

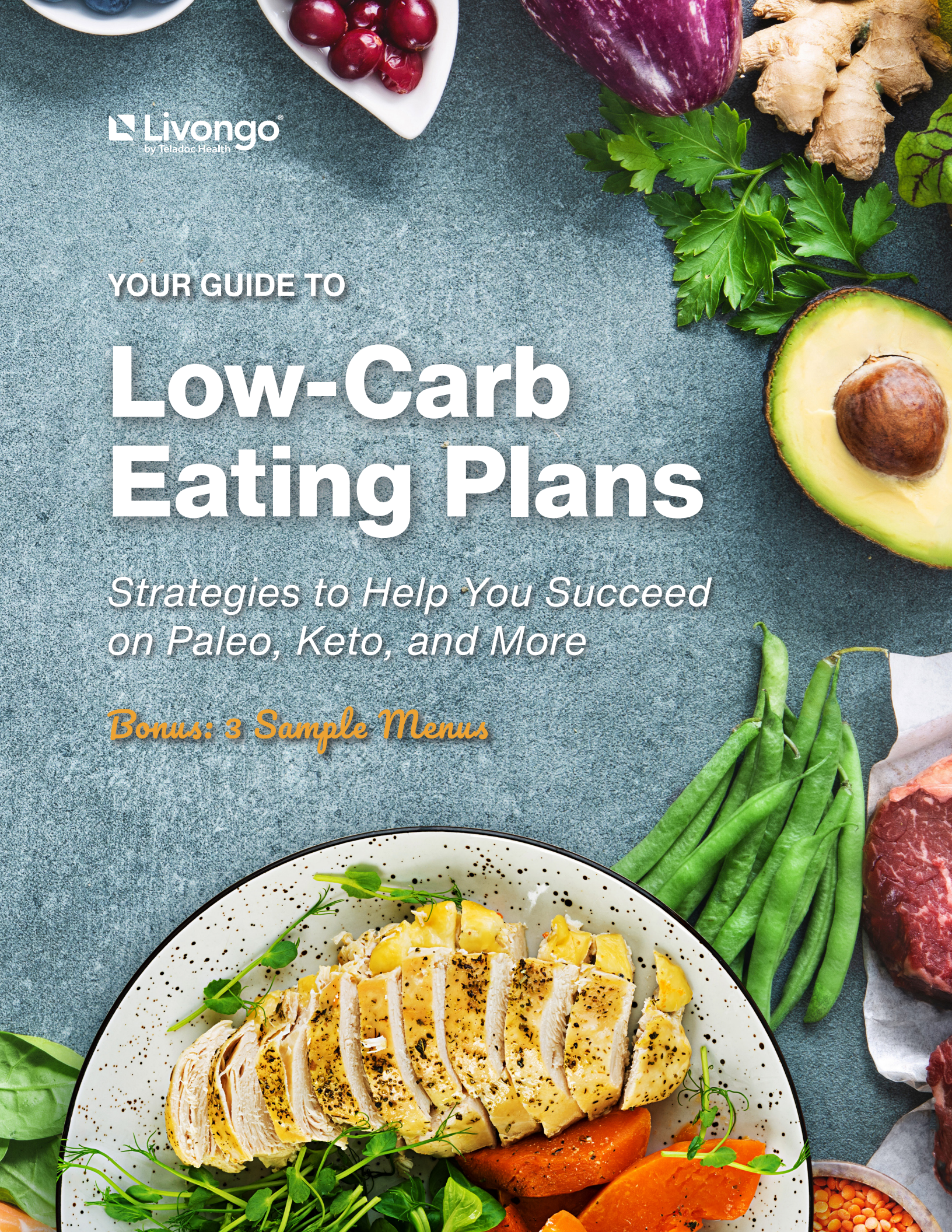


YOUR GUIDE TO

# Low-Carb Eating Plans

*Strategies to Help You Succeed  
on Paleo, Keto, and More*

*Bonus: 3 Sample Menus*





## Welcome!

There's a lot of buzz around low-carb diets right now. While there is no single meal plan that is best for everyone, low-carb eating is one method that may help you reach your goals. No matter what eating style you choose, the best results come from changes you can stick with for the long term.

That's why we created The Livongo Guide to Low-Carb Diets. This guide will help you understand the pros and cons of different low-carb plans. We'll also give you tools for planning healthy low-carb meals and snacks to fuel you on your journey.

We all have different nutrition needs, likes and dislikes, budgets, and more. That's why we want you to have the skills to create a strategy that suits you. We hope you use this guide to create lasting changes so you can live better.

Enjoy!  
Your Livongo Team

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## Understanding the Basics

Food is made of three basic nutrients that provide fuel to your body: carbohydrates, protein, and fats. Knowing how the body uses each nutrient and meeting the goals below will help you build meals that are healthy and satisfying.



### CARBS

Carbs are the sugars and starches that your body breaks down into glucose to use for energy. It's important for people with diabetes to closely monitor carb intake. Nutritious carbs like whole grains, legumes, and starchy veggies are higher in fiber. That causes a slower rise to your blood sugar level. Too many of the less nutritious kinds, like added sugars, can cause weight gain and therefore increase your risk of diabetes and heart disease.

**Your goal: When choosing carbs, opt for smaller portions of the more nutritious carb foods. Avoid added sugars.**



### NON-STARCHY VEGGIES

Non-starchy veggies are low in carbs and calories and a great source of fiber, vitamins, and minerals.

**Your goal: For most low-carb plans, you can fill half of your plate with a variety of non-starchy veggies at each meal. It's generally not necessary to limit portion sizes like you do with other carb-containing foods — eat as much as you desire.**



### PROTEIN

Protein helps build and keep muscle. It also helps you feel full. Protein has very little impact on your blood sugar.

**Your goal: Include protein when eating carbs. This slows the rise of blood sugar following a meal or snack. Opt for lean or plant-based protein sources.**



### FATS

Fats help your brain and nervous system work, and add great flavor and texture to food. When eaten alone, fats will not raise your blood sugar.

**Your goal: Choose foods that contain healthy fats (polyunsaturated and monounsaturated). Limit saturated fats and avoid trans fats. Saturated and trans fats can raise your bad (LDL) cholesterol levels. Trans fats also lower your good (HDL) cholesterol levels. Replacing saturated and trans fats with unsaturated fats can reduce your risk for heart disease.**

## Getting to Know the Low-Carb Plans

When a person says they are eating “low-carb,” they could mean a number of things. Often, low-carb dieters focus on one of the most popular plans: the standard low-carb diet, the paleo diet, or the keto diet. Here’s what you need to know about the top three:

### STANDARD LOW-CARB DIET:

This plan limits foods containing carbs like grains, starchy veggies, and fruit. It is focused on foods that are higher in protein and fat. There is no consensus on how many carbs are allowed on a low-carb diet, but less than 130 grams per day is typical. A standard low-carb diet generally allows for small amounts of nutrient-dense, carb-containing foods.

#### Pros:

- + May improve blood sugar management
- + Can promote weight loss

#### Cons:

- May be lower in fiber
- If you have kidney disease, eating too much protein can harm your kidney function. Check with your doctor or health coach to find out how much protein is safe for you to eat.

**Coaching tip:** Choose healthier sources of protein like fish, lean meat, eggs, nuts, and tofu.



# Getting to Know the Low-Carb Plans



## PALEO DIET:

Short for “Paleolithic diet,” this plan focuses on foods that were available to our Stone Age ancestors. Lean meats (like grass-fed beef), fish (wild caught), fruits, vegetables, and nuts and seeds are mainstays. Grain foods, dairy, legumes, and refined sugars are avoided. Overall, this diet is higher in protein, moderate in fat, and low in carbs. It is also generally high in fiber and low in sodium and refined sugars.

### Pros:

- + May improve blood sugar management
- + Can promote weight loss

### Cons:

- Is more restrictive
- Focus is on pricier foods
- Can be difficult to maintain over the long run
- If you have kidney disease, eating too much protein can harm your kidney function. Check with your doctor or health coach to find out how much protein is safe for you to eat.

**Coaching tip: Watch your calories and carbs; Paleo treats made using ingredients like nuts, nut butters, and honey can add up.**

## KETO DIET:

This very low-carb plan focuses on fat to supply as much as 90% of daily calories. It requires fewer than 50 grams of carbs per day as well as limited protein, which sends your body into a state of ketosis. This causes the body to burn stored fat as fuel instead of carbohydrates. High-fat foods like nuts, seeds, avocados, olive oil, coconut oil, ghee, and butter are encouraged in high amounts.

### Pros:

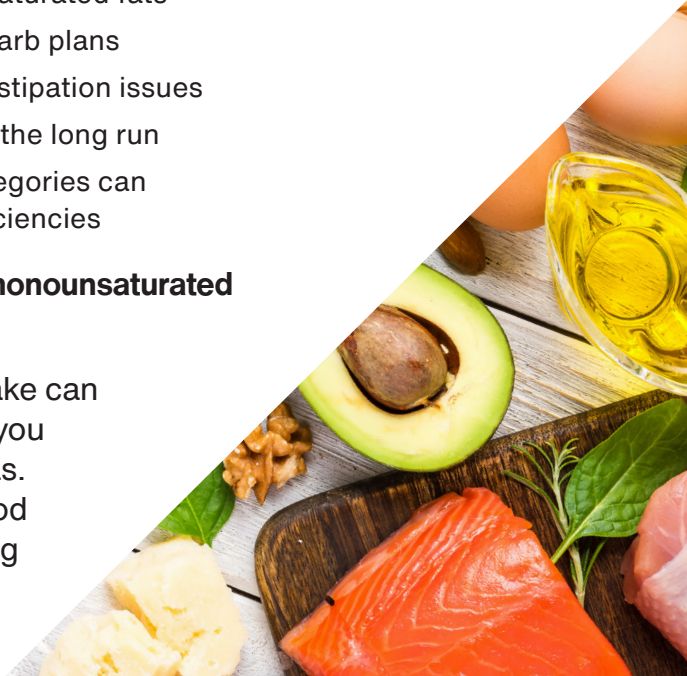
- + May improve blood sugar management
- + Can promote weight loss

### Cons:

- May be more likely to raise cholesterol than other low-carb plans because of increased intake of saturated fats
- The most restrictive of the low-carb plans
- May cause liver, kidney, and constipation issues
- Can be difficult to maintain over the long run
- Long-term exclusion of food categories can increase the risk of nutrient deficiencies

**Coaching tip: Focus on eating polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats; eat less saturated fat and avoid trans fats.**

**Note:** If you have diabetes, decreasing your carb intake can cause hypoglycemia (low blood sugar), especially if you are taking medication such as insulin or sulfonylureas. Monitor for signs of low blood sugar, check your blood sugar often, and talk with your doctor about adjusting medication to keep your blood sugar in range.



## Putting Low-Carb Plans on the Plate

Depending on the plan you choose, the proportion of foods on your plate may look a little different. Here are examples of plates that meet the requirements of standard low-carb, Paleo, and Keto plans.

### STANDARD LOW-CARB PLATE:

**50%** **Non-Starchy Veggies**  
Salad, broccoli,  
asparagus, zucchini,  
bell pepper

**30%** **Proteins**  
Fish, poultry, tofu,  
lean beef

**20%** **Carbs**  
Quinoa, brown rice,  
sweet potatoes



## Putting Low-Carb Plans on the Plate

### PALEO PLATE:

**50%** **Non-Starchy Veggies**  
Salad, broccoli,  
asparagus, zucchini,  
bell pepper

**25%** **Proteins**  
Fish, grass-fed beef,  
poultry, eggs

**25%** **Carbs**  
Sweet potatoes,  
white potatoes,  
plantains



### KETO PLATE:

**60%** **Fats**  
Avocado, nuts,  
seeds, olive oil,  
ghee, olives

**25%** **Proteins**  
Poultry, fish, eggs,  
full-fat dairy

**15%** **Non-Starchy Veggies**  
Salad, broccoli,  
asparagus, zucchini,  
bell pepper



# Understanding Food Labels

Learning how to read food labels can help you make healthier choices. Use this guide to help you make the most of the Nutrition Facts label.

- Keep in mind that the healthiest foods, like fruits and veggies, don't have food labels.

## Step 1: What's in a Serving?

- Read the number of servings per container.
- Learn the size of each serving.
- Remember, the numbers below are for ONE serving
- If you're eating more than one serving, multiply the numbers below by that amount.

## Step 2: Aim for Less:

- Saturated fat
- Trans fats
- Sodium (below 2,300 mg per day)
- Carbs
- Sugar
- Added sugars

## Step 3: Aim for More:

- Fiber
- Protein
- Polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats (Keto plan)
- Nutrients like vitamin D, iron, potassium, and calcium

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
<b>Serving size</b>	<b>2/3 cup (55g)</b>
<b>Amount per serving</b>	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>230</b>
<b>% Daily Value*</b>	
<b>Total Fat</b> 8g	<b>10%</b>
Saturated Fat 1g	<b>5%</b>
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg	<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 160mg	<b>7%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 37g	<b>13%</b>
Dietary Fiber 4g	<b>14%</b>
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	<b>20%</b>
<b>Protein</b> 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	6%

## Step 4: Check the Ingredients List (separate from the Nutrition Facts Panel)

- Ingredients are listed in order by quantity, from highest to lowest.
- Avoid food additives like "monosodium glutamate," "sodium nitrates," and "food coloring." These are likely processed foods.
- Avoid items with ingredients that contain the word "hydrogenated" — this means trans fat. Avoid added sugars, often listed as "high fructose corn syrup," "dextrose," "sucrose," "honey," and "molasses."

## Smarter Low-Carb Snacks

Having a snack between meals can curb hunger throughout the day. Well-planned snacks can also keep you from eating too much at meals. Here are some low-carb snack ideas to keep you satisfied until mealtime.

**LC** = Low-Carb      **P** = Paleo      **K** = Keto



**2 hard-boiled eggs, halved and sprinkled with everything bagel seasoning**

**LC P K**



**Trail mix: Almonds, pecans, pumpkin seeds, and coconut flakes**

**LC P K**



**Cottage cheese topped with sliced almonds and cinnamon**

**LC K**



**Sliced turkey breast rolled around a pickle spear**

**LC P K**



**Guacamole and red bell pepper slices**

**LC P K**



**Peanut butter and celery sticks**

**LC P K**



**Lettuce wraps filled with tuna salad**

**LC P K**



**Steamed edamame**

**LC P**

If you're craving a snack, check in with your body. Are you low on energy? Is your stomach empty? Avoid eating when you're bored or stressed. Instead, save snacking for when you need extra fuel to make it to the next meal.



## Breakfast: Eggs in Pepper Rings

(Makes 1 serving)

Calories	Fat	Sat. Fat	Sodium	Carbs	Fiber	Protein
335	20.3 g	4.7 g	149.9 mg	23.3 g	5.8 g	14.6 g

### INGREDIENTS

2 ¼-inch bell pepper round slices (any color)

2 eggs

½ medium avocado

### PREPARATION

Heat a nonstick skillet sprayed with cooking spray over medium heat. Add pepper slices. Crack an egg in the middle of each ring. Cook until set, and flip. Cook until desired doneness. Serve with ½ avocado, sliced.

Serve with 1 cup grapes.

#### Flavor boost:

Sprinkle with red pepper flakes and cumin.



## Lunch: Romaine Tuna Wraps

(Makes 1 serving)

Calories	Fat	Sat. Fat	Sodium	Carbs	Fiber	Protein
422	17.4 g	2.4 g	775.4 mg	24.1 g	5.5 g	42.2 g

### INGREDIENTS

1 5-oz can chunk light tuna in water

1 Tbsp mayonnaise

2 Tbsp chopped celery

½ carrot, chopped

4 pieces romaine lettuce

1 Tbsp lemon juice

### PREPARATION

Drain tuna and flake with a fork in a small bowl. Add mayonnaise, celery, and carrot, and mix well. Distribute between romaine lettuce pieces, and drizzle with lemon juice.

Serve with ¼ cup roasted chickpeas and ½ cup carrot slices.

#### Flavor boost:

Top with sriracha.



## Dinner: Lemon Sheet-Pan Chicken & Vegetables (Makes 4 servings)

Calories	Fat	Sat. Fat	Sodium	Carbs	Fiber	Protein
357	11.2 g	2.1 g	474.7 mg	26.6 g	6.7 g	37.6 g

### INGREDIENTS

- 1¼ lb boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 small head broccoli, cut into small florets
- 1 zucchini, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 yellow squash, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 Tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tsp Italian seasoning
- 1 tsp each garlic and onion powder
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese

### PREPARATION

Preheat oven to 400°F. In a large bowl, mix together chicken, broccoli, zucchini, squash, olive oil, lemon juice, Italian seasoning, garlic powder, and onion powder. Spread mixture onto sheet pan and bake for 10 minutes. Toss ingredients and return to oven for another 10 minutes, or until chicken is cooked through and vegetables are tender. Sprinkle with Parmesan and serve.

Serve with ½ medium baked sweet potato.

#### Flavor boost:

Add chili powder to chicken mixture before baking.

## Snack Options:



String cheese stick



Celery with peanut butter



Jicama tossed with chili powder and lime juice



## Breakfast: Three-Ingredient Pancakes

(Makes 1 serving)

Calories	Fat	Sat. Fat	Sodium	Carbs	Fiber	Protein
387	22.2 g	3.2 g	72.2 mg	33.3 g	6.1 g	13.6 g

### INGREDIENTS

1 banana  
1 egg  
2 Tbsp almond butter

### PREPARATION

In a bowl, mash banana. Add egg and whisk together. Add almond butter and whisk until combined. Pour 1 large pancake or 3 small pancakes in a medium skillet over a low flame. When pancakes begin to turn brown, carefully flip and cook on the other side until browned.

#### Flavor boost:

Top with shredded unsweetened coconut.



## Lunch: Crunchy Chicken Salad

(Makes 2 servings)

Calories	Fat	Sat. Fat	Sodium	Carbs	Fiber	Protein
560	35.1 g	5.7 g	598.5 mg	30.5 g	5.6 g	30.5 g

### INGREDIENTS

#### Salad:

5 cups slaw mix  
1 red bell pepper, cored and sliced  
1 medium orange, peeled and chopped  
7 oz grilled chicken breast, sliced  
¼ cup roasted cashews

#### Dressing:

2 Tbsp olive oil  
2 Tbsp rice wine vinegar  
1 Tbsp sesame oil  
¼ tsp minced ginger

### PREPARATION

In a large bowl, combine slaw mix, bell pepper, orange, chicken, and cashews. In a small bowl, whisk together dressing ingredients. Toss salad and dressing together.

#### Flavor boost:

Squeeze with fresh lime juice.



## Dinner: Cauliflower Rice Taco Bowl

(Makes 2 servings)

Calories	Fat	Sat. Fat	Sodium	Carbs	Fiber	Protein
429	31.9 g	4.4 g	542.7 mg	19.3 g	10.3 g	16.4 g

### INGREDIENTS

3 Tbsp olive oil (divided into 1 and 2 tablespoons)

18 large peeled and deveined shrimp

4 cups frozen cauliflower rice

½ tsp chipotle powder

½ tsp garlic powder

1 avocado, sliced

¼ cup cilantro, chopped

½ cup salsa

### PREPARATION

Heat 1 tablespoon of oil in a medium skillet over medium-high heat. Add thawed shrimp when oil sizzles upon contact. Sauté until pink and opaque, around 4-5 minutes. Set shrimp aside. Lower heat and add the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil to the pan. Sauté frozen cauliflower rice with chipotle and garlic powders until cooked through, around 6 minutes. Divide rice between two bowls and top with shrimp, avocado, cilantro, and salsa.

### Flavor boost:

Add hot sauce.

## Snack Options:



Almonds



Olives



Hard-boiled eggs



## Breakfast: Scrambled Eggs

(Makes 1 serving)

Calories	Fat	Sat. Fat	Sodium	Carbs	Fiber	Protein
414	37.7 g	7.1 g	709.5 mg	1 g	0 g	17.7 g

### INGREDIENTS

2 Tbsp olive oil  
2 eggs  
1 oz smoked salmon

### PREPARATION

In a medium skillet, heat olive oil over a medium flame. Scramble 2 eggs. Serve with smoked salmon.

#### Flavor boost:

Top with fresh herbs like basil and parsley.



## Lunch: Avocado Hemp Salad

(Makes 1 serving)

Calories	Fat	Sat. Fat	Sodium	Carbs	Fiber	Protein
530	44.1 g	5.3 g	16.4 mg	18.3 g	11.8 g	15 g

### INGREDIENTS

1 ripe avocado  
½ cup cherry tomatoes, halved  
1 tsp olive oil  
1 tsp lemon juice  
¼ cup shelled hemp seeds

### PREPARATION

Cut avocado into chunks and toss with tomatoes. Drizzle with olive oil, lemon juice, and hemp seeds.

#### Flavor boost:

Top with smoked paprika.





## Dinner: Mozzarella Tomato Chicken

(Makes 2 servings)

Calories	Fat	Sat. Fat	Sodium	Carbs	Fiber	Protein
501	42.6 g	6.3 g	534 mg	3.5 g	1 g	25.9 g

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 Tbsp avocado oil
- 2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 1 oz fresh mozzarella
- ½ tomato, sliced
- ¼ cup black olives, sliced
- ¼ cup fresh basil
- ¼ cup olive oil

### PREPARATION

Preheat oven to 375°F. In a medium skillet, heat oil. Add chicken to the pan. Cook until seared, around 2-3 minutes. Flip and sear on the other side, around 2-3 minutes. Arrange chicken in one layer in a glass dish. Top with mozzarella, tomatoes, and olives. Bake for around 25 minutes, or until chicken is cooked through. Finish with fresh basil and olive oil.

### Flavor boost:

Sprinkle with balsamic vinegar.

## Snack Options:



½ Avocado



Olives



Macadamia nuts



Questions about figuring out what plan is right for you? We can help.

**Message a coach** through your Livongo app or schedule a coaching session at [coach.livongo.com](https://coach.livongo.com).

This content is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.