



Your guide to

Southeast Asian cuisine

Bonus:
5 sample
recipes

Simple strategies
to help you thrive



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Welcome!

Meals and snacks that work with an individual's budget, preferences, and nutritional needs are key to any wellness journey. But foods that connect us to our own culture can be the missing ingredient in many people's healthy eating plans. And the opportunity to explore cuisines that are new to us through delicious food can bring immense pleasure.

That's why we created Your Guide to Southeast Asian cuisine. This guide is packed with healthy-eating ideas inspired by the flavours and colours of Thailand, Laos, Vietnam and more. Use our meal-planning tools to create a strategy that will work for you. We hope these delicious dishes will bring satisfaction and excitement to your days.

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 is important to closely monitor carb intake.

Your goal: Choose moderate portions of 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 is 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 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. They add great flavour and texture to your 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 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

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

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 ½ large
Blueberries	¾ cup
Dried fruit (raisins, dates)	2 Tbsp
Grapes	17 small
Guava	¾ cup
Lychee	½ cup
Mango	½ cup or ½ small
Melon	1 cup, diced
Nectarine or peach	1 medium
Orange	1 medium
Papaya	1 cup cubed or ½ small
Passion fruit	3 fruits
Persimmon	½ fruit
Pineapple	¾ cup fresh or ½ cup canned
Plum	1 small
Raspberries or blackberries	1 cup
Starfruit	2 medium
Strawberries	1¼ cup whole
Watermelon	1¼ 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

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, garbanzo, lentil, etc.)*	$\frac{1}{2}$ 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	1 tsp
Coconut milk, canned	$\frac{1}{3}$ cup light or $1\frac{1}{2}$ Tbsp regular
Coconut, shredded	2 Tbsp
Mayonnaise	1 tsp regular or 1 Tbsp reduced fat
Nut butters (almond butter, peanut butter, cashew butter, etc.)	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ 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 carbohydrates 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	Luffa
Asparagus	Napa cabbage
Bamboo shoots	Onions
Bell Peppers (red, green, yellow)	Opo squash
Bitter melon	Oyster mushroom
Bok choy	Shiitake mushroom
Broccoli	Snow peas
Brussels sprouts	Spinach
Cabbage	Tatsoi
Cauliflower	Thai eggplant
Chayote	Water chestnuts
Cucumber	Water spinach
Daikon radish	Winter melon
Greens (collard, mustard, turnip, etc.)	



Don't forget about... herbs and spices

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

Bird's eye chili pepper	Green onions	Shiso leaves
Calamansi limes	Kaffir lime leaves	Star anise
Cilantro	Lemongrass	Thai basil
Coriander	Lemon juice	Thai chili peppers
Five-spice powder	Lime juice	Turmeric
Galangal	Mustard seeds	Vinegar
Garlic	Pandan leaves	
Ginger	Red pepper	

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

Chili sauce	Oyster sauce	Sriracha sauce
Curry paste	Palm sugar	Sweet soy sauce
Fish sauce	Shrimp paste	
Hoisin sauce	Soy 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 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, rice noodles, 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 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 help keep you from eating too much at meals. Snacks that contain both produce or protein are your best bet. That combo will fill you up and keep you satisfied until mealtime.

Here are a few dynamic snack duos:



Cucumber + edamame



Clementine + pistachios



Roasted seaweed + hard-boiled egg



Apple + almonds



Papaya + peanuts



1 cup baked squash + pumpkin seeds

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

Thai chicken and asparagus curry

Makes 5 servings | Prep: 10 min | Cook: 15 min



Kaffir lime leaves are thick and dark green with a shiny front and a pale back. They keep well in a refrigerator for at least two weeks. Dried leaves are also available at markets. You may also be able to find fresh leaves at a local Asian market. If you can't find any, use the zest of a lime to add a fresh citrus flavour to your dish.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING (4 oz chicken plus ½ cup asparagus)

Calories	Total fat	Sat. fat	Sodium	Cholesterol	Carbs	Fibre	Sugars	Protein	Potassium
317	17g	7 g	214 mg	87 mg	11 g	4 g	4 g	32 g	533 mg

INGREDIENTS

Nonstick cooking spray
24 oz chicken breast, cut into cubes
1 large onion, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, crushed
1 lemongrass stem, outer leaves removed, quartered lengthways
4 Tbsp green curry paste
10 oz light coconut milk
1 cup chicken stock, low sodium
2 Tbsp green peppercorns, drained (or substitute 1 Tbsp black peppercorns)
2 kaffir lime leaves
1 bunch thin asparagus, trimmed and halved
Fish sauce, to season
Options: serve with a sprinkle of coriander leaves, lime wedges, over a serving of steamed jasmine rice

PREPARATION

Spray a large nonstick sauté pan with cooking spray and place over high heat. Sauté chicken 6 to 7 minutes, or until lightly browned and cooked through. Then place cooked chicken in a bowl and set aside.

Spray skillet again with nonstick cooking spray over high heat. Add onion, garlic and lemongrass, and sauté for 1 minute. Add the curry paste and stir for another minute. Return the chicken to the skillet and add the coconut milk, stock, peppercorns and kaffir lime leaves. Bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium and simmer for 2 minutes. Add the asparagus and cook for another 2 minutes, or until the asparagus are tender. Season to taste with fish sauce.

You could also garnish with coriander and lime wedges and serve over jasmine rice.



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12

5 Sample recipes

Filipino picadillo

Makes 5 servings | Prep: 15 min | Cook: 45 min



NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING (approximately 1½ cups plus 1 egg)

Calories	Total fat	Sat. fat	Sodium	Cholesterol	Carbs	Fibre	Sugars	Protein	Potassium
521	17 g	4 g	588 mg	694 mg	31 g	7 g	2 g	39 g	1,285 mg

INGREDIENTS

1½ Tbsp extra virgin olive oil, divided
2½ cups yellow potatoes, peeled and diced into bite-sized pieces (approximately 1 lb)
2 cups carrots, peeled and cut into ½-inch pieces
1 medium onion, peeled and diced
1 Tbsp fresh garlic, minced
1½ lb extra-lean ground turkey
1 Tbsp tomato paste
15-oz can diced tomatoes, low sodium
½ tsp kosher salt
¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper
½ cup raisins
1 Tbsp fish sauce
3 Tbsp soy sauce, low sodium
1 tsp chili garlic paste
1 cup water
1 cup frozen peas, thawed
5 eggs
Nonstick cooking spray
Optional: hot sauce

PREPARATION

Place a large nonstick skillet pan over medium to medium-high heat. Add 1 tablespoon of olive oil and heat for a couple of minutes. Add potatoes and carrots and sauté for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. They should start to brown and turn slightly tender. Use a slotted spoon to place potatoes and carrots into a bowl.

Add half a tablespoon of olive oil to the pan. Add onion and sauté for 3 minutes. Add garlic and sauté for 1 minute. Add the ground turkey and sauté for about 6 to 7 minutes, or until browned.

Add garlic and sauté for 1 minute. Add the ground turkey and sauté for about 6 to 7 minutes, or until browned.

Add tomato paste and stir for 1 minute. Add the tomatoes, salt, pepper, raisins, fish sauce, soy sauce, chili garlic paste, water and reserved cooked potato and carrot mixture. Reduce heat to medium and simmer until most of the liquid has evaporated. Add peas, stir and remove from heat.

Spray another nonstick skillet pan with cooking spray and place over medium to high heat. Place each egg sunny-side up and cook through. Flip over each egg and continue to cook until it's cooked to your liking.

Serve by placing about one-fifth of the picadillo in each of the five individual bowls. Place one egg on top of each portion. Garnish with hot sauce, if desired.



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13

5 Sample recipes

Vietnamese green papaya salad

Makes 2 servings | Prep: 10 min



NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING (2 cups salad; 1/2 recipe)

Calories	Total fat	Sat. fat	Sodium	Cholesterol	Carbs	Fibre	Sugars	Protein	Potassium
269	13 g	2 g	551 mg	17 mg	25 g	7 g	11 g	18 g	855 mg

INGREDIENTS

3 tsp brown sugar
1 Tbsp fish sauce
1 Tbsp fresh lime juice
1/2 tsp sesame oil
1/2 long red chili pepper, seeds removed, finely chopped, optional
1/2 green papaya, shredded
1 carrot, peeled and shredded
1/2 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
1 small cucumber, peeled, seeded and chopped
2 cups bean sprouts, rinsed and drained well
1/4 cup fresh mint, chopped
1/4 cup fresh coriander or basil, chopped
1/4 cup toasted peanuts, crushed

PREPARATION

Mix the sugar with 1 tablespoon of boiling water and stir to dissolve.

Mix in the dissolved sugar, fish sauce, lime juice and sesame oil in a medium-size bowl.

Add the chili pepper (if using), papaya, carrot, cherry tomatoes, cucumber, sprouts and herbs to the bowl and toss to combine.

Place salad in two small bowls and sprinkle the nuts over the top.



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5 Sample recipes

Lao Jeow Bong dipping sauce

Makes 6 servings | Prep: 10 min | Cook: 10 min



This savoury dipping paste can be served with fresh vegetables and herbs with small portions of sticky rice and grilled meats or fish for a bold kick of flavour. It is a versatile paste that can also be used for cooking in stir-fries, soups and even as a marinade.

Want more heat?
Add a few more chili peppers!

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING (1/4 cup)

Calories	Total fat	Sat. fat	Sodium	Cholesterol	Carbs	Fibre	Sugars	Protein	Potassium
73	0 g	0 g	571 mg	0 mg	16 g	2 g	5 g	2 g	175 mg

INGREDIENTS

1 cup shallots, peeled
1 cup garlic cloves, peeled
½ cup galangal*, sliced
1 cup Thai dried chili peppers
2 Tbsp palm sugar (palm sugar can usually be found in the aisle next to other canned goods or premade sauces; regular sugar can be substituted)
2 Tbsp tamarind juice
2 Tbsp fish sauce
½ tsp of salt

*Galangal is a root vegetable used in Asian cooking that is a blend of garlic, shallots and ginger. If you cannot find galangal, use a combination of these three ingredients instead.

PREPARATION

Roast the shallots, garlic and galangal until darkened and cooked through.
Place a medium skillet over medium-high heat, and heat for 2 to 3 minutes, or until hot. Add the Thai dried chili peppers, stirring frequently, until aromatic. Remove from heat.
Add the roasted chiles into a mortar and pestle, then pound and grind them. (This recipe is traditionally made using a mortar and pestle. If you don't have one, use a food processor or blender.)
Add in the shallots, garlic and galangal and continue grinding.
Once ground, add the palm sugar, tamarind juice, fish sauce and salt. Continue grinding until it forms a paste.
Then mix together.
Place in a small serving bowl. Serve on the side with sticky rice, fresh vegetables and grilled meats.
Jeow bong can be preserved in an airtight container for up to 30 days.



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15

5 Sample recipes

Indonesian satay

Makes 6 servings | Prep: 25 min | Cook: 35 min



NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING (1 breast + 2 tablespoons sauce)

Calories	Total fat	Sat. fat	Sodium	Cholesterol	Carbs	Fibre	Sugars	Protein	Potassium
488	22 g	4 g	627 mg	172 mg	11 g	2 g	8 g	45 g	1,048 mg

INGREDIENTS

5 Tbsp soy sauce, low sodium, divided
3 Tbsp tomato sauce, low sodium
1 Tbsp peanut oil
2 cloves garlic, peeled and minced
1/8 tsp ground black pepper
1/8 tsp ground cumin
6 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves, cubed
1 Tbsp canola oil
1/4 cup onion, minced
1 clove garlic, peeled and minced
1 cup water
1/2 cup chunky peanut butter
2 Tbsp granulated sugar
1 Tbsp lemon juice
Skewers

PREPARATION

In a bowl, mix 3 tablespoons of soy sauce, tomato sauce, peanut oil, garlic, pepper and cumin. Place chicken into the mixture and stir to coat. Cover, and marinate in the refrigerator for 15 to 20 minutes.

Preheat the grill for high heat.

Heat canola oil in a saucepan over medium heat, and sauté onion and garlic until lightly browned. Mix in water, peanut butter, 2 tablespoons soy sauce and sugar. Cook and stir until well blended. Remove from heat, mix in lemon juice and set aside.

Lightly oil the grill grate. Thread chicken onto skewers, and throw away marinade. Grill skewers about 5 minutes per side, until chicken juices run clear. Serve with peanut sauce.



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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!

