



How to Use Food as Fuel

If you tend to have an energy slump mid-day, what you ate in the morning could be to blame. Eating foods that are high in sugar may give you a temporary energy rush by quickly elevating your blood sugar. Once your cells absorb that sugar, you'll feel tired and hungry. Studies show that too much sugar also contributes to depression, joint pain, heart disease, and more.

Foods that energize

Instead of reaching for an energy drink or a second cup of coffee and relying on caffeine for energy, try getting a boost through nutritious food as fuel. In general, it's best to eat a balanced diet—including vegetables, fruits, protein, and whole grains.

Within that balanced diet, these foods will help you maintain a steady energy level:

- **Complex carbohydrates**, such as oatmeal, fruits, and vegetables
- **Healthy fats**, like nuts, fish, and avocados
- **Proteins**, including eggs, skinless chicken, Greek yogurt, and beans

Fast, affordable tips for better nutrition

Eating healthier doesn't have to take a lot of time or money. Try these time- and money-saving tips for improving your diet:

- **Buy frozen vegetables.** Because the frozen produce you buy from your local grocery store is flash-frozen right after picking, it's still rich in vitamins, minerals, fiber,

and other nutrients. Frozen foods also keep longer than fresh and are usually less expensive.

- **Double-up on recipes.** When you have time to cook, make a double batch. Use the rest for another meal later in the week, or freeze the leftovers.
- **Make a meal out of snacks.** You don't have to "cook" at all to have a healthy, energy-boosting meal. Just throw together some snacks like nuts, raw vegetables, cheese, fruit, and low-sodium deli meat.

Save the sugar for special occasions

You can still have treats—just not every day. Save the sugar for special occasions, and treat yourself to a healthy meal (and plenty of energy) instead!

Giving your body the fuel it needs can help you maintain your energy and your mood throughout the day.

1. <https://www.webmd.com/diabetes/features/how-sugar-affects-your-body>
2. <https://www.webmd.com/diet/ss/slideshow-food-energy-boost>
3. <https://www.insider.com/guides/health/diet-nutrition/are-frozen-vegetables-healthy>



6 Easy Tips for Better Nutrition

Would you like to have more energy, be more productive, and feel happier? Giving your nutrition a boost could help you accomplish all three.

Better nutrition doesn't necessarily mean completely overhauling your diet. Instead, try these simple steps for incorporating healthy choices into your current routine.

- 1. Make smart swaps.** Substitute whole-grain rice for white rice and fruit for sugary treats.
- 2. Drink more water.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends women drink 2.7 liters of water per day and men drink 3.7 liters of water per day. Getting enough water is great for your energy level, skin, joints, and more. *Note: Living or working in hot, humid environments, and extended periods of strenuous exercise may increase daily needs.*
- 3. Track what you eat.** Looking back at what you have eaten over a day or a week may help you make healthier choices in the future.
- 4. Cook at home more often.** Zipping through the fast food drive-through is easy. But fast food is often high in fat, sodium, and preservatives—and low in nutrition. Cooking (or even just “assembling”) meals at home gives you more control and may also save you money.
- 5. Keep healthy snacks on hand.** Think of healthy snacks you will actually eat, and keep those at home, in your car, and at work. (Nuts, apples, and bananas are great snack options that don't need refrigeration.)

- 6. Change it up.** A big key to a healthy diet is eating a variety of fruits, vegetables, and lean proteins. One way to think of it is in terms of color—try to eat healthy foods in a variety of colors each day.

Take small steps to work more fruits, vegetables, and healthy proteins into your diet. Before long, healthier eating will be a habit, and you will feel better for it.





Intuitive Eating

Having a healthy relationship with food is important for our physical and mental health. That's one reason many people have turned to intuitive eating.

According to the [National Eating Disorders Association](https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/), intuitive eating focuses on trusting your inner wisdom to make choices about foods that feel good in your body—without judgment and without influence from diet culture. The intent is to stop cycles of overindulgence followed by deprivation—and the self-loathing that often goes with it—and develop a more natural, compassionate approach to food and our bodies.

The principles of intuitive eating:

- Rejecting the diet mentality
- Listening to your body's hunger (and fullness) cues
- Rediscovering the satisfaction of food
- Embracing body movements that feel good to you

Overall, experts recommend focusing on your health goals—not weight-loss or appearance goals. This can help you develop a more natural, positive relationship with food, exercise, and your body.



Having a healthy relationship with food is important for our physical and mental health.

HOMEMADE PROTEIN BARS

Ingredients

DATE VERSION:

- 2.5 cups (250 g) old-fashioned certified gluten free rolled oats
- 1 scoop (36 g) gluten free protein powder (vanilla or chocolate)
- 10 (150 g, as pitted) pitted soft Medjool dates
- ¼ cup (84 g) pure maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ cup (2 fluid ounces) milk (any kind) plus more as necessary
- 3 ounces unsweetened chocolate chopped and melted (optional)
- 8 ounces bittersweet chocolate chopped and melted (optional, for coating)

NUT BUTTER VERSION:

- 2.5 cups (250 g) old-fashioned rolled oats
- 1 ½ scoops (54 g) gluten free protein powder (vanilla or chocolate)
- ½ cup (40 g) unsweetened cocoa powder natural or Dutch-processed (can replace with more protein powder)
- ¾ cup (192 g) smooth natural nut butter
- ¼ cup (84 g) pure maple syrup
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ cup (2 fluid ounces) milk (any kind) plus more as necessary
- 3 ounces unsweetened chocolate chopped and melted (can replace with 2 tablespoons more nut butter + 1 tablespoon pure maple syrup)
- 8 ounces bittersweet chocolate chopped and melted (optional, for coating)

Instructions

1. Line an 8-inch square baking pan or standard 9-inch x 5-inch loaf pan with unbleached parchment paper and set it aside.
2. Place the oats in a food processor fitted with the steel blade and process until ground into a flour.
 - **DATE VERSION:** Add the protein powder, dates, maple syrup, vanilla, salt, 1/4 cup milk and (optional) melted unsweetened chocolate.
 - **NUT BUTTER VERSION:** Add the protein powder, cocoa powder (or more protein powder), nut butter, maple syrup, salt, 1/4 cup milk and melted unsweetened chocolate (or more nut butter and maple syrup).
3. Process until the mixture is well-combined and is tacky (but not sticky) to the touch. Add more milk by the teaspoonful and process, only as necessary for the mixture to reach the proper consistency. *If you opt not to use the melted unsweetened chocolate, you will have to add more milk, and the bars will not hold together as firmly when shaped.*
4. Transfer the mixture to the prepared pan and press firmly into an even layer, smoothing the top as much as possible.
5. Cover with parchment and place in the refrigerator or freezer to chill until firm (about 1 hour in the refrigerator, or 20 minutes in the freezer). Remove the bars from the pan and slice into 10 or 12 equal-sized rectangular bars.
6. Dip in the optional melted bittersweet chocolate to coat and allow to sit at room temperature until set.
7. Wrap the bars individually in waxed paper, and store in the refrigerator.

Prep Time	Cook Time	Servings
10 minutes	25 minutes	10 bars



Nutrition Facts

Calories	288
Total Fat	17g
Cholesterol	8mg
Sodium	155mg
Carbohydrate	29g
Dietary Fiber	6g
Total Sugars	8g
Protein	13g



Track what you eat

Keep a food journal for one week. Looking back at what you've eaten over a day or a week may help you make healthier choices in the future.

Employer Completion Form

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I successfully completed the Nutrition Activity by:

Signed: _____ Date: _____

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Your Wellbeing Activity **Track what you eat**

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