



USC WorkWell Center

Snack on This:
**A Healthy Guide for
Your Next
Trader Joe's Run**



It can be a struggle to find the time to make nutritious, well-rounded meals, especially when you have a busy work schedule. But finding healthy options when eating out can be even more difficult. Luckily for our USC community, we have access to a Trader Joe’s grocery store right here in the USC village.

To make selecting pre-packaged meals, snacks, and beverages easier for you, our team has gone through the items currently available* and pulled a wide variety of foods for this guide. Each section includes vegan and/or gluten-free options.

We’ve also included the [USC Trojan Healthy Plate](#), created by USC Hospitality’s own dietitian. This visual representation of food categories provides relative portion sizes to aim for at each meal. These tools should give you a good idea of what to look for when making your own choices.

Are you already preparing meals and snacks at home but would like ingredient ideas that can also be bought at our local Trader Joe’s? Not a problem! The second half of this Healthy Options Guide contains a list of nutritious items from each of the main food groups: protein, grains, vegetables, fruits, and fats. Dairy, spices, and condiments are included as well.

We hope you find this guide useful and fun. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Julie Chobdee, MPH, Associate Director, Health & Well-being Program at the WorkWell Center: jchobdee@usc.edu.

*Trader Joe’s often rotates out old items for new ones, and selection varies slightly from location to location. What is listed here was available in May 2022 at our USC Village store.

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Meals



Legend

- Refrigerated
- Frozen
- Shelf
- Vegan
- Gluten-free*

Breakfast

- Banana and Almond Butter Protein Smoothie ● ● ●
- Non-Fat Plain Greek Yogurt ● with Gluten-Free Granola Loaded Fruit and Nut ● ● ●
- Eggwich Breadless Breakfast Sandwich ● ●
- Cocoa and Sea Salt Instant Oatmeal ● ● ● made with low-fat milk ● ● or soy milk ● ● ●
- Organic Acai Bowl ● ● ●

Entrée-Style

- Grilled Chicken With Rice and Vegetables Meal ● ●
- Grilled Chicken Fajitas ● ●
- Vegan Enchilada Casserole ● ● ●
- Steamed Pork and Ginger Soup Dumplings ●
- Butter Chicken with Basmati Rice ● ●
- Riced Cauliflower Bowl ● ●
- Sriracha Shrimp Bowl ● ●
- Cuban Style Citrus Garlic Bowl ●

Salads

- Roasted Butternut Squash, Red Quinoa, and Wheatberry Salad ●
- Waldorf Salad, whole container ● ●
- Legume and Spinach Salad ● ●
- White Meat Chicken Salad ● ●, add whole-grain crackers or bread

Sandwiches

- Tuna Salad Wrap ●
- Turkey Apple Cheddar Sandwich ●
- Spicy Lentil Wrap, whole container ● ●
- Tarragon Chicken Salad Wrap ●

Soups

- Lentil Soup with Ancient Grains ● ● ●
- Kettle Cooked Chicken Soup ● ●
- Turkey Chili with Beans ● ●
- Yellow Tadka Dal ● ● with Tandoori Naan ●

*Items listed as gluten free do not contain gluten as ingredients, but may not be labeled as certified gluten free. Please check the package for certification status.



Meal Criteria

(unless otherwise specified by a medical professional)

- 700 calories or less
- If the meal doesn't have enough calories (less than 400), supplement with a snack
- Good balance of protein, carbohydrates, and fats
- 8g saturated fat or less
- If saturated fat comes mostly from a sauce or dressing, consider using/eating only half of what's provided
- Ideally 2 servings (2 cups) of vegetables or fruit (can be brought from home or bought separately)
- 800 mg of sodium or less
- Whole grains when possible

Snacks



Legend

- Refrigerated
- Frozen
- Shelf
- Vegan
- Gluten-free*

- Baked Cheese Crunchies ● ●
- Hummus (any variety) ● ● ● with a carbohydrate or vegetable
 - Whole Grain Crispbread ● ●
 - Cucumbers ● ● ●
 - Pita Chips ● ●
- Chomps Turkey Stick ● ●
- Any fruit, whole or cut, not in syrup or juice ● ● ● ●
- Thai Lime and Chili Cashews ● ● ●
- Movie Theater Popcorn ● ●
- Cut and Peeled Carrots ● ● ●
- Almond Butter Filled Pretzel Nuggets ● ●
- Habanero Ghost Pepper Salsa ● ● ● with Quinoa and Black Bean Infused Tortilla Chips ● ● ●
- Organic Hemp Seed Bars ● ● ●
- Cottage Cheese ● ●
- Organic Mini Peanut Butter Sandwich Crackers ● ●
- Mini Banana Bread Biscotti ●

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Snack Criteria

(unless otherwise specified by a medical professional)

- 250 calories or less
- 3g saturated fat or less
- No trans fats or partially hydrogenated oils
- 250 mg of sodium or less
- 6.5g added sugar or less
- No candy

Beverages



Legend

- Refrigerated
- Shelf

- Sparkling Green Tea with Pineapple Juice ●
- Virgil's Zero-Sugar Root Beer ●
- Cold-Brew Coffee ● with Oat Milk Brown Sugar Creamer ●
- Watermelon Lemonade Sparkling Water ●
- Nonfat or low-fat milk ●
- Organic Orange Strawberry Banana Juice ● mixed with flat or sparkling water ●
- Organic Blood Orange Rooibos Herbal Tea Blend ● hot or iced



Beverage Criteria

(unless otherwise specified by a medical professional)

- For water-based drinks, no more than 10 calories per 8-ounce serving
- Milk drinks should be low- or nonfat and no more than 130 calories per 8 ounces
- Juices are 100% juice or mixed with water
- Sodas and other beverages should have no more than 10 calories
- Non-nutritive or artificial sweeteners (like Stevia and chicory root) are okay

Trojan Healthy Plate



WHAT IS A BALANCED PLATE?



DON'T FORGET TO ADD:

WATER

- Hydrate with water instead of sugary beverages

HEALTHY FATS

- Plant based oils (e.g. olive oil)
- Avocado
- Nuts / Peanuts/ seeds

CALCIUM RICH

- Dairy
- Almonds
- Broccoli & Dark Leafy Greens
- Oranges
- Tofu
- White Beans

GUT HEALTHY

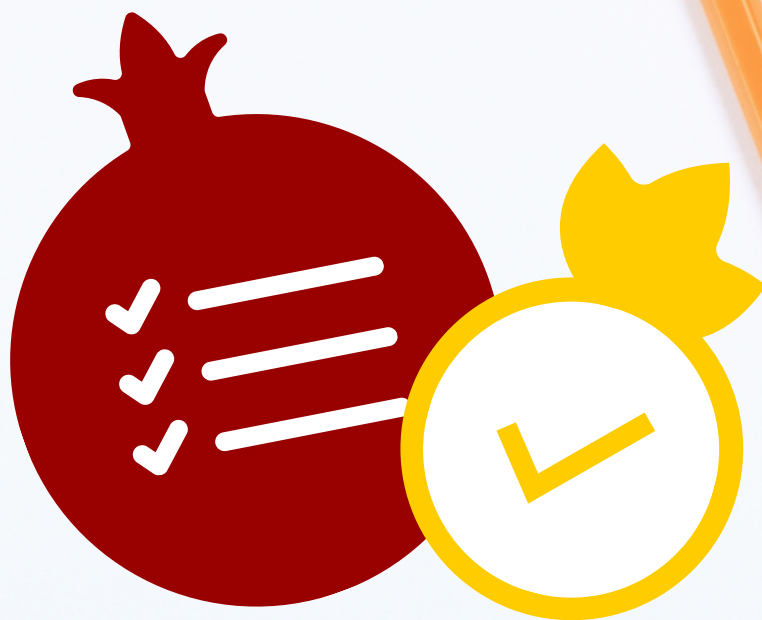
- Probiotics: Sauerkraut, Yogurt, Tempeh, Miso, Kefir, Kombucha, Kimchi
- Prebiotics: Onions, Garlic, Apples, Bananas, Asparagus, Beans, Wheat, Barley, Flax

COMPLEMENTS TO A HEALTHY PLATE

Fun Fitness Reduce Stress
Stay Social 7-8 Hours of Sleep/Night

For more information go to our dietitian page: hospitality.usc.edu/dietitian/

Grocery List



Proteins

Legend

- Refrigerated
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- A Dozen Cousins Mexican Cowboy Pinto Beans ● ● ●
- Shelled Edamame ● ● ●
- Red Split Lentils ● ● ●
- Organic Tofu or Sprouted Tofu ● ● ●
- Organic 3 Grain Tempeh ● ● ●
- Quinoa Cowboy Veggie Burgers ●
- English Peas ● ● ●
- Melodious Blend ● ● ●
- Organic Free Range Eggs ● ●
- 100% Liquid Egg Whites ● ●
- Pork Chops ● ●
- Traditional Carnitas ● ●
- Organic Free Range Boneless Skinless Chicken Breasts ● ●
- Sweet Apple Chicken Sausage ● ●
- Just Chicken Strips ● ●
- Turkey Meatballs Fully Cooked ●
- Uncured Turkey Bacon ● ●
- Ground Beef 85% lean / 15% fat – the leaner, the better! ● ●
- All Natural Lean Beef Stew Meat ● ●
- Seasoned Beef and Lamb Gyro Slices ●
- Cedar Wrapped BBQ Sockeye Salmon Fillet ● ●
- Raw Shrimp Peeled and Deveined, Tail On ● ●
- Canned Tuna in Water, No Salt Added ● ●

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Complete Proteins

When selecting plant-based protein, consider adding in a whole grain as well. Not all plant-based proteins have the amino acids our bodies need, but combining them with whole grains fills out the amino acid profile of the meal. Variety in ingredients is key.

Carbohydrates/Grains/Starches

Legend

- Refrigerated
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- Corn Tortillas ● ● ●
- Any whole grain bread
- Sourdough Sandwich Bread ● ●
- Whole Wheat English Muffins ●
- Whole Wheat Pita Bread ● ●
- Ezekiel 4:9 Sprouted Flourless Tortillas ● ● ●
- Tricolor Spaghetti ● ●
- Organic Whole Wheat Fusilli Pasta ● ●
- Spicy Jollof Seasoned Rice Mix ● ● ●
- 10 Minute Barley ● ● ●
- Organic Tricolor Quinoa ● ● ●
- Rice Medley ● ● ●
- Quick-Cook Organic Brown Basmati Rice ● ● ●
- Petite Potato Medley ● ● ●
- Hashbrowns ● ● ●
- Butternut Squash ● ● ● ●
- Sweet Potatoes ● ● ● ●
- Honey Wheat Pretzel Sticks ●
- 3 Seed Beet Crackers ● ● ●

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Whole Grains

Eating the whole food version of grains provides many more nutrients than in the processed versions. If you're having difficulty adding these into your meals or snacks, consider making your grain/carbohydrate portion 50% whole and 50% processed.

Vegetables

Legend

- Refrigerated
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- Organic Power Greens ●
- Southern Greens Blend ●
- Yellow Squash ●
- Broccoli and Cauliflower Duet ●
- Crimini Mushrooms; sliced or whole ●
- Whole Carrots ●
- Trimmed Radishes ●
- Ears of Corn ●
- Bell Pepper; any color ●
- Diced Onions ●
- Organic Shredded Green & Red Cabbage with Orange Carrot ●
- Cucumber; any kind ●
- Asparagus Spears, ● ●
- Green Beans, ● ●
- Stir-Fry Vegetables ●
- Organic Rainbow Cauliflower ●
- Roasted Vegetables ●
- Roasted Seasoned Brussel Sprouts ●
- Organic Foursome ●
- Zucchini Spirals ●



Dark Leafy Greens

Having 1 ½ - 2 servings (serving = 1 cup cooked, 2 cups raw) each week of dark, leafy greens like spinach, arugula, and collard greens is highly recommended. Not only are they filled with vitamins, minerals, fiber, antioxidants, and other phytonutrients, but researchers have repeatedly linked frequent intake of dark leafy greens with decreased risk of several types of cancer. They're also a good source of folate to incorporate into meals during pregnancy and lactation.

Fruits

- Plum ●
- Nectarine ●
- Yellow Peaches ●
- Apple; any kind ●
- Unsweetened Applesauce ●
- Pear; any kind ●
- Lemon ●
- Orange; any kind ●
- Banana ●
- Freeze-Dried Strawberries ●
- Unsulfured Apricots ●
- Watermelon, ● ●
- Sliced Fresh Mango ●
- A Fruitful Medley ●
- Red Seedless Grapes ●
- Blueberries ● ●
- Very Cherry Berry Blend ●

Legend

- Refrigerated
- Frozen
- Shelf



What is a serving of fruit?

A serving of fruit or 100% fruit juice is typically 1 cup. For whole fruit, that is about the size of a medium apple or half a large banana, while for dried, unsweetened fruit it is ½ cup. If possible, try to spread out your daily 1 ½ - 2 servings throughout the day; Fruits are very good for you, but they can contain high levels of sugar.

Fats (Non-Dairy)

- Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- Avocado Oil Spray
- Grapeseed Oil
- Canola Oil
- Olive & Herbs Mixed Nuts
- Raw Walnuts
- 50% Less Salt Roasted and Salted Peanuts
- Raw Pepitas
- Roasted and Unsalted Sunflower Seeds
- Flaxseed Meal
- Avocado



What fats should you eat more of?

The unsaturated fats—polyunsaturated and monounsaturated—are significantly healthier for your cardiovascular system than saturated fats. Unsaturated fats are liquid at room temperature (ex: canola oil), while saturated fats stay mostly solid at room temperature (ex: butter, coconut oil.) It is absolutely true that we need saturated fats to live, but for most Americans, the amount we need is significantly less than what we consume in a day. Whenever possible, try eating foods with poly- and monounsaturated fats instead of saturated fats or partially hydrogenated oils.

Dairy

- Clarified Butter (Ghee)
- Fat Free Feta Crumbles
- Light String Cheese
- All Natural Fresh Mozzarella Cheese
- Cranberry Chevre Goat Cheese
- Icelandic Style Skyr Lowfat Yogurt
- Nonfat Greek Yogurt Plain
- Lowfat Milk 1% with Vitamins A and D



Do you have to eat or drink dairy products?

Dairy is an excellent source of calcium, protein, and, when fortified, vitamin D. However, all of the above can be found in other categories, and spending time in the sunshine causes your body to naturally produce vitamin D. If you enjoy dairy products, that's great! Lean sources are excellent snacks and beverages.

Spices and Condiments/Sauces

Legend

- Refrigerated
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Spices

- Harissa ●
- Furikake ●
- Frozen Minced Garlic ●
- Multi-Purpose Umami Seasoning Blend ●
- Everything But the Bagel Seasoning ●
- Truffle Powder Seasoning ●
- Turmeric Powder ●
- Chile Lime Seasoning Blend ●
- Fresh Rosemary ●

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Condiments/Sauces

- Bruschetta ● ● ● ●
- Habanero Hot Sauce ● ● ●
- Green Goddess Dressing ● ● ●
- Avocado Tzatziki Dip ● ●
- Organic Balsamic and Fig Dressing ● ● ●
- Guajillo Salsa ● ● ●
- Peri-Peri Sauce ● ● ●
- White Wine Vinegar ● ● ●
- Organic Yellow Mustard ● ● ●
- Organic Ketchup ● ● ●
- Pineapple Fruit Spread ● ● ●



Low on Salt, Big on Flavor

The healthiest seasonings and sauces provide lots of flavor without too much sodium. While eating salt is essential for life, we often eat much more than is needed. It's used for flavor in fast food and restaurant meals as well as for a preservative in pre-packaged and frozen foods. For people with cardiovascular health issues like hypertension, the American Heart Association recommends no more than 1500mg of sodium per day. For folks not at risk, the USDA suggests no more than 2300mg per day. If you have a doctor's recommendation already, please be sure to follow your personal healthcare guidelines.

Sources

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Provided by the USC WorkWell Center's staff and interns: Julie Chobdee, Suzzane Huynh, Cory Tripp, Marissa Gaab, Tiffany Chiu, Vivienne Yang, and Alicia Liu