

# ESSENTIAL FOODS MEAL PLAN



Let's face facts – it's really easy to gain weight and nearly impossible to lose it. The Essential Foods plan is for everyone, especially those who have lost weight before only to regain it and then some. Fad diets come and go because they just don't work. We recognize that there are numerous ways to approach weight loss. This suggested nutrition plan is proven successful, easy to follow, flexible, and provides all of the nutrients you need. And it can be eaten anywhere—home, restaurants, other people's homes, etc.

## CORE PRINCIPLES

Basically, people don't eat well, which has led them down a path of missing out on essential nutrients every day. This causes the brain to go into overdrive, forcing a person to eat more food in the hope that it will provide the essential nutrients missing in the body. In other words, eating foods devoid of essential nutrients makes you hungry. If you make it until 4 p.m. and have only consumed a coffee and donut for breakfast, a small bowl of pasta for lunch, and a candy bar for an afternoon snack, your brain will be quite agitated.

The brain is the master of the body and assigns nutrients to tissues for repair and storage. When you go throughout the day without adequate nutrients, you miss many of the things that make your body function properly. This leaves the brain signaling the rest of the body to eat more, with the hope that the next bite will contain the missing nutrients. Sadly, in states of extreme hunger, no one dives into a healthy meal. Rather, you are more likely to grab conveniently prepared foods (fast foods), which are low in essential nutrients and high in calories.

The Essential Foods nutrition plan placates your brain and reduces hunger, while providing everything your body needs to operate in peak condition—all for only 1,200 calories! This results in two good things. First, you'll nourish your body with the nutrients it needs in the right amounts it needs them.

Studies show that in order to lose weight, you need about a 500 calorie deficit per day. Following the Essential Foods plan provides about 1,200 calories, which will put you at a 700 calorie deficit. Thus, if you eat your essential foods each day

and have one snack of 300–400 calories like a donut, candy bar, ice cream, etc., you should still see positive results.

On the days you don't eat these “snacks,” you'll be in an enhanced weight-loss mode. It's your choice, but either way, following the Essential Foods plan promotes achieving a healthy weight and successful weight management. For most people, this plan promotes a 1–2 pound loss per week, which is the recommended amount to sustain healthy weight loss over time. Losing too much weight too fast results in weight regain.

You don't need to count calories because the Essential Foods plan is focused on providing optimal nutrition. There is no wrong or right food. Forget what you may have heard about “superfoods.” All foods are super, if they are part of the plan. The only counting you have to do is 2-2-3-3-6+. This translates into the number of times you need to eat key foods to supply your body with the essential nutrients. It's simple: 2 dairy alternatives, 2 fruits (yes, overeating fruit promotes weight gain), 3 proteins (meat-based or vegetarian), 3 whole grain, potato, and the like, and 6+ vegetables.

## THE DIET

OK, this is the easy part. You don't need a scale or measuring cups, and you don't have to count calories. All you have to do is follow the guide below.

### CHECK A BOX WHEN YOU CONSUME A SERVING.



**DAIRY  
ALTERNATIVE**  
2 Servings

 


**FRUIT**  
2 Servings

 


**WHOLE GRAINS  
& POTATOES**  
3 Servings

  


**PROTEIN**  
(meat, seafood, poultry, legumes)  
3 Servings

  


**VEGETABLES**  
6+ Servings

     

Admittedly, everything you eat doesn't fit into these nice categories. Stews, hearty soups, chili and baked pasta dishes come to mind. When in doubt, use a one-cup measuring device and eat that amount of food. Count pasta, bread-like substances, rice or potatoes as a Whole Grain.

### MIXED DISHES



**TURKEY SANDWICH**  
2 Whole Grains, 1 Protein, 1 Vegetable

**CHILI CON CARNE**  
1 Protein, 1 Vegetable

**SPAGHETTI AND MEATBALLS**  
1 Whole Grain, 1 Protein, 1 Vegetable

**CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP**  
1 Whole Grain

**PIZZA**  
1 Whole Grain, 1 Protein

**¼ POUNDER**  
1 Protein, 2 Whole Grains

There is no exact serving size, but use common sense. You'll lose weight fastest, however, if you closely follow these guidelines:

| FOOD CATEGORY                               | SERVING SIZE                                      |
|---|---|
| Dairy alternative                           | 1 cup yogurt or milk alternative; 1 protein bar   |
| Fruit                                       | 1 cup or 1 medium-sized piece                     |
| Meat, poultry, seafood, vegetarian proteins | 4–6 ounces; at least one cup                      |
| Whole grain                                 | 1 cup (potato, rice, pasta) or two slices (bread) |
| Vegetables                                  | Unlimited   |



Each time you consume a meal replacement shake, have a piece of fruit. Each NSP meal replacement shake, when mixed with 2 scoops with a dairy alternative, provides:

- ✓ One Dairy Alternative
- ✓ One serving of Protein
- ✓ One serving of Vegetables
- ✓ One serving of Whole Grains



## MEAL PLAN

Take a look at this sample meal plan.

| BREAKFAST   | LUNCH  | DINNER  |
|---|--|---|
| Meal replacement shake<br>Dairy alternative*<br>1 apple<br>Coffee/tea               | Meal replacement shake<br>Dairy alternative*<br>2 kiwis            | Grilled salmon patties • Black bean soup<br>Steam-roasted asparagus<br>Orange glazed beets • Sliced tomatoes<br>Garlic mashed potatoes                              |
| Meal replacement shake<br>Dairy alternative*<br>1 peach<br>Coffee/tea               | Meal replacement shake<br>Dairy alternative*<br>1 cup blackberries | Lemon pesto seafood fettuccine<br>Stir-steamed bell pepper<br>Oven-roasted broccoli<br>Lettuce salad • Sliced cucumber  |
| Meal replacement shake<br>Dairy alternative*<br>1 orange<br>Coffee/tea              | Meal replacement shake<br>Dairy alternative*<br>1 pomegranate      | Scallops with watercress and peppers<br>Steam-roasted cauliflower<br>Garlic green beans<br>Fried rice   |
| Meal replacement shake<br>Dairy alternative*<br>1 banana<br>Coffee/tea              | Meal replacement shake<br>Dairy alternative*<br>6 dried apricots   | Salmon with pesto mayonnaise sauce<br>Steam-roasted green beans • Asian asparagus<br>Pea-pod and water chestnut stir-fry<br>Garlic bread (one slice)                |
| Meal replacement shake<br>Dairy alternative*<br>2 small plums<br>Coffee/tea         | Meal replacement shake<br>Dairy alternative*<br>1/2 grapefruit     | Cheddar cheese, baby leek and tomato sandwich<br>Gazpacho • Stir-steamed portobello mushrooms<br>Fennel with lemon and crushed red pepper<br>Cinnamon raisin quinoa |
| Meal replacement shake<br>Dairy alternative*<br>1 cup strawberries<br>Coffee/tea    | Meal replacement shake<br>Dairy alternative*<br>1 banana           | Lemon pepper salmon • Stir-steamed kale<br>Sautéed escarole with shallots and hot chili oil<br>Cauliflower • Sautéed mushrooms<br>Plantain steak fries              |
| Meal replacement shake<br>Dairy alternative*<br>1 piece of cantaloupe<br>Coffee/tea | Meal replacement shake<br>Dairy alternative*<br>1/2 mango          | Lemon chicken • Steam-roasted fennel<br>Sautéed Swiss chard • Grilled red peppers<br>Sautéed spinach<br>Couscous  |

\* Dairy alternative could be 1 additional scoop of Meal Replacement powder or 1 cup yogurt or milk alternative or a healthy protein bar.

Weight management and healthy weight goals should encompass diet, dietary supplements, cleansing agents, exercise and cognitive restructuring, which is a fancy word for getting your mind into a different mode. Remember, being overweight is not all your fault. We live in a toxic society. Many of us see a continual barrage of advertising; are served super-sized portions; are fed tasty, addictive foods; and then are forced to sit at a desk all day in front of a computer. The math doesn't add up. You can't over-consume calories and not burn them off without gaining weight.

Our DNA is programmed to hold onto excess calories. In fact, the body is very efficient at getting each and every nutrient and calorie out of the foods we eat. Those of us who are on the planet today came from a long line of ancestors with very efficient bodies that stored excess calories as fat in times of famine. Western societies don't have famines any more, but our existing DNA hasn't gotten the message. That could take another million years of evolution! We need to work around this now. Everyone who is overweight needs to consume fewer calories and engage in physical activity. This has been shown to be the only recipe for success. The NSP program is designed to get you on the right path for success and to help you maintain a healthy weight.

## GLUTEN AND SUGAR

The Essential Foods plan makes it easy to avoid things like gluten and sugar. You should eat lots of fresh foods, which don't contain these ingredients. When eating packaged foods, you can avoid gluten by choosing items with gluten-free labels. Naturally occurring sugars, like those found in foods in the Essential Foods plan, have little impact on raising blood sugar levels. It is only when you consume foods with high levels of added sugar that you experience blood sugar swings, which promote hunger and weight gain.



## A WORD ABOUT VEGETARIANS

During active weight loss, the body needs more protein than in a weight-stable situation. Avoiding meats and dairy are tactics that some people have adopted. These food choices are fine, as long as you make sure your higher protein needs are met with high-quality vegetable proteins. Things like legumes and soybeans contain a good mix of essential amino acids in the right ratios. Some other nonmeat proteins are not as good. For example, almond milk has very few essential amino acids compared to soymilk or dairy milk.

You don't need to eat a steak to lose weight, but not eating more than a cup of most legumes three times a day will be problematic. When the brain senses a lack of essential amino acids, it signals the muscles and vital organs like your liver and kidneys to send some of their own tissue proteins into the bloodstream. In essence, the body is in auto-cannibalizing mode. If this persists, you'll be in a protein-deficit state and begin wasting away. Soon, you'll become lethargic and weak. This is all prevented with adequate protein intake from good protein sources.

### VEGETARIAN TIPS

For the vegetarian protein options below, the amounts are the equivalent of about 4 ounces from non-vegetarian sources (about 28 grams of dietary protein). Remember, you need to eat three of these every day during active weight loss. Each NSP meal replacement shake counts toward one serving of protein.

You can see that to get the equivalent of 4 ounces of animal protein (28 grams of dietary protein) from some of these vegetarian foods, you'll be eating a big portion. Vegetarian diets are very filling because the protein sources are typically rich in fiber, but watch out—the calories associated with each serving of vegetarian protein exceed those of any non-vegetarian protein. The equivalent animal-based protein contains about 250–300 calories. You can be healthy and lose weight on a vegetarian diet, but you need to be very careful. To get your required amount of protein each day, you'll have to avoid eating other high-calorie foods. The good news is you'll feel mighty full from these vegetarian proteins and won't have much room for other foods.

| PROTEIN SOURCES, VEGETARIAN        | SERVING SIZE                                    |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <b>LEGUMES</b>                     | <b>AVERAGE CALORIES PER SERVING = 300–500</b>   |
| Soybeans, edamame (green soybeans) | 1 cup   |
| Lentils                            | 1.5 cups  |
| Split peas                         | 1.7 cups  |
| Kidney beans                       | 1.8 cups  |
| Black or pinto beans               | 1.8 cups  |
| Navy beans                         | 1.9 cups  |
| Garbanzo beans                     | 1.9 cups  |
| <b>GRAINS</b>                      | <b>AVERAGE CALORIES PER SERVING = 700–1,300</b> |
| Whole wheat flour                  | 1.7 cups  |
| Buckwheat flour                    | 1.8 cups  |
| Couscous                           | 4.7 cups  |
| Quinoa                             | 1.3 cups  |
| Millet                             | 4.6 cups  |
| Brown rice                         | 6 cups  |
| <b>SEEDS/NUTS</b>                  | <b>AVERAGE CALORIES PER SERVING = 600–1,000</b> |
| Pumpkin seeds                      | 3/4 cup   |
| Peanut butter                      | 1/4 cup   |
| Black walnuts                      | 1 cup, scant                                    |
| Sunflower seeds                    | 1 cup, scant                                    |
| Almonds                            | 1 cup, scant                                    |
| Pistachios                         | 1 heaping cup                                   |
| Cashews                            | 1-1/3 cups                                      |