

NUTRITION
ESSENTIALS

for dancers

PEAK HEALTH AND FITNESS

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to "Nutrition Essentials" your go-to nutrition guide tailored for the dynamic lifestyle of dancers. As aspiring artists, we understand the challenges you face – tight schedules, limited budgets, and the constant demand for peak performance.

This booklet aims to help you achieve a nourishing diet while respecting your time and resources. Recognizing the uniqueness of each body, remember this guide is a flexible tool, not a rigid rulebook.

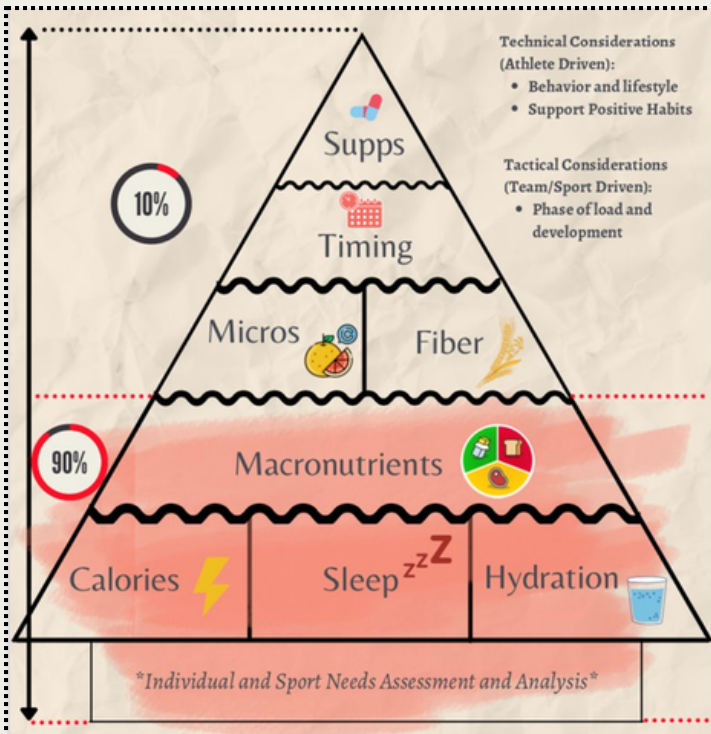
As athletes, your nutritional needs are unique, requiring attention to both macronutrients and micronutrients. While this guide provides practical tips and budget-friendly recipes, it is crucial to remember that individual preferences and requirements may vary.

Listen to your body, make adjustments as needed, and seek personalized advice from a nutrition professional. May this guide empower you to nourish your passion for dance while maintaining a healthy, budget-friendly lifestyle.

NUTRITION BASICS

ATHLETE'S PYRAMID

Whether it's a training day, a competition day, or just a regular day as a student, the first priority is to make sure you're **eating enough** to support your body's needs. Once you've covered this basic requirement, then you can start considering the timing, amounts, and types of macros that suit your goals.



CARBOHYDRATES

- The recommended range for general population is 45 - 65% of daily intake. This can vary for athletes based on training load.
- Main source of energy used by the body.
- Helps prevent breakdown of muscle.

Complex Carbohydrates: slowly digested (due to fiber), longer energy, provides greater satiety, contains natural vitamins and minerals (e.g., whole grains, starchy vegetables).

Simple Carbohydrates: easily digested, quick energy, fortified with vitamins and minerals (e.g., white grains, fruit and fruit juices, sport drinks).

PROTEIN

- The recommended range for general population is 10 - 25% of calories. This can vary for athletes based on training load (usually 1.2 - 1.7 g/kg).
- Synthesis and maintenance of multiple body tissues.
- Maintains fluid balance.
- Non-preferred energy source.

Animal protein: complete protein, has all essential amino acids (e.g., beef, chicken, eggs, greek yogurt, cottage cheese).

Plant protein: incomplete protein, inadequate amounts of one or more amino acid, needs pairing (e.g., beans, legumes, tofu, soy milk, nuts, seeds, quinoa, grains).

FAT

- The recommended range for general is 20 - 35% of daily intake, can vary for athletes based on training load.
- Our bodies require **essential** body fat just for survival, and additional amounts to support primary functions.
- Long-term energy source.
- Hormone and cell signaling function.

Unsaturated: mono-unsaturated (e.g., olive oil, avocados), poly-unsaturated, essential, omega-3 (e.g., salmon, tuna, flax seed), omega-6 (e.g., nuts, sunflower, corn oil).

Saturated: not-essential (e.g., dairy, meat, coconut oil).

SPORT PERFORMANCE:

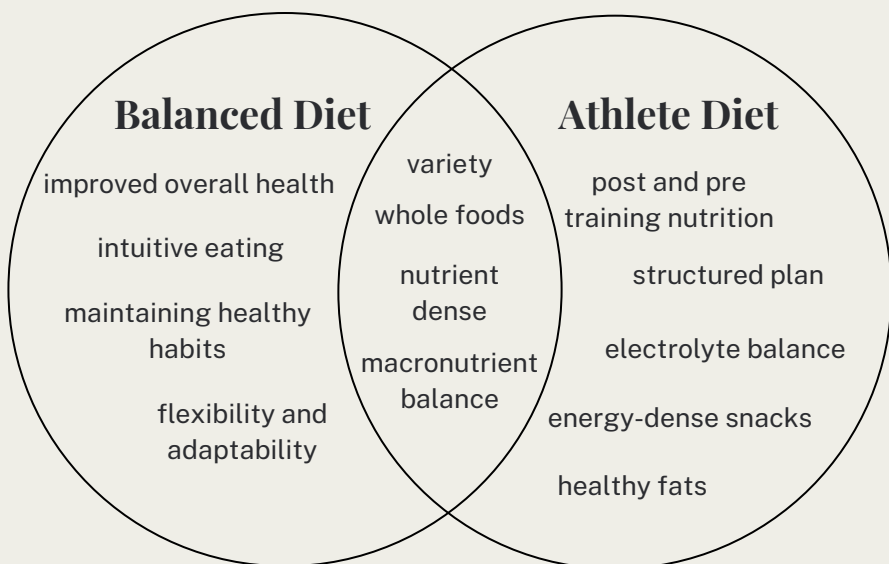
benefits of omega-3

- Anti-inflammatory
- Promotes faster recovery between training and performances
- Cardiovascular health
- Skeletal muscle growth and regeneration
- Neuroprotection (concussions)
- Efficiency for memory and reaction time



THE ATHLETE'S DIET

THE ATHLETE'S DIET



Embracing an athlete's diet during in-season peaks can be a game-changer. *This targeted approach, designed for **energy, rapid recovery, and peak performance**, propels dancers to shine on stage daily.* Opting for an athlete's diet isn't just about sustenance; it's a strategic choice that amplifies performance excellence.

THE ATHLETE'S PLATE

high-intensity training

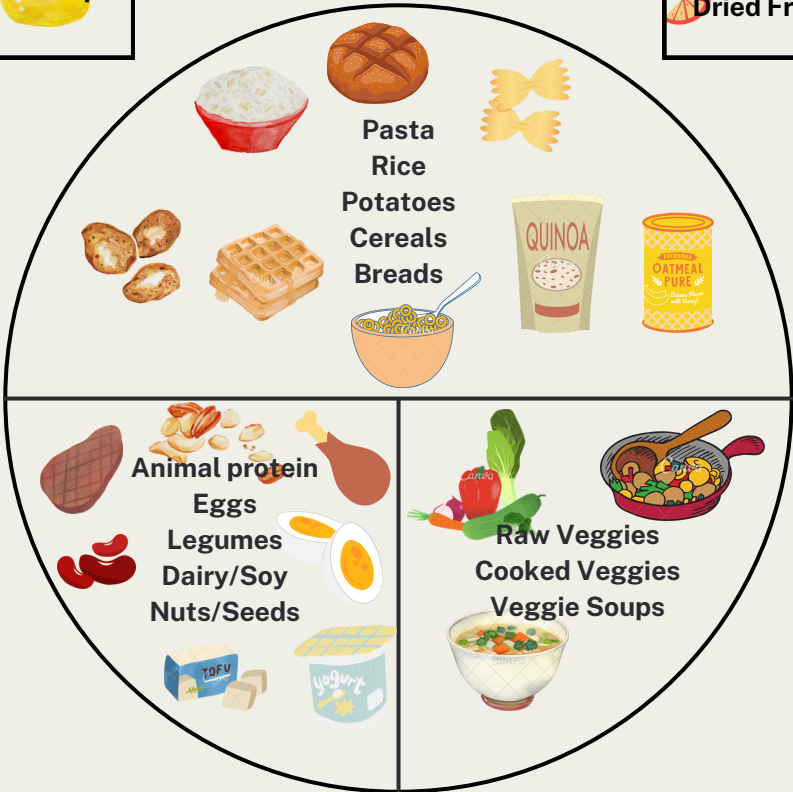


plate suggested for in-season **
rehearsal, performances

THE ATHLETE'S PLATE

moderate training

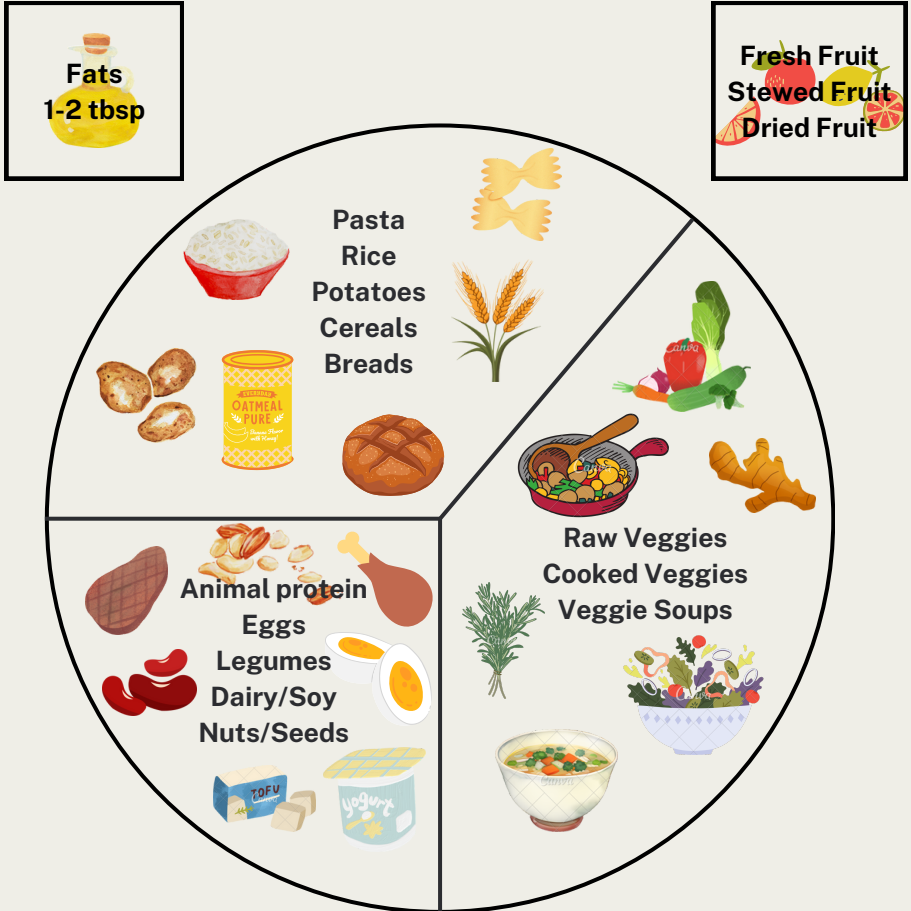
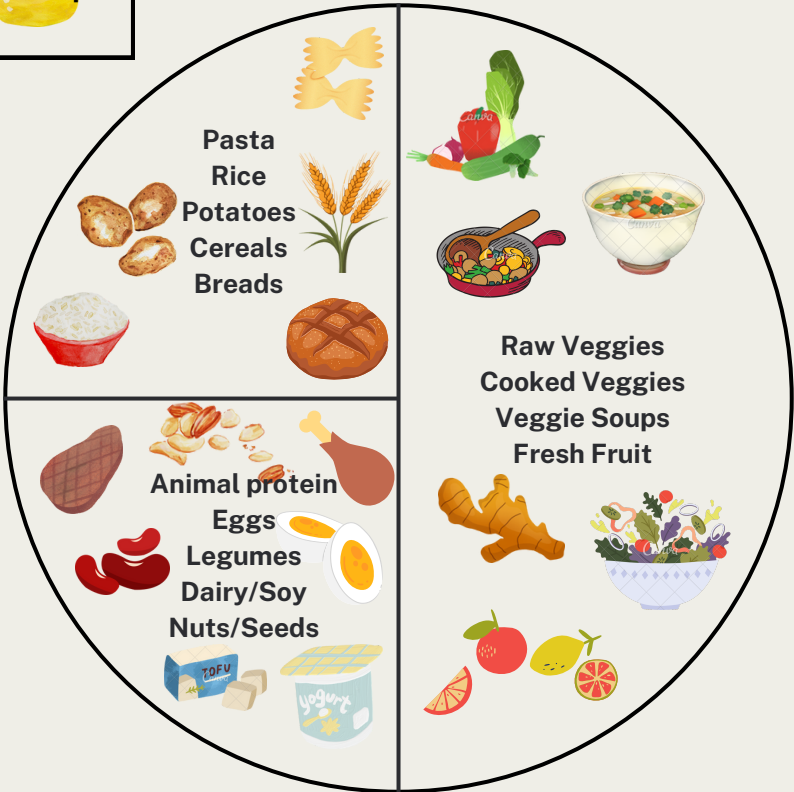


plate suggested for pre-season **
rehearsal, training

BALANCED DIET PLATE

easy or no training



DISCLAIMER

The smaller portion for fruits and vegetables on plates designed for high-intensity and moderate-intensity training **doesn't mean limiting these important food groups**. It just emphasizes the importance of prioritizing other components for recovery. In these athlete plates, more focus on carbohydrates and proteins in higher and moderate intensity variations supports sustained energy and muscle repair. This distribution aligns with a balanced approach for both performance and overall health. **These plate compositions are strategic adaptations to meet athletes' diverse needs during different training intensities.**

RECOVERY NUTRITION

WHEN IS IT IMPORTANT?

- High volume or intensity training sessions
- Heavy lifting sessions
- Competition
- Consecutive days of competition
- 2-3 training sessions in a day

Following a light training session (e.g. skills/drills, yoga, stretching, recovery day) the next meal or snack is sufficient to meet recovery needs.

SUCCESSFUL RECOVERY
WILL ONLY OCCUR WITH
PROPER PLANNING.

THINK ABOUT TRAINING
SESSIONS AHEAD OF TIME
IN ORDER **TO PLAN AND**
PACK THE APPROPRIATE
FOODS.



THE 4 R'S OF RECOVERY

REPLENISH: muscle glycogen
(carbohydrate stored in muscle)
following a training session.

REPAIR: and regenerate skeletal muscle
with high quality protein sources and
key amino acids (e.g. leucine).

REINFORCE: muscle cells, immune
function, and central nervous system
function with colorful and anti-oxidant
rich foods.

REHYDRATE: with fluid and electrolytes
according to individual sweat lost during
training.

PRE TRAINING

goal: top off energy stores with carbohydrates, maximize hydration, optimize glycogen stores.

- **1-3 hrs before:** carbohydrates with moderate protein, fat and fiber.
- **within 1 hr:** carbohydrates with lower protein, fat, and fiber. easily digestible carbohydrates.

examples: toast with nut butter, banana, granola bar, applesauce, pretzels, graham crackers, sports drink.

DURING TRAINING

goal: prevent depletion of glycogen stores and maintain glucose levels in the blood when exercise is greater than **45 minutes**.

- **45-75 minutes:** 15 - 30 g carbs/hr
banana, rice cake with jam, energy gel

- **1 - 2.5 hrs:** 30 - 60 g carbs/hr
PB & Jelly sandwich , sports drink

- **> 2.5 hrs:** up to 90 g carbs/hr
bagel with jam and honey, fruit smoothie

POST TRAINING

goal: replenish carbohydrate stores, protein for repair, rehydrate with fluids and electrolytes, normalize appetite cues.

- the earlier the better
- best if within 30 minutes after activity
- use liquid nutrition for convenience

examples: chocolate milk, yogurt with fruit and granola, nuts and fruit, dried fruit and cheese.

HYDRATION

goal: replenish fluid and electrolytes lost through sweat, reduce the risk of muscle cramps and injuries, prevent a decline in performance.

1. monitor urine: the lighter the color the better.
2. start class and rehearsal in a **euhydrated** state: appropriate and balanced level of water content.
3. Replace **100 – 150% total body weight lost** during training.

TIPS

BUDGET TIPS

- **Buy in bulk:** places like Winco or Costco will offer items like quinoa, rice, pasta, nuts, seeds, and legumes.
- **Frozen fruits and vegetables:** They are more affordable than fresh produce and have a longer shelf life. They are also just as nutritious.
- **Canned Goods:** Opt for low/no sodium canned beans, legumes, and vegetables. They are convenient, have a long shelf life, and can be a cost-effective source of protein and fiber.
- **Seasonal and Local Produce:** Buying fruits and vegetables that are in season and locally sourced can be more affordable.

BUDGET TIPS

- **Meal Planning:** Plan your meals for the week and create a shopping list. This helps avoid impulsive purchases and reduces food waste.
- **Generic Brands:** Consider buying store or generic brands instead of name brands.
- **Protein Sources:** Eggs, canned tuna, and chicken thighs are often more budget-friendly protein sources.
- **Cook in Batches:** Prepare larger quantities of meals and freeze portions for later. This can save time and money.
- **Discounts and Coupons:** Keep an eye out for discounts, sales, and coupons.

TIME SAVING TIPS

- ***Pre-Washed and Pre-Cut Kits:*** Invest in salad and veggie stir-fry kits that come pre-washed and pre-cut, reducing prep time and making meal assembly quick and easy.
- ***Pre-Chopped Vegetables:*** Cut down on prep time even further, allowing you to focus more on cooking and less on chopping.
- ***Instant or Microwaveable Grains:*** Opt for instant or microwaveable rice, quinoa, or other grains for quick and easy carbs that require minimal cooking time.
- ***Fully Cooked Proteins:*** Utilize fully cooked proteins such as rotisserie chicken, canned tuna, canned beans, sliced deli meats, or fully cooked frozen proteins to cut down on cooking time and streamline meal preparation.

TIME SAVING TIPS

- ***Frozen Vegetables in Steamable Bags:*** convenient and nutritious additions to meals, eliminating the need for washing and chopping.
- ***Batch Cooking:*** Batch cook grains, proteins, and vegetables in advance to have ready-to-assemble components throughout the week, saving time on cooking and allowing for quick meal assembly.
- ***Kitchen Gadgets:*** Use kitchen gadgets like a slow cooker, pressure cooker, or air fryer to streamline cooking processes and save time, allowing you to multitask or attend to other activities while your meals cook.
- ***Prepared Sauces, Dressings, and Marinades:*** Buy or prepare ahead for easy flavor enhancement, eliminating the need to make them from scratch each time you cook.

TIME SAVING TIPS

- ***Meal Prep Containers:*** Make use of meal prep containers to portion out meals in advance, making it easy to grab and go during busy days and reducing the need for daily meal preparation.
- ***One-Pan or One-Pot Recipes:*** Minimize cleanup and simplify cooking procedures, saving time on both cooking and cleaning tasks.
- ***Multitask with Sheet Pan Meals:*** Prepare sheet pan meals that allow you to cook everything on a single pan in the oven allowing you to engage in other activities while you wait.

GROCERY LIST

GROCERY LIST

CARBOHYDRATES

Amaranth	White/sweet corn
Couscous	Whole grain pasta
Quinoa	Sourdough bread
Buckwheat	Whole grain bread
Bulgur	Rice (white, black, wild, red, brown)
Barley	Black, Red, White kidney beans
Potatoes	Peas (black, green, yellow)
Sweet potato	
Lentils	
Oats (gf, whole, steel cut)	

GROCERY LIST

PROTEIN

Eggs

Chicken

Fish (salmon, tuna, cod)

Dairy products (cheese, milk, yogurt)

Turkey

Shellfish (shrimp, crab)

VEGAN PROTEIN

Legumes (beans, lentils, chickpeas)

Tofu and soy products

Tempeh

Seitan

Edamame

Quinoa

Protein powder

GROCERY LIST

FATS

Plant oils

Nut butters (peanut, almond, cashew)

Avocados

Flax seeds

Hemp seeds

Full-fat dairy products

Fatty fish

CONDIMENTS

Apple cider vinegar

White/wine vinegar

Lemon/lime

Ketchup

Mustard

Mayo

Tomato sauces

Hot sauce

Honey

Maple syrup

Hummus

Salsa

GROCERY LIST

SPICES

Cinnamon

Cumin

Paprika

Turmeric

Garlic powder

Onion powder

Chilli powder

Cayenne pepper

Black pepper

Red pepper flakes

Coriander

Ginger

Cloves

Allspice

Basil

Oregano

Thyme

Rosemary

Sage

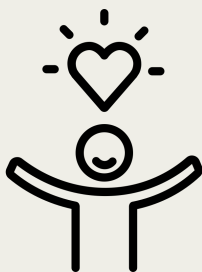
Bay leaves

Parsley

Dill

Mint

**ENJOYING A VARIETY OF
FOODS IS KEY!
ALL FOODS FIT IN A
HEALTHY DIET WHEN
BALANCED WITH
NUTRIENT-RICH FOODS.**



SAMPLE DAYS

OMNIVORE SAMPLE DAY

BREAKFAST

*Breakfast sandwich and
iced coffee*

1 bagel

2 tbsp cream cheese

1 egg

1 slice cheddar cheese

1 apple sliced

1 cup milk

1/2 cup cold brew

Approx. \$2.50 - 5.25

protein: 33 g

fiber: 6 g

LUNCH

Deli box

2 oz turkey breast

1 hard boiled egg

1 oz cheese cubed

1/4 cup almonds

6 - 8 pita crackers

1/4 cup cherry tomatoes

1/4 cup baby carrots

Approx. \$2.10 - \$4.70

protein: 33 g

fiber: 10 g

AM SNACK

1 medium banana

1 greek yogurt

Approx. \$0.95 - \$2.00

protein: 20 g

fiber: 2 g

OMNIVORE SAMPLE DAY

DINNER

Chicken stir fry

4 oz chicken breast, thinly sliced

1 cup mixed vegetables (bell peppers, broccoli, carrots, snap peas)

1 tbsp vegetable oil

1 clove garlic, minced

1/2 tbsp soy sauce

1/2 tbsp oyster sauce

1/2 tsp cornstarch

salt and pepper

cooked rice for serving

Approx. \$ 2.50 - 4.00

protein: 30 g

fiber: 4 g

PM SNACK

1 apple

2 tbsps peanut butter

optional: honey, cinnamon, chopped nuts, chocolate chips)

Approx. \$1.50 - \$3.00\$

protein: 8 g

fiber: 6 g

VEGETARIAN SAMPLE DAY

BREAKFAST

PB and J smoothie

- 1 banana
- 1 cup frozen berries
- 3/4 cup greek yogurt
- 1 tbsp peanut butter
- 1 cup milk

Approx. \$3.00 - \$3.90

protein: 31 g

fiber: 8 g

AM SNACK

- 1/2 cup hummus
- 11 cup chopped carrots

Approx. \$1.25 - 2.50

protein: 8 g

fiber: 10 g

LUNCH

Quinoa salad

- 1 cup cooked quinoa
- 1 cup canned chickpeas
- 1/4 avocado
- 1/4 cup diced cucumber
- 2 tbsp chopped parsley or cilantro
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 3 oz feta cheese

Approx. \$4.30 - \$6.50

protein: 27 g

fiber: 16 g

VEGETARIAN SAMPLE DAY

DINNER

Spaghetti with lentil marinara (makes 2 servings)

4 oz whole wheat spaghetti

1/2 cup can canned lentils

1/2 can diced tomatoes

1 tbsp tomato paste

1 cloves garlic

1 tbsp olive oil

1 tsp dried basil

1 tsp dried oregano

salt and pepper

parmesan cheese

Approx. \$ 4.00

protein: 26 g

fiber: 11 g

PM SNACK

1 medium banana

1 greek yogurt

Approx. \$0.95 - \$2.00

protein: 20 g

fiber: 2 g

VEGAN SAMPLE DAY

BREAKFAST

High protein oatmeal

1/2 cup rolled oats

1 cup soy milk

2 tbsp chia seeds

2 tbsps flaxseed

1/2 ripe banana

1/4 cup chopped nuts

1/2 tsp cinnamon

berries to top

Approx. \$4.00 - 5.50

protein: 33 g

fiber: 20 g

AM SNACK

1/2 cup hummus

11 cup chopped carrots

Approx. \$1.25 - 2.50

protein: 8 g

fiber: 10 g

LUNCH

Cold peanut salad

2 oz noodles

1 cup edamame

1/2 red bell pepper

1/2 cup cabbage

1 small carrot

green onions

cilantro

2 tbsp peanuts

Peanut dressing: 2 tbsp

peanut butter, 1 tbsp soy

sauce, 1 tbsp rice vinegar,

1/2 tbsp maple syrup, lime

juice, garlic, water.

Approx. \$3.00- \$4.00

protein: 24 g

fiber: 7 g

VEGAN SAMPLE DAY

DINNER

Tofu and vegetable stir fry

1/2 block extra-firm tofu

1 cup mixed vegetables (bell peppers, broccoli, carrots, snap peas)

1 tbsp vegetable oil

1 clove garlic

1/2 tbsp soy sauce

1/2 tbsp maple syrup

1/2 tbsp rice vinegar

1/2 tbsp cornstarch

1 tbsp water

salt and pepper

Approx. \$ 2.00 - 3.50

protein: 22 g

fiber: 5 g

PM SNACK

1 apple

2 tbsps peanut butter

optional: honey, cinnamon, chopped nuts, chocolate chips)

Approx. \$1.50 - \$3.00\$

protein: 8 g

fiber: 6 g

RESOURCES

RESOURCES

SOCIAL MEDIAL RED FLAGS

Watch out for social media accounts that:

- Emphasize rigid food rules or encourage restrictive eating.
- Deliver an “Eat like me, look like me” approach.
- Promote certain food brands, herbal supplements or weight-loss systems — especially when those posts are sponsored.
- Label foods as “good” or “bad.”

RECIPES

- <https://therealfooddietitians.com/>
- <https://www.jessicagavin.com/recipe-index/>
- <https://www.instagram.com/bakedbymelissa/?hl=en>
- <https://plantbasedwithamy.com/recipes/>
- <https://www.instagram.com/nutritionbykylie/>
- <https://www.budgetbytes.com/category/recipes/>

ATHLETE RESOURCES

<https://sportsrd.org/downloadable-resources/>

RESOURCES

BOOKS

- **Intuitive Eating by Evelyn Tribole and Elyse Resch**

Read this if you want to gain more insights regarding intuitive eating!

- **The Food Mood Connection by Uma Naidoo MD**

Read this if you want a more science-y look into how our food and gut health impact our mood and brain health!

- **How to Eat by Thich Nhat Hanh**

Read this to get a look into mindfulness and eating!

- **Gentle Nutrition by Rachel Hartley RD**

Read this for recipe ideas, tips, and trips to build a healthy relationship with your food and body!

PODCASTS

- **Maintenance Phase**

Fad diets, body image and debunking common nutrition myths

- **The Find Food Freedom Podcast**

Body image and building a healthy relationship with food

- **The Eat for Endurance Podcast**

Fueling for sports

- **Uphill Athlete Podcast**

Training and nutrition for endurance athletes