillas, turkey filling, and cabbage mixture. Top with the remaining salsa.

Makes 4 servings

Per serving: 330 calories, 24 g protein, 44 g carbohydrate, 6 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 8 g fiber, 676 mg sodium

Breakfast Burritos

Good for: building muscle, and rich in nutrients for promoting immunity, healthy vision and skin, bone growth

- 4 fat-free honey-wheat tortillas (8" diameter)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 medium zucchini, halved lengthwise and cut into $\frac{1}{4}$ "-thick slices
- 1 small red bell pepper, chopped
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup fresh or frozen and thawed corn kernels
- 3 eggs
- 3 egg whites
- 2 tablespoons 1% milk
- $\frac{1}{2}$ avocado, cut lengthwise into 8 thin slices
- 1 cup mild or medium-spicy salsa

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Wrap the tortillas in foil. Place in the oven to heat for 10 minutes. Turn the oven off, leaving the tortillas in the oven to stay warm.
2. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add the zucchini, bell pepper, and black pepper. Cook the vegetables, stirring often, for 5 minutes, or until tender. Add the corn, and cook, stirring often, for 1 minute.
3. In a medium bowl, combine the eggs, egg whites, and milk.
4. Reduce the heat to low. Pour the egg mixture into the skillet, and scramble gently until the eggs are cooked but still moist.
5. Evenly divide the eggs, avocado slices, and salsa among the tortillas. Roll up, and serve immediately.

Makes 4 servings

Per serving: 255 calories, 13 g protein, 28 g carbohydrate, 11 g fat, 2 g saturated fat, 10 g fiber, 774 mg sodium

Linguine with Clams

Good for: building muscle, and rich in nutrients that prevent heart disease and promote energy, immunity, bone and cartilage growth

- 12 ounces spinach linguine
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 shallots, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 cup chopped plum tomatoes
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 1½ cups chicken broth
- ¼ cup + 2 tablespoons chopped Italian parsley
- 3 dozen littleneck clams, scrubbed

1. Prepare the linguine according to package directions.
2. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large saucepot or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add the shallots and garlic, and cook, stirring often, for 4 minutes, or until soft. Add the tomatoes, and cook for 1 minute. Add the wine, and bring to a boil. Cook for 2 minutes. Add the broth and parsley. Bring to a boil.
3. Add the clams, cover, and cook for 5 minutes, or until the clams open. (Discard any unopened clams.)
4. Remove the clams to a bowl with a slotted spoon. Return the broth mixture to the heat, and bring to a boil. Boil for 4 minutes, or until reduced by one-third. Remove 24 of the clams from their shells, and mince; discard those shells. Keep the remaining 12 clams in their shells.
5. Add the minced clams and pasta to the pot. Toss to combine. Add the clams in the shells.

Makes 4 servings

Per serving: 312 calories, 23 g protein, 32 g carbohydrate, 6 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 3 g fiber, 425 mg sodium

Orange Roughy Veracruz

Good for: losing weight while maintaining muscle, and rich in nutrients that fight aging, heart disease, and anemia and promote immunity and good vision

- 4 orange roughy or red snapper fillets (5 ounces each)
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano, crushed
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 15-ounce can Mexican-style diced tomatoes
- 12 pimiento-stuffed olives, coarsely chopped
- 2 tablespoons chopped parsley

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Coat a 9" × 9" baking dish with cooking spray. Place the fillets in the baking dish. Sprinkle with the lime juice and oregano.
2. Heat the oil in a medium skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic, and cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes, or until soft. Add the tomatoes (with juice), olives, and parsley. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes, or until thickened. Spoon over the fillets. Cover tightly with foil. Bake for 15 minutes, or until the fish flakes easily.

Makes 4 servings

Per serving: 185 calories, 22 g protein, 11 g carbohydrate, 6 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 2 g fiber, 510 mg sodium

Tex-Mex Longhorn

Good for: losing weight while maintaining muscle, and rich in nutrients that promote healthy skin, vision, energy

- 1 15-ounce can black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 11-ounce can corn with peppers, drained
- ½ teaspoon hot-pepper sauce
- ¼ cup finely chopped onion
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley or cilantro
- Juice of ½ lime
- 1 top round London broil, about 2" thick (about 2 pounds)
- 2 tablespoons salt-free mesquite grilling blend

1. Fire up your grill to medium-hot. In a big bowl, mix everything but the steak and grilling blend. Cover, and refrigerate until after you've grilled the steak. Coat the steak all over with cooking spray. Press the grilling blend into both sides.

2. Put the steak onto the grill, and close the lid (with the vents open). Grill, turning once, until it's done the way you like: 5 to 7 minutes per side for medium-rare (145°F on an instant-read thermometer) or 6 to 8 minutes per side for medium (160°F).

3. Rest on a cutting board for 10 minutes, so the juices seep back in. Then thinly slice across the grain. Top with bean-corn mix.

Makes 8 servings

Per serving: 264 calories, 25 g protein, 13 g carbohydrate, 12 g fat, 4 g saturated fat, 3 g fiber, 320 mg sodium

Grilled Rib-Eye Steak with Mustard Sauce

Good for: losing weight while maintaining muscle, and rich in nutrients that promote healthy bones, energy.

- 3 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon + 1½ teaspoons sour cream or plain yogurt
- 1 scallion, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon dry mustard
- ¾ teaspoon soy sauce
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 boneless beef rib-eye steak (1½ pounds), 1" thick, fat trimmed

1. In a small bowl, combine the mayonnaise, sour cream or yogurt, scallion, mustard, soy sauce, ¼ teaspoon of the pepper, and 1/8 teaspoon of the salt. Cover and let sit at room temperature.

2. Meanwhile, coat a grill rack with cooking spray. Preheat the grill. Season the beef with the remaining 1/4 teaspoon pepper and the remaining 1/8 teaspoon salt. Grill, turning once, until a meat thermometer registers 160°F for medium, 11 to 13 minutes. Remove to a platter and let rest for 5 minutes.

3. Slice steak thinly and serve topped with the mustard sauce.

Makes 6 servings

Per serving: 252 calories, 24 g protein, 1 g carbohydrates, 16 g fat, 5 g saturated fat, 0 g fiber, 230 mg sodium

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