

Focus on What You Can Eat

Keep the guesswork, and your cravings, to a minimum with these practical tips for managing and maintaining an FCS-friendly nutrition plan.

Eating a low-fat diet can seem difficult at first – but with a few simple tips people living with FCS can make FCS-friendly meals that taste great and are fun to make.

Follow these four steps to stay healthy, happy and satisfied.

Identify: Create a list of your favorite foods, cuisines, and flavors

Write down all the foods you love. Think about foods you grew up with. Include entrées, snacks, desserts and beverages. When your list is complete, go back and take a look at what you wrote down. Did you notice any patterns? Do you like Italian or Indian? Mexican or Mongolian? Spicy or tangy?

Discover: Get to the root of what fuels your cravings

Think about what it is that you like about the foods you listed. Is it the ingredients, the spices, the flavor profiles, or the cooking methods? Do you know how they are made? If you're not sure, try looking up low-fat, low-sugar recipes on the internet, or talk to people who make the type of food you like.

Substitute: Create FCS-friendly versions of the foods you crave

Armed with the knowledge you've gained in your research, think about how you can make low-fat, healthy versions of your favorite off-limit foods.

For example, how might you substitute a pizza from your local pizzeria with something healthy? For instance, you could use a non-fat, whole wheat pita for the crust. Then, add sliced tomatoes, fresh basil and vegetables (like peppers, mushrooms, or onions) – and top it off with fat-free mozzarella cheese and a sprinkle of oregano.

Do you crave a hamburger? Try one of the low-fat veggie burgers sold at some grocery stores. Or grill a portabella mushroom (which has a texture similar to steak). Spread some stone-ground mustard on a whole wheat bun, top it with a sliced tomato and red onion, and you have a backyard BBQ in the making!

Maintain: Stock your pantry with FCS-friendly food staples

Once you've come up with your recipes for healthy substitutes, you can add their ingredients to a list of low-fat, low-carb staples (such as those on the back of this page). Keep these items in your pantry for quick and easy grab and make meals. Also consider stocking up on dried herbs and spices for the cuisines you enjoy, since most have little to no fat.

Keep your FCS-friendly pantry list handy on your smart phone or print it out on paper. That way, when you're at the grocery store, you can get everything you need to make healthy and flavorful foods that you love.



Below is a list of FCS-friendly food items you might consider keeping on hand as part of your FCS kitchen. As always, check Nutrition Facts labels to make sure all ingredients fit with your meal plan.

Proteins

- skinless poultry breast
- extra lean ground turkey breast
- non-oily fish like cod, tilapia, sole, halibut, and haddock
- all shellfish
- well-trimmed pork tenderloin
- low fat luncheon meats
- extra-lean ham
- egg whites and fat-free egg substitutes
- defatted powdered peanut butter
- canned chicken breast and tuna, packed in water

Dairy

- fat free, plain, sugar-free versions of the following: yogurt, milk, cheese, cottage cheese, sour cream
- certain fat-free, sugar-free ice creams (warning: sugar alcohols like sorbitol may have a laxative effect, so keep portions small)

Grains

- whole grains like 100% whole wheat bread
- fat-free whole grain crackers
- quinoa
- whole wheat pastas
- brown rice
- air popped popcorn
- farro
- oatmeal
- unsweetened dry oat cereal
- shredded wheat cereal

Vegetables

- asparagus
- carrots
- broccoli
- cauliflower
- green beans
- leafy greens
- celery
- zucchini
- eggplant
- brussel sprouts
- onions
- cabbage
- tomatoes
- peppers
- bean sprouts
- bok choy
- water chestnuts

Fruit

- most fresh fruits
- canned fruit, with no added sugar

Legumes (Beans)

- dried beans, such as lentils, black beans, white beans, pinto beans and garbanzos
- canned fat-free beans and chili beans

Certain seeds

- chia seeds or milled flax (in small amounts, as advised by your dietitian to supply essential fatty acids)

Sugar-free beverages

- sparkling water
- coffee
- unsweetened tea
- flavored water
- certain sugar-free vitamin waters
- diet sodas

Flavor enhancers

- spices
- alcohol-free vanilla extract
- vinegars
- certain condiments, like mustard
- whole wheat panko bread crumbs
- fat-free, no sugar salad dressings and marinades
- fat-free salsa
- fat-free tomato sauce
- fat-free broth

Foods to avoid

Below are some of the food items that might seem healthy, but are not:

- beverages low in fat, but high in sugar (these include fruit juices, soft drinks, alcohol, etc.)
- healthy sounding honey and agave (which act like sugar to raise triglycerides)
- foods loaded with added sugars, like BBQ sauce
- refined grains, white pasta, and rice
- all oils (except MCT Oil) including: olive oil and coconut oil
- avocados
- edamame
- nuts and nut butters
- vinaigrette salad dressings made with oil

NOTE: Be aware that some foods may affect people differently.

When introducing a new food into your diet, start with a very small portion.

If you experience no ill effects, try a little more in a couple days. Share this list when speaking with your registered dietitian to see what's best.

