

## Get Fit Nutrition: Weight Loss Tips and Strategies

### *Food Essentials*

Whether you are an endurance athlete or just starting to exercise for the first time, having a strong nutritional base in your game plan is essential.

Eating well and exercising are important to your overall health and well-being. Fueling your body is an integral part of your performance plan. The key to meeting your nutritional needs is to apply variety, balance, and moderation when choosing a high carbohydrate, moderate protein, and low fat diet.

*I'll have just a plate of food groups, please!*

The basis of your fitness diet should include all five food groups: grains; vegetables; fruits; milk; meat and beans; and a separate category for a small amount of healthy fats. At each meal you should have foods from at least three out of the five food groups to help ensure balance. For a snack, aim for one or two food groups. Here is an example of how easy it is to meet the minimum recommended three food groups at a meal:

*Breakfast:* whole-grain/high fiber cereal, skim milk, and a bowl of fresh strawberries or blueberries.

*How much is a serving size?*

Now that we know the five food groups, it is important to discuss serving sizes. Each portion size below is equal to one serving.

- Grains:** 1 slice bread, 1 cup dry cereal, or ½ cup cooked cereal, ½ cup cooked pasta or rice.
- Milk Group:** 1 cup milk or yogurt, 1 ½ oz hard cheese, 2 cups cottage cheese.
- Meat/Beans:** 1 egg, 1 oz cooked beef, chicken, or turkey, ¼ cup cooked legumes (dried beans, peas, lentils), ¼ cup baked or refried beans, 1 tbsp peanut butter.
- Fruit:** 1 large piece, 1 cup applesauce, 1 cup cooked/canned, ½ cup dried, 1 cup 100% fruit juice.
- Vegetables:** 1 cup raw leafy greens, ½ cup cooked greens, 1 cup cooked or raw vegetables, 1 medium baked/boiled potato, 1 large sweet potato.

Lastly, eat consistently throughout the day, never skip breakfast, and try to follow the 90/10 rule: 90% of the time, choose high quality, nutritious foods and the use the remaining 10% for treats. Remember, all foods can fit into a healthy lifestyle.

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To learn more about your nutritional needs and questions, purchase a 30 minute phone consultation with Alison from [GetFitLiveFit.org](http://GetFitLiveFit.org).