

# Optimizing Your Nutrition

Mary Reher, MS, RDN, CSO, LDN  
Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center  
of Northwestern University



# Objectives

## Quick Nutrition Tips:

- Prepare
- Plan
- Add Color!



# Prepare and Plan

## Going out to eat

- Look at menu ahead of time
- Ask for a to-go box with meal
- Side of vegetables or fruit
- Drink water or unsweetened beverages
- Order 2 appetizers instead of meal



# Prepare and Plan

## Happy Hour for 21 +

- Order water with your drink
- Alcoholic beverages
  - Wine, light beer, vodka soda
- Appetizer to share
  - Hummus and veggie platter or snack before you go
- **KEY:** Focus on the happy part: time spent with family or friends in conversation



# Prepare and Plan

## Meal Prep!

- Start meal planning
  - Have recipes/meals in mind
  - Draft grocery list before going to the store and save money!



- Recipe examples:
  - Premade salads
  - Crockpot meals such as chili
  - Rice/protein/veggie dishes
    - Switch up the flavor with different spices
    - Leftover stir-fry can be a salad topper the next day!
- Make recipes in bulk
  - Eat leftovers throughout the week
  - Freeze for quick meals when busy

# Prepare and Plan

## Meal Prep!

- Have staples on hand
  - Whole grain brown rice, canned beans, variety of herbs/spices
  - Frozen protein (chicken, beef)
  - Frozen vegetables (spinach, brussels sprouts)
- Make your life easier
  - Cut vegetables ahead of time
    - Use in salads/meals throughout the week
  - Have fruit on counter or on eye level shelf in fridge



# Prepare and Plan

## Healthy Snacking – Because who doesn't like to snack?

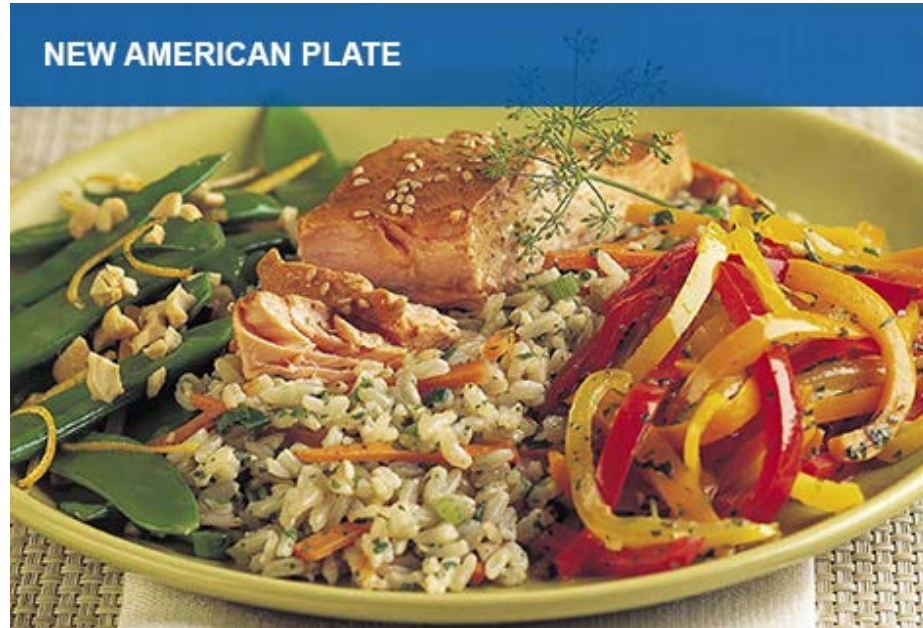
### Something Sweet:

- Frozen yogurt
- Frozen berries
- Graham cracker with almond butter and a few chocolate chips or sliced strawberries
- Plain greek yogurt with fruit on top
- Banana/apple with peanut butter sprinkled with mini chocolate chips
- Homemade energy balls
  - Oats, nut butter, dried fruit, nuts, flaxseed or chia seeds
- Chia pudding- it's like tapioca!

### Crunchy/Salty:

- Homemade popcorn- not the movie theater kind!
- Handful of nuts with dried fruit
- Cucumber slices + whole grain crackers dipped in hummus
- Guacamole + carrots
- Roasted chickpeas
- Celery sticks + sunbutter + raisins
- Ranch dip + bell peppers + steamed broccoli
  - May add some cheese cubes
- Rice cake with hummus spread

# How does your plate shape up?





Add color!



# Add color!

Eat the colors of the rainbow

What is a phytochemical?

- A natural plant compound found in fruit, vegetables, nuts, and whole grains
- Cancer fighting properties

Color your table with synergy

- Phytochemicals work best with each other
- Color, smell, flavor is key



# Now what?

## Points to keep in mind

- Planning is key
  - Pick a slow day or two to:
    - Choose some recipes → Draft a grocery list → Shop → Cook!
- Think about nutrient rich rather than “good” or “bad” food
- Perfection isn't the goal
  - It's OK to splurge every once in a while



# Resources

## Slender Kitchen

- <https://www.slenderkitchen.com/>
  - Weekly custom meal plans and recipes with membership
- 25% off discount on membership fee with code: **AYAO**

# Resources

- The American Institute for Cancer Research
  - [AICR.org](http://AICR.org)
- The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
  - [Eatright.org](http://Eatright.org)
- The USDA
  - [ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov)

Thank You!