

# UVM ScholarWorks

## A Healthier Diet for Weight Loss

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# A Healthier Diet for Weight Loss

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“Eating well gives a spectacular joy to life and contributes immensely to goodwill and happy companionship. It is of great importance to the morale.” - Elsa Schiaparelli

## Goals:

- ★ Most families eat the same 10 recipes regularly.
- ★ We can replace less healthy recipes with healthier, but still appetizing and affordable, recipes.
- ★ Decreasing portion sizes of favorite recipes and foods is an effective and sustainable way to reduce weight.
- ★ Making a series of small changes is more sustainable and easy than overhauling everything.
- ★ A comprehensive approach of decreased dietary intake, regular physical activity, and behavioral strategies is the most effective strategy and supported by research!
- ★ Consider personal goals like walking around the block, or playing with kids and grandkids, for motivation.
- ★ Changing your diet and losing weight is very difficult. Be kind to yourself and start small!

# Information on Food

So your doctor told you to eat “lean proteins and more veggies...”

★ **Lean proteins:** High protein, low fat foods help build muscle and lose extra weight.

- Fish: salmon, cod, halibut, haddock, bass
  - Eating fish at least once a week has been linked with 15 percent lower risk of cardiovascular disease mortality when compared with those who don't eat fish!
- Plain greek yogurt
- Chicken or turkey breast
- Tofu
- Lean beef
- Eggs, egg whites
- Beans, legumes
  - Plant based proteins, like chickpeas, are nutrient dense and low in saturated fat.

★ **Vegetables:** Rich with nutrients such as vitamins A and C, fiber, folate, and potassium. These help lower blood pressure, cholesterol and risk of heart disease.

- Broccoli
- Arugula
- Carrots
- Bell peppers
- Sweet potatoes
- Avocado
- And many, many more!

## Recipe Ideas:



## Salmon and Tomatoes in Foil

Mark Bittman NYT

4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil  
1½ to 2 pounds salmon fillet, cut crosswise (4 pieces)  
12 cherry tomatoes, sliced in half  
Salt and pepper  
16 basil leaves

### Step 1

For each of 4 packages, place one 12-inch-long sheet of aluminum foil on top of another. Smear top sheet with ½ tablespoon olive oil, and layer a fillet of salmon, 6 tomato halves, salt and pepper, 4 basil leaves and another half tablespoon oil. Seal package by folding foil onto itself and crimping edges tightly. Repeat to make other packages, and refrigerate until ready to cook, no more than 24 hours later.

### Step 2

When you are ready to cook, heat oven to 500 degrees. Place packages in a roasting pan. (Or they can be cooked on top of the stove in 2 skillets over medium-high heat.) Cook 5 minutes (for medium-rare) to 8 minutes from the time the mixture starts to sizzle, or roughly 10 to 12 minutes total.

### Step 3

Let packages rest a minute, and cut a slit along the top with a knife. Use a knife and fork to open the package. Spoon the salmon, garnish and juices onto a plate, and serve.

Can serve with side salad, brown rice, quinoa, or cooked spinach.



## Greek Chicken with Cucumber Feta Salad Ali Slagle NYT

- 1½ cups plain Greek yogurt
- 3 garlic cloves, finely grated
- Kosher salt (Diamond Crystal)
- Black pepper
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano or mint
- 2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs, patted dry
- 1½ pounds cucumbers (preferably Japanese, Persian or mini, seedless cucumbers)
- 1 pound ripe tomatoes
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus more as needed
- 4 ounces feta, crumbled (about ¾ cup)
- ½ cup Kalamata olives, pitted and halved

### Step 1

In a large bowl, stir together the yogurt and garlic; season to taste with salt and pepper. Transfer ½ cup of the yogurt to a medium bowl and reserve for Step 5.

### Step 2

Coat the chicken: To the large bowl, add the oregano and stir to combine. Season the chicken all over with 1½ teaspoons salt and a few grinds of pepper. Add the chicken to the large bowl and turn to coat; set aside.

### Step 3

Start the salad: Smash the cucumbers with the side of your knife until craggy and split. Rip into ½- to 1-inch pieces and transfer to a colander placed in the sink. Slice or chop the tomatoes into bite-size pieces. Add to the cucumbers along with 1 ½ teaspoons salt. (It may seem like a lot of salt, but most will drain away.) Toss to combine and leave to drain.

### Step 4

In a large nonstick or well-seasoned cast-iron skillet, heat the olive oil over medium. Scrape excess marinade off the chicken, then cook the chicken in batches, adding oil to the pan if necessary, until it's well browned and releases from the pan, 5 to 7 minutes. Flip and cook until cooked through, another 5 to 7 minutes. Transfer to plates to rest. (For grilling info, see Tip.)

### Step 5

To the medium bowl of yogurt, add the feta and mash with a fork until a chunky paste forms. Shake the cucumbers and tomatoes to get rid of any excess moisture. Add to the feta yogurt along with the olives and stir until coated. The balance is dependent on your produce and feta, so season to taste with salt and pepper until flavors are vivid. Eat alongside the chicken.



## Tofu with Sizzling Scallion Oil Kay Chun NYT

- 1(14- to 16-ounce) package silken tofu
- Kosher salt (such as Diamond Crystal) and pepper
- ¼ cup neutral oil, such as safflower or canola
- 1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil
- ¼ cup thinly sliced scallions
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 1 tablespoon minced, peeled ginger
- 2 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro leaves and tender stems
- 2 teaspoons unseasoned rice vinegar
- 2 cups baby arugula

### **Step 1**

Remove the tofu from its package; drain the tofu then pat it dry. Scoop spoonfuls of the tofu onto a large platter and arrange in an even layer. Season lightly with salt and pepper.

### **Step 2**

In a small saucepan, combine neutral oil, sesame oil, scallions, garlic and ginger. Cook over medium-low, stirring occasionally, until oil is sizzling and garlic, ginger and scallions are softened but not browned, about 3 minutes.

### **Step 3**

Meanwhile, in a small bowl, combine soy sauce, cilantro and vinegar.

### **Step 4**

Spoon hot scallion mixture over the tofu. Top with arugula and drizzle with the cilantro sauce. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Find more heart healthy recipes here:

<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/recipes-complete-list/>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/recipes/heart-healthy-recipes/rcs-20077163>

## Other Tips and Tricks

### ★ Replace / Substitute:

- Garlic powder instead of garlic salt
- Use whole wheat breads, pastas
- Brown rice instead of white rice
- Sweet potatoes instead of white potatoes
- Spinach instead of lettuce
- Water instead of soda
- Turkey or plant-based burgers instead of beef burgers

★ Limit meals to one serving. Take a 10 minute break before getting a second helping.

★ Use smaller plates or bowls.

★ Share appetizers or dishes at restaurants.

★ Supply your pantry with healthier snacks so that when you are hungry, there are healthier choices available.

★ Meal prep in advance so that portions are controlled and available.

★ Drink plenty of water! Decrease soda and juice consumption.

## Resources:

- ★ My Fitness Pal (free app)
- ★ Myplate.gov
- ★ CDC Healthy Weight Loss Tools website
- ★ Weight Watchers
- ★ American Dietetic Association
- ★ Support groups

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