

MAKE THE MOST OUT OF YOUR MEALS

CHOOSE NUTRIENT-DENSE FOODS

Nutrient-Dense Foods Explained

“Nutrient-dense foods and beverages provide vitamins, minerals, and other health-promoting components and have little added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium.” (Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020).

Fill Your Plate with Nutrient-Dense Choices

Vegetables & Fruits: fresh, frozen, low sodium canned

Whole Grains: oats, rice, ancient grains (like quinoa and barley), pasta, bread

Lean Animal or Plant-based Proteins: seafood, fish, poultry, eggs, legumes, nuts, seeds, tofu, tempeh

Nuts and Seeds: tree nuts, peanuts, all seeds (like sunflower, pumpkin and chia)

Beans, Peas, and Lentils: all beans, split peas, lentils

Fat-free and Low-fat Dairy or Plant-based Alternatives: unsweetened milk, low-sugar yogurt, cheese

Benefits of Eating Nutrient-Dense Foods

- **FUEL.** Instead of receiving a boost of energy and crashing after a meal, nutrient-dense foods provide sustained energy, powering us through our day.
- **SATISFACTION.** Nutrient-dense foods make us more satisfied and comfortably full instead of thinking about our next meal.
- **DISEASE PREVENTION.** Nutrient-dense foods may decrease the risk of various health conditions and diseases including heart disease, obesity, and cancer.

Quick Guide for Choosing More Nutrient-Dense Foods

Nutrient-dense foods such as oatmeal, yogurt, and trail mix can quickly lose their nutrient-dense value when food companies add other ingredients. To avoid being fooled, be sure to read the nutrition facts label. The Percent Daily Value (%DV) for each nutrient provides quick insight to help you determine if a serving of food is high or low in a nutrient.

5% DV or less of a nutrient per serving is considered **low**. Choose foods **lower in %DV** for saturated fat, sodium, and added sugars

20% DV or more of a nutrient per serving is considered **high**. Choose foods **higher in %DV** for dietary fiber, vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium

