

Your guide to

East Asian cuisine

Simple
strategies
to help
you thrive

Bonus:
5 sample
recipes

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Welcome!

Planning healthy meals and snacks is at the heart of any wellness journey. But there is no one meal plan that is best for everyone. The colours, flavours and aromas of food help to connect us to who we are. Plus, we all have different nutrition needs, likes and dislikes, budgets and more. That's why we created Your Guide to East Asian Cuisine.

The guide is packed with healthy-eating ideas infused with a taste of China, Japan, Korea and more. We'll spice things up with meal planning tools to help you create a strategy that will work for you. Use this guide to create lasting changes so you can live better.

Enjoy!

Sneak peek inside

Understanding the basics	3
Teladoc Health food groups.....	4
Balance your plate.....	8
Healthy portion sizes, any time	9
How to build a healthy meal.....	10
Smarter snacks	11
5 Sample recipes.....	12
Understanding food labels.....	17
Dining out tips and tricks	18

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 well-balanced meals that are healthy and satisfying.



Carbohydrates

Carbs are the sugars and starches that your body breaks down into glucose to use for energy. Carbs cause your blood sugar to rise. Too many of the less nutritious kinds, like added sugars, can cause weight gain and increase your risk of diabetes and heart disease. If you have diabetes, it's important to closely monitor carb intake.

Your goal: Choose moderate 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 fibre, vitamins and minerals.

Your goal: Fill half of your plate with a variety of non-starchy veggies at each meal. It's not usually necessary to limit portion sizes like you do with other carb-containing foods — in most cases, you can eat as much as you desire. If you have a chronic condition that limits certain nutrients, make sure you consult with your doctor.



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 flavour and texture to food. When eaten alone, fats will not raise your blood sugar.

Your goal: Choose foods that contain healthy fats (poly and monounsaturated). Limit saturated fats and avoid trans fats.

Curious about how these nutrients translate into the foods you eat? Keep reading to take a look at our detailed Teladoc Health food groups guide.

Teladoc Health food groups

Figuring out what to eat? Below you'll find examples of foods that fall into each group. Depending on your health needs, you may be able to eat more than one serving at a meal. Use this as a guide to build a variety of satisfying meals that help you reach your goals.



Carbohydrates (starches)

One serving contains 15 grams of carbs and around 80 calories

Bagel	<i>1/4 large bagel (1 oz)</i>
Beans and pulses (<i>adzuki beans, edamame, garbanzo, lentil, etc.</i>)	<i>1/2 cup cooked also = 1 protein serving</i>
Bread slice	<i>1 slice (1 oz)</i>
Buckwheat noodles	<i>1 oz</i>
Buns	<i>1 small</i>
Cellophane noodles	<i>1/3 cup cooked</i>
Corn	<i>1/2 cup or 1/2 large cob</i>
English muffin	<i>1/2 muffin</i>
Green peas	<i>1/2 cup</i>
Oatmeal	<i>1/2 cup cooked</i>
Pasta	<i>1/3 cup cooked</i>
Plain potato, sweet potato, yam	<i>1/2 cup cooked</i>
Pumpkin	<i>1/2 cup cooked</i>
Rice (brown or white)	<i>1/3 cup cooked</i>
Rice vermicelli	<i>1/3 cup cooked</i>
Soba noodles	<i>1/2 cup cooked</i>
Taro	<i>3/4 cup cooked</i>
Udon noodles	<i>1/3 cup cooked</i>
Wheat noodles	<i>1/3 cup cooked</i>
Winter squash (acorn, butternut, kabocha)	<i>1 cup</i>
Quinoa	<i>1/3 cup cooked</i>

Teladoc Health food groups



Carbohydrates (fruits)

One serving contains 15 grams of carbs and around 60 calories

Apple	1 small (4 oz)
Asian Pear	1 small fruit
Banana	1 extra small or $\frac{1}{2}$ large
Blueberries	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup
Dried fruit (raisins, dates)	2 Tbsp
Grapes	17 small
Guava	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup
Lychee	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
Mango	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup or $\frac{1}{2}$ small
Melon	1 cup, diced
Nectarine or peach	1 medium
Orange	1 medium
Papaya	1 cup cubed or $\frac{1}{2}$ small
Passion fruit	3 fruit
Persimmon	$\frac{1}{2}$ fruit
Pineapple	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup fresh or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup canned
Plum	1 small
Raspberries or blackberries	1 cup
Starfruit	2 medium
Strawberries	$1\frac{1}{4}$ cup whole
Watermelon	$1\frac{1}{4}$ cups diced

Carbohydrates (milk & yogurt)

One serving contains 6-12 grams of carbs and around 80-160 calories

Cow's milk (whole, reduced fat, skim)	1 cup
Kefir (plain, unsweetened)	1 cup
Rice milk (plain, unsweetened)	1 cup
Almond milk (plain, unsweetened)	1 cup
Soy milk (plain, unsweetened)	1 cup
Yogurt, Greek or regular (plain, unsweetened)	6 oz

Dairy is not a part of many East Asian diets. If you avoid dairy, talk with a dietitian about strategies for getting enough calcium and vitamin D.

Note: If food/drink is flavoured or sweetened, read the label for more details.



Teladoc Health food groups



Protein

One serving contains 7 grams of protein and around 35-100 calories

Beans and pulses (red, soy, mung)	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked also = 1 carb serving
Cheese	1 oz
Chicken, turkey, fish, beef, lamb, goat, pork	1 oz
Cottage cheese	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup
Eggs	1 egg
Egg substitute	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup
Egg whites	2 egg whites
Nuts and seeds (almonds, cashews, pistachios, peanuts, flaxseeds, pumpkin seeds)	1 Tbsp
Nut spread, no sugar added (peanut, almond, soy butter)	1 Tbsp
Tempeh (check label for carb counts) *	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup
Tofu *	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup

Fats

One serving contains 5 grams of fat, around 45 calories, usually 0 carbs, but always check the label

Almonds or cashews *	6 nuts
Avocado	2 Tbsp
Bacon	1 slice
Butter, stick	1 tsp
Coconut milk, canned	$\frac{1}{3}$ cup light or 1½ Tbsp regular
Coconut, shredded	2 Tbsp
Mayonnaise	1 tsp regular or 1 Tbsp reduced fat

Nut butters

(almond butter, peanut butter, cashew butter, etc.) *	1½ tsp
Oil (olive, canola, peanut, sesame, vegetable, etc.)	1 tsp
Olives	8 black or 10 green
Peanuts*	10 nuts
Pecans and walnuts	4 halves
Pistachios*	16 nuts



* Plant-based protein foods provide quality protein, healthy fats, and fibre. They vary in how much fat and carbohydrate they contain, so make sure to read labels.

Teladoc Health food groups



Non-starchy veggies

One serving contains about 5 grams of carbohydrates and around 25 calories. ½ cup cooked or 1 cup raw for one non-starchy vegetable choice below:

Arugula	Greens (collard, mustard, turnip, etc.)
Asparagus	Japanese eggplant
Bamboo shoots	Leaf celery
Bell Peppers (red, green, yellow)	Mustard greens
Bitter melon	Napa cabbage
Bok choy	Onions
Broccoli	Opo squash
Brussels sprouts	Oyster mushroom
Cabbage	Shiitake mushroom
Cauliflower	Snow peas
Choy sum	Spinach
Cucumber	Tatsoi
Daikon radish	Water chestnuts
Enoki mushroom	Water spinach



Don't forget about... herbs and spices

Seasonings can add minimal calories and sodium but pack loads of flavour. Use freely:

Chinese chili pepper	Lime juice
Cilantro	Mustard seeds
Coriander	Red pepper
Dill	Saffron
Five-spice powder	Shiso leaves
Garlic	Star anise
Ginger	Szechuan peppercorn
Green onions	Thai chili peppers
Lemongrass	Vinegar
Lemon juice	Wasabi

Use, but be mindful of sodium and/or sugar:

Chili sauce	Oyster sauce
Dashi	Soy sauce
Fish sauce	

Balance your plate

You can eat well and still enjoy yummy meals from your culture! The balanced plate model is an easy, delicious way to fuel your body. Following this format will help you fill your plate with healthy foods in the right proportions.

It's as simple as eyeballing it. A balanced plate has 50% non-starchy veggies, 25% lean proteins, and 25% carbs. It may also include a little healthy fat.

Start with a **9-inch plate**. Measure your usual plates to see how wide they are. If they're bigger than 9 inches, try using smaller plates. You can also fill your regular plates to the 9-inch mark.

Use the Teladoc Health food groups guide on the previous pages to help you fill your plate. You'll find lots of tasty options to help create a variety of balanced and satisfying meals. Plugging different foods into the sections of the plate can even inspire creativity and get you out of a rut.

50%

Non-starchy veggies = half of your plate

Options include: Bok choy, broccoli, cabbage, spinach, snow peas, mushrooms, water chestnuts

25%

Carbs = a quarter of your plate

Options include: Brown rice, Japanese sweet potatoes, cellophane noodles, kabocha squash

25%

Proteins = another quarter of your plate

Options include: Edamame, poultry, meat, fish, tofu, tempeh

*

Healthy fats = just a bit

Options include: Olive oil, nuts, seeds



Healthy portion sizes, any time

Now that you know how to balance your plate, it's important to consider how much you eat. When it comes to portion sizes, it can feel like the world is working against us. Restaurant servings for one can be big enough for a family to share. Even the plates we use at home have gotten bigger!

Luckily, you can retrain your eyes — and your stomach — to recognize what "enough" looks and feels like. Use your hand as a guide to estimate portions that will satisfy and help you reach your goals.



Fist

Whole grains, starchy vegetables, whole fruits

Palm of hand

Meat, fish, tofu, tempeh



Thumb

Dressings, dips, desserts

Two flat hands side by side

Total amount of food per meal

Flat hand

Non-starchy vegetables

How to build a healthy meal

Knowing what to eat is only the first step. Here are some strategies you can use to enjoy healthy foods that fit your nutrition needs:



Plan and shop

- Make a meal plan and shop only for foods that are on your plan.
- Don't be fooled by discounts. "Good deal" doesn't mean "good for you"!



Prep ahead

- Wash, cut, and store produce in containers right after grocery shopping.
- Cook once, eat twice: Prepare more than you need so you can enjoy leftovers, too.



Get cooking

- **Cut the fat:**
 - Sauté foods in water or vegetable stock instead of frying in oil.
- **Slash the sodium:**
 - Skip the salt in recipes. Replace it with your favourite herbs and spices.
 - Use reduced-sodium soy sauce instead of regular.
 - Try lemon juice and vinegar to tone down bitterness and sharpen flavours.
- **Bump up the veggies:**
 - Double the amount of non-starchy veggies in a recipe.
 - Grill, roast or steam veggies to mellow bitterness and help bring out their flavour.
- **Include lean proteins:**
 - Make sure your meals contain lean meat, fish, eggs, beans or tofu.
 - Cook using healthier methods: Grill, roast or sauté.
- **Choose whole grains:**
 - When possible, choose brown rice, buckwheat noodles and brown rice noodles instead of white rice, wheat noodles and noodles made from white rice.
 - Remember that grains are also sources of carbs and calories. Portion size matters!



Eat and enjoy

- **Be mindful when eating:**
 - Avoid distractions like the TV, your phone or your tablet.
 - Slow your pace by putting down your fork between bites. Chew and savour!

Smarter 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. Snacks that contain both produce and fat or protein are your best bet. That combo will help fill you up and keep you satisfied until mealtime.

Here are a few dynamic snack duos:



Cucumber + edamame



Clementine + soy nuts



Apple + almonds



Melon + ginkgo nuts



½ baked sweet potato + pumpkin seeds



Roasted seaweed + hard-boiled egg

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.

5 Sample recipes: Chinese

Shrimp & egg fried rice

Makes 2 servings | Prep: 10 min | Cook: 15 min



NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING (½ recipe)

Calories	Total fat	Sat. fat	Sodium	Cholesterol	Carbs	Fibre	Sugars	Protein	Potassium
211	14 g	3 g	321 mg	127 mg	14 g	3 g	5 g	8 g	269 mg

INGREDIENTS

1½ cups cooked brown rice
8 to 10 uncooked large shrimp, peeled and deveined
1 Tbsp soy sauce, low sodium
1 Tbsp olive oil, divided
2 garlic cloves, minced
½ onion, diced
¼ cup carrots, sliced
½ cup sliced string beans
1 large egg
¼ cup chives, sliced
Salt and pepper to taste

PREPARATION

Heat a half tablespoon of olive oil over medium-high heat. Add garlic and onions and sauté until golden brown and fragrant.

Add the shrimp and sauté for one to two minutes, or until slightly pink. Stir in the carrots, string beans, and continue cooking for about 3-4 minutes, until vegetables are slightly soft and the shrimp are pink and cooked through.

Next stir in the rice and soy sauce and mix well. Spread the rice mixture to the corner of the pan, creating a small hole in the center. Add the remaining half tablespoon of olive oil in the center of the pan, add the egg and scramble very quickly for about 10 seconds, when the egg is still a little bit runny. Combine the egg with the rice mixture and mix well.

Stir in the chives, and season with salt and pepper to taste.

This simple recipe is quick to cook and makes a perfect lunch to go!



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5 Sample recipes: Japanese

Miso vegetable soup

Makes 2 servings | Prep: 5 min | Cook: 30 min



NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING (2½ cups)

Calories	Total fat	Sat. fat	Sodium	Cholesterol	Carbs	Fibre	Sugars	Protein	Potassium
265	6 g	1 g	138 mg	0 mg	33 g	7 g	6 g	21 g	507 mg

INGREDIENTS

2 cups plus 3 Tbsp water, divided

2 Tbsp brown rice

2 cups frozen stir-fry vegetables

16 oz extra-firm silken tofu,
cut into small cubes

2 Tbsp miso

3 scallions, thinly sliced

1 tsp rice vinegar, or to taste

1 tsp sugar, to taste

PREPARATION

Bring 2 cups of water and rice to a boil in a large saucepan over high heat. Cover, reduce heat to a gentle simmer and cook until the rice is just tender, 12-15 minutes.

Add stir-fry vegetables to the pot, increase heat to high and bring to a boil. Cook until the vegetables are heated through, stirring occasionally, 2-3 minutes. Add tofu and cook until heated through, about 2 minutes. Remove from the heat.

Combine miso and the remaining 3 tablespoons water in a small bowl and stir to dissolve. Add the miso mixture, scallions, vinegar and sugar to the soup and stir to combine.



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13

5 Sample recipes: Korean

Bibimbap

Makes 4 servings | Prep: 30-45 min | Cook: 30 min



NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING (1/4 of the recipe)

Calories	Total fat	Sat. fat	Sodium	Cholesterol	Carbs	Fibre	Sugars	Protein	Potassium
439	17 g	4 g	324 mg	204 mg	53 g	6 g	9 g	21 g	630 mg

INGREDIENTS

Meat and meat sauce:

4 oz lean ground beef or turkey
1 Tbsp low-sodium soy sauce
½ Tbsp sesame oil
½ tsp brown sugar
¼ tsp minced garlic

Vegetables and other:

10 oz baby spinach
10 oz mung bean sprouts, fresh
4 oz shiitake mushrooms
1 medium carrot
1 tsp finely chopped scallion
2 Tbsp rice vinegar, unseasoned
2 tsp roasted sesame seeds
2 cups steamed brown rice
4 eggs, large

Bibimbap sauce:

2 Tbsp gochujang (brown rice red pepper paste)
1 Tbsp sesame oil
½ Tbsp sugar
1 Tbsp roasted sesame seeds
1 tsp rice vinegar, unseasoned
1 tsp minced garlic

PREPARATION

Mix the ground beef with soy sauce, sesame oil, brown sugar and garlic.

Marinate for at least 30 minutes while prepping vegetables and bibimbap sauce. Cook meat in wok over medium-high to high heat, until thoroughly cooked, about 3-5 minutes.

Whisk bibimbap sauce ingredients in a bowl.

Boil 6 cups of water. Once boiling, plunge the spinach into the pot and leave for 30 seconds. Remove spinach from water, add to colander and run cold water over the spinach for 1-2 minutes. Squeeze spinach to remove excess water and set aside. In the same boiling water add the mung bean sprouts and leave them for 1-2 minutes. Drain the water and run cold water over the sprouts for 1-2 minutes. Squeeze sprouts to remove excess water and set aside. Mix spinach with 1 tablespoon of rice vinegar and 1 teaspoon of roasted sesame seeds. Mix sprouts with 1 tablespoon of rice vinegar, 1 teaspoon of roasted sesame seeds and finely chopped scallion.

Peel and julienne the carrots and clean and thinly slice the mushrooms. Cook in wok on medium-high to high heat until softened, about 2-3 minutes.

Cook eggs — sunny-side up is common, but you can make them to your preference.

Put rice into a bowl and add meat and assorted vegetables. Drizzle bibimbap sauce over the vegetables and top with egg. Enjoy!

Note: If you want to lower the carbohydrate count of this meal, swap the brown rice for cauliflower rice.



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5 Sample recipes: Taiwanese

Vegetarian Taiwanese meefun

Makes 4 servings | Prep: 20 min | Cook: 35 min



NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING (1/4 of recipe; around 1 1/2 cups)

Calories	Total fat	Sat. fat	Sodium	Cholesterol	Carbs	Fibre	Sugars	Protein	Potassium
393	16 g	3 g	584 mg	93 mg	51 g	9 g	9 g	15 g	69 mg

INGREDIENTS

5 oz dried rice vermicelli noodles
5 dried shiitake mushrooms
3 Tbsp vegetable oil
2 eggs, lightly beaten
2 large shallots, thinly sliced
Kosher salt
3 cups shredded carrots
1/2 small green cabbage, shredded
8 oz baked firm tofu, cut into thin matchsticks
2 Tbsp soy sauce
1 tsp ground pepper
1/4 cup fresh cilantro, roughly chopped
Chili oil, optional for serving

PREPARATION

In a medium bowl, cover rice vermicelli noodles in cold water and soak until softened, 5-10 minutes. Drain and set aside.

Soak dried shiitake mushrooms in warm water until hydrated and softened, about 10 minutes, then drain and slice into 1/4-inch-thick pieces.

Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large, deep skillet over medium. Add beaten eggs, swirl to create an even layer, and cook until eggs are set and cooked through, about 1 minute. Transfer the cooked eggs onto a cutting board. Let cool slightly, then cut into matchsticks. Set aside.

Return the skillet to the stove and raise heat to medium-high. Add the remaining 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil, shallots and shiitake mushrooms. Season with salt. Cook, stirring frequently, until the edges of shallots begin to brown, 3-4 minutes.

Add carrots, season with salt, and cook, stirring frequently, until slightly softened but still crisp, 1-2 minutes. Add cabbage, season with salt, and cook, stirring frequently, until slightly wilted, 1-2 minutes.

Add baked tofu, soy sauce, rice vermicelli noodles and 1 cup water, and cook, stirring frequently, until the noodles absorb the water, 5-6 minutes. Season with salt and pepper and stir in reserved sliced eggs to combine. Serve topped with cilantro and chili oil as desired.



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15

5 Sample recipes: Mongolian

Easy Mongolian beef

Makes 4 servings | Prep: 10 min | Cook: 15 min



NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING (1/4 of recipe)

Calories	Total fat	Sat. fat	Sodium	Cholesterol	Carbs	Fibre	Sugars	Protein	Potassium
404	17 g	4 g	578 mg	68 mg	29 g	1 g	18 g	33 g	516 mg

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb flank steak
- 1/4 cup cornstarch
- 2 Tbsp canola oil
- 2 tsp fresh ginger, minced
- 1 Tbsp garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup soy sauce, low sodium
- 1/3 cup water
- 1/2 cup dark brown sugar
- 4 stalks scallions, green parts only, cut into 2-inch pieces

PREPARATION

Slice the flank steak against the grain (the grain is the length of the steak) the long way, in 1/4-inch-thick pieces, and add it to a sealable bag with the cornstarch. Press the steak around in the bag, making sure each piece is fully coated with cornstarch, and leave it to sit.

Add the canola oil to a large sauté pan and heat on medium-high. Add the steak, shaking off any excess cornstarch, to the pan in a single layer and cook on each side for 1 minute.

Tip: If you need to cook the steak in batches because your pan isn't big enough, do that rather than crowding the pan. You want to get a good sear on the steak, and if you crowd the pan your steak will steam instead of sear.

When the steak is done cooking, remove it from the pan. Add the ginger and garlic to the pan and sauté for 10-15 seconds. Add soy sauce, water and sugar and let it come to a boil.

Add the steak back in and let the sauce thicken for 20-30 seconds.

Add the green onions, stir to combine everything, and cook for 20-30 seconds. Serve immediately.



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16

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)
- Sugar
- Added sugars

Step 3: aim for more:

- Fibre
- Protein
- Nutrients like vitamin D, iron, potassium, and calcium.



Step 4: check the ingredients list (separate from the nutrition facts panel)

- Ingredients are listed in by quantity, from highest to lowest.
- Avoid food additives like sodium nitrates and food colouring. 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."

Dining out tips and tricks

Going to restaurants is a part of life. While it can be a challenge to dine out healthfully, it can be done! Here's how you can set yourself up for success:

Before you go

- Review the menu online to help make better choices when it's time to order.
- Eat normally. Skipping meals just sets you up to be overly hungry when you sit down to order.
- Have a produce and protein snack an hour before the meal to curb hunger.

At the restaurant

- Choose the treat that you like best — drink, starter, bread or dessert — to go along with your meal. Enjoy it!
- Cut your meal in half. Pack up the rest to bring home as leftovers.
- Ask for lower-calorie options like salad dressing on the side, light oil on pasta and veggies, and grilled chicken instead of crispy!
- Stick with balanced plate portions: 50% non-starchy veggies, 25% lean protein, 25% carbs.
- Chew food well and wait until you have swallowed your current bite to take another one.

It's okay if one meal isn't "perfect." But by planning ahead, you'll be able to stay closer to your wellness goals!

