

Shopping List & Meal Planning Tips

It is time to plan for success. In order to get you started on the right foot, we have outlined a few simple meal-planning tips that can be incorporated at work or at home. Once you get into the groove of shopping and prepping your food properly, this approach should not take much more time or be costly.

Meal Planning Tips

Meal planning tips for successful weight loss include:

- **Make a grocery list**—Below you will find a list of some basic food items to buy that will make weight loss easy and grab and go. I certainly do not want you to be running to the grocery store each and every day, so it is always a good idea to double up on certain staples (i.e. yogurt, fruits, vegetables).
- **In the beginning, keep it simple**—Weight loss does not have to be gourmet (although it can be...but most of us simply do not have the time for that). In the beginning, it is best to keep meals simple and repetitive. For example, if you find eating a yogurt parfait delicious and easy in the morning – you can eat the same meal as many times as you like! Variety is not necessary for weight loss. It is only necessary if you are feeling “food bored”. We firmly believe in the first few weeks of being on the program, being a creature of habit helps.
- **From the grocery store to the counter**—Whether you grocery shop on the weekend or in the evening – when you bring your groceries home, prepare them (chop, clean, boil, freeze etc.) prior to putting them away. For example, wash your berries, make a batch of quinoa or oatmeal, hard boil eggs or put some nuts in grab and go containers. By doing so, you will make the rest of your week much easier when you have less time. Save your veggie tops/scrap for broth! Just pop them in the freezer.
- **Examine your containers**—We all want to be environmentally friendly and organized, so it is necessary to have the right containers to pack lunch or snack properly. When beginning the NRG Healthy Weight Loss Challenge, we want you to examine your grab and go containers. It is important to organize them (yes ...that's right –match the lids with the bottoms!) and make sure you have a variety of sizes. While you are at it – this is also a good time to take a good look at your food cupboards, fridge and freezer for a big ol' cleaning. Any foods that may sabotage your success or may have expired should be cleaned out. Like a gorgeous looking

and organized closet –your fridge and cupboards should reflect the way you want to feel.

- **Double batch it**—Hands up if you like time saving steps! When making dinner, feel free to double batch so you have an instant lunch option the next day. Alternatively, if you are making soups, stews or chills (and we will post a lot of recipes) – double the batch to freeze for future last minute dinners or grab and go meals.

Basics to buy

On your next visit to the grocery store, here are a few basics to put on your list:

- Vegetables (i.e., peppers, zucchini, spinach, kale, arugula, broccoli, cauliflower, eggplant, cucumber, tomatoes, carrots)
- Lemons
- Avocado
- Organic or omega 3 eggs
- 2% plain yogurt or Greek yogurt
- 1 or 2% cottage cheese (low sodium if available)
- Unsweetened almond, cashew or soymilk (great for smoothies!)
- Hummus
- Low fat cheese or goats cheese
- Berries (i.e., blueberries, strawberries, raspberries – frozen or fresh.)
- Apples
- Nuud fruit & veggie squares – very good source of protein & fiber (Vince’s – produce dept – usually beside 1st express checkout). These are a “go to” of Sarah’s especially as she’s celiac. They are gluten-free (GF). Note, not all GF products healthy. To be discussed another time...always read labels!
- Natural nut butters –peanut, almond or cashew
- High fiber wraps
- Coconut or spinach wraps (found at most health food stores)
- Sprouted grain bread
- Nuts (i.e., pistachios, almonds, cashews, etc.)

- Healthy bars such as Daryl's (through Sarah – see info on 10 steps to Success)
Simply bar or Kashi bar that are low in sugar (5-10 g tops) and have no artificial sweeteners or sugar alcohols
- Nitrate free turkey or chicken slices (only as a last “convenience” resort). Batch cook your own chicken & turkey & freeze where possible.
- Chicken breast and/or a rotisserie chicken
- Ground meat
- Fresh herbs – dill, oregano, basil etc.
- Salmon fillets to freeze (or your fish of choice)
- Frozen fruit of choice

What to keep in your cupboards

Keeping the right staples in your cupboard makes it easier to prepare recipes without having to run out to pick up last minute items.

Here are a few great staples:

- Beans and legumes (i.e., chickpeas, split peas, lentils)
- Low sodium chicken or vegetable stock (make your own easily – to be discussed)
- Canned tuna or salmon (in water)
- Quinoa
- Steel cut oats & slow cook oats
- Healthy flours (i.e., coconut, whole wheat, spelt flour.)
- Flax seeds and/or chia seeds
- Good quality oils (i.e., extra virgin olive oil, sesame oil, coconut oil etc.)
- Pasta (i.e. whole wheat, spelt, quinoa, kamut, etc.)
- Brown rice
- Tomato sauce (no salt added if possible)
- Tomato paste (“ “ “)
- Salsa (watch salt – lowest sodium possible)

- Spices (i.e., oregano, basil, chili flakes, turmeric, cumin, sea salt etc.)
- Natural Maple syrup & Natural honey
- Unsweetened apple sauce
- Protein powder (ie. sprouted grain protein options)