



## Tailoring Meals for Dietary Restrictions

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### Food Allergies and Sensitivities

- **Wheat Allergy**
  - Creates an allergy-causing antibody to proteins found in wheat
- **Wheat Sensitivity**
  - Creates a non-allergic negative reaction to eating wheat
- **Celiac Disease**
  - Gluten, which is a protein in wheat, causes an abnormal immune system reaction in the small intestine
  - Causes the microvilli in the small intestine to lay down, making it difficult to absorb vitamins, minerals, and nutrients.

## Food Allergies and Sensitivities (cont.)

- **Dairy Allergy**
  - Creates a negative immune response to milk, most commonly to a protein in milk
- **Lactose Intolerance**
  - The inability to digest lactose, a sugar found in milk. People with lactose intolerance do not produce enough lactase, the enzyme that helps to break down lactose.

## Food Allergies and Sensitivities (cont.)

- **Nut Allergies**
  - An immune reaction caused by sensitivity to a component of nuts
  - Nut allergies are becoming more and more common
  - Reactions can range from a rash to anaphylaxis
  - Tree nut allergy and peanut allergy are different. Tree nuts are considered a fruit while peanuts are considered a legume.

## Wheat/Gluten-Free Carbohydrate Ideas

- Brown, white, and wild rice
- White potatoes and sweet potatoes
- Oats (need to come from a facility that guarantees there is no cross-contamination)
- Quinoa (high in protein too)
- Buckwheat
- Millet
- Teff

## Wheat/Gluten-Free Carbohydrate Ideas (cont.)

- Amaranth
- Buckwheat
- Corn, cornmeal, corn tortillas
- Wheat-free pasta (rice, corn, quinoa...)
- Gluten-Free Bread, Rolls, Bagels, Waffles, Crackers, Pizza Crust

## Grains to Avoid for Wheat/Gluten-Free Diets

- Wheat
- Semolina (in pasta)
- Bulgur
- Barley
- Rye
- Triticale
- Oats with the possibility of contamination

## Dairy/Lactose-Free Alternatives

- Instead of butter - vegetable/nut oils, non-hydrogenated margarine, coconut oil
  - Instead of milk - soy, rice, almond, or coconut milk
  - Instead of cheese - veggie or soy cheese (double check for casein in ingredient list)
  - Instead of yogurt - soy, rice, hemp, or coconut milk yogurt
  - Instead of ice cream - soy, rice, or coconut milk ice cream
- \*Lactaid products work with lactose-intolerance but not dairy allergies!***

## Nut-Free Alternatives

- Some people with nut allergies do not have an allergy to seeds such as sesame seeds, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds
- Instead of peanut butter - sunflower seed butter
- Instead of nut butters in recipes - sesame seeds paste (Tahini)
- As a crunch component in a meal - toasted pumpkin or sunflower seeds

## Dietary Concerns for Medical Conditions

- **Diabetes**
  - Portion size
  - Amount (grams and exchanges) of carbohydrate
  - Amount of sugar/sweetener
  - Aim for whole-grains as much as possible instead of simple carbohydrates. Whole-grains cause a slower rise in blood sugar and less demand on the pancreas.

## Dietary Concerns for Medical Conditions (cont.)

- **High Blood Pressure and Heart Disease**

- Portion size
- Lower fat options
- Focus on plant fats (liquid at room temperature) instead of animal and man-made fats (solid at room temperature)
- Lower sodium options
- Low sodium diet - 1400-1500mg per day. One teaspoon of salt has almost 2000mg of sodium!

## Dietary Concerns for Medical Conditions (cont.)

- **High Cholesterol**

- Quality of fats - choose plant-based fats that are liquid at room temperature
- Emphasize fish oil
- Choose lean meats and low-fat dairy
- High fiber carbohydrates - choose whole-grains

## Altering Meals to Accommodate Dietary Needs

- Keep main components of a meal the same including protein, carbohydrate, and vegetable and change the seasonings and sauce to accommodate dietary needs
- Having one “core” meal minimizes the need for multiple types of meals
- Exception would be celiac disease and wheat allergies/intolerances where you might need to alter the carbohydrate choice

## Examples

- Use wheat-free soy sauce (tamari sauce) in a stir-fry sauce in place of regular soy sauce.
- Use a lemon-white wine sauce instead of a creamy sauce.
- Use a cornstarch-thickened gravy instead of a flour-thickened gravy.
- Bread chicken in corn meal or wheat-free bread crumbs instead of wheat bread crumbs.
- Avoid seasoning blends with wheat added.
- Leave nuts out of dishes to accommodate nut allergies and add herbs for flavor or a different crunch component.

## How to Increase Flavor While Reducing Sodium, Fat, and Processed Foods

- Fat-free, sodium-free flavoring components
  - fresh and dried herbs
  - dried seasonings (watch sodium in spice blends)
  - onions
  - ginger
  - garlic
  - peppers
  - lemongrass
  - garlic powder is a great salt substitute!
- Increase flavor in foods by adding these components instead of salt and fat

## Flavor Profiles

- Follow flavor profiles to create flavor in food while sticking to a theme
  - Mediterranean/Greek - lemon, garlic, oregano, olive oil
  - Asian - ginger, garlic, lemongrass, reduced-sodium soy sauce, sesame oil, rice vinegar
  - Italian - tomato, garlic, basil
  - Middle Eastern - yogurt, dill, lemon, garlic



## Flavor Profiles (cont.)

- Tex Mex - cumin, chili powder, garlic, lime juice
- French/Provençal - olive oil, garlic, basil/herbs, wine
- African - cumin, coriander, cinnamon, ginger, onion, tomato, peanuts
- Spanish - olive oil, garlic, nuts, onion, peppers, tomato
- By using these flavor enhancers and profiles, processed foods such as sauces, gravies, breading, and condiments, can be reduced or eliminated.

## Creating Appealing Vegetarian Meals

- Vegetarian protein ideas - beans, lentils, nuts, nut butters, tofu, edamame (soy beans), eggs, meat substitutes (meatless burgers, patties, sausage, nuggets), dairy proteins (cheese, yogurt, Greek yogurt, ricotta cheese)
- Some dishes work well when you switch a meat protein out with a vegetarian protein. In other recipes, it might be best to have a separate vegetarian option.

## Vegetarian Meal Ideas from a “Core” Meal

- **Core Meal:** Lasagna with ricotta and meat sauce
- **Vegetarian Meal:** Eliminate the meat sauce and use a marinara sauce instead, keeping the base recipe the same. Part-skim ricotta serves as the protein.
- **Core Meal:** Stir-fry with chicken, veggies, and rice
- **Vegetarian Meal:** Switch the chicken out with pre-marinated, sautéed, cubed tofu

## Vegetarian Meal Ideas from a “Core” Meal (cont.)

- **Core Meal:** Turkey and vegetable chili
- **Vegetarian Meal:** Make the same recipe but use meatless crumbles in place of ground turkey
- **Core Meal:** Baked chicken cutlet or fish fillet
- **Vegetarian Meal:** Substitute the chicken or fish with a veggie chicken patty or make a homemade bean/lentil burger. Keep the side dishes the same.
- **Core Meal:** Soup or stew with meat
- **Vegetarian Meal:** Leave the meat out and use any type of bean instead

## Vegetarian Meals For Everyone!

- Some vegetarian meals work for all diets and are appealing even though there is no meat. Examples:
  - Veggie or Spinach Lasagna (ricotta/cheese as protein)
  - Black Bean or Lentil Burgers (beans are very inexpensive!)
  - Minestrone Soup with Kidney Beans
  - Veggie Pizza
  - Vegetable and Black Bean Burritos/Fajitas



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