

NUTRITION

Balancing Act

An important part of eating nutritiously is making sure you have balanced meals

Many nutritionists look to create a balance of food groups in each meal. This includes grains, vegetables, fruits, dairy, and protein. The "MyPlate" model is a helpful tool for creating a balanced meal. It shows the relative amounts of each food group that should be included in a meal. The "MyPlate" model is a helpful tool for creating a balanced meal. It shows the relative amounts of each food group that should be included in a meal.

VEGETABLES
 Vegetables are a great source of fiber, vitamins, and minerals. They are also low in calories and fat. Try to include a variety of vegetables in your diet, including leafy greens, cruciferous vegetables, and starchy vegetables.

GRAIN
 Grains are a source of carbohydrates, fiber, and B vitamins. They are also a good source of energy. Try to include whole grains in your diet, such as whole wheat bread, brown rice, and oatmeal.

DAIRY
 Dairy products are a source of calcium, protein, and B vitamins. They are also a good source of energy. Try to include dairy products in your diet, such as milk, yogurt, and cheese.

PROTEIN
 Protein is essential for building and repairing tissues in the body. It is also a source of energy. Try to include protein in your diet, such as meat, fish, eggs, and beans.

FRUIT
 Fruits are a source of vitamins, minerals, and fiber. They are also low in calories and fat. Try to include a variety of fruits in your diet, including apples, oranges, and berries.

TEST YOURSELF
 Can you identify the food groups in the following meal?
 1. A bowl of cereal with milk
 2. A banana
 3. A glass of orange juice
 4. A slice of whole wheat bread
 5. A hard-boiled egg

DECISION DURING
 When you are eating, think about the food groups that are in your meal. Try to include a variety of food groups in each meal. This will help you create a balanced meal.

BALANCED BREAKFAST

Below is an example of a nutritionally balanced breakfast



GRAIN AND DAIRY COMBO
 Grains in cereal are a terrific source of carbohydrates, the starches and sugars that the body converts into energy. Other nutrients that cereal provides include fiber, protein, zinc, folic acid, iron, and B vitamins. Add milk to cereal, and you'll get the calcium that your body needs to strengthen its bones.

JOLT OF JUICE
 Orange juice is full of nutrients. A single eight-ounce serving of orange juice contains all the vitamin C that the body needs for one day. OJ is a good source of potassium, folate, and thiamine too. Orange juice also contains more than 60 phytonutrients, which researchers believe help keep the body healthy.

BANANA BONUS
 As with vegetables, fruits strengthen the body's immune system. They are packed with antioxidants that decrease your risk of heart disease, lower your blood pressure, and help prevent cancer. In particular, bananas are a great source of potassium, an essential mineral to maintaining normal blood pressure and heart function. Bananas are also a good source of calcium and they even help you maintain your eyesight.