

Meal Planning with the Rule of Threes

What is the Rule of Threes?

Healthy eating is pretty flexible but can become overwhelming. The Rule of Threes is an easy way to nourish your body and meet your energy needs by following three simple rules.

- 1. Eat three meals a day.**
- 2. Eat up to three snacks a day.**
- 3. Allow no more than three to five hours between meals and snacks.**

Rule of Threes Meal Plan

Breakfast

Calcium
 Complex Carbohydrates
 Fruit or Vegetable
 Protein (optional)
 Fat (optional)

Morning Snack

Lunch

Calcium
 Complex Carbohydrates
 Fruit or Vegetable
 Protein
 Fat

“Fun Food”

Afternoon Snack

Dinner

Calcium
 Complex Carbohydrates
 Fruit or Vegetable
 Protein
 Fat

“Fun Food”

Bedtime Snack

Calcium Suggestions

Milk, yogurt, cheese, frozen yogurt, tofu, Ca fortified orange juice, collard greens, canned salmon, almonds, pudding

Complex Carbohydrate Suggestions

Cereal, oatmeal, bagels, bread, crackers, rice, potatoes, pasta, corn, popcorn, quinoa, millet, amaranth

Fat Suggestions

Butter, margarine, peanut butter, cheese, cream cheese, salad dressing, mayonnaise, sauces, muffins, bacon, nuts, olives, avocado, egg yolk, fried/sautéed foods, chips, ice cream, some meats

Fruit or Vegetable Suggestions

Any fresh, cooked, dried, canned, or juiced fruits or vegetables

“Fun Food” Suggestions

Any dessert, cookies, cake, ice cream, pudding, doughnuts, croissants, candy bars, chips, fries, non-diet soda, milk shakes, latte

Protein Suggestions (one serving is about 20 g protein – the size of a deck of cards or checkbook)

Meat, fish, poultry, eggs, cottage cheese, Greek yogurt (1 cup), cheese, beans, hummus, tofu, tempeh, peanut butter, other nut butters

Snack Suggestions

1-2 food groups

Serving sizes are generally one cup. Consult with your registered dietitian/nutritionist about your favorite foods to ensure the proper serving size.

Note: These suggestions are not all inclusive.

My Rule of Threes Meal Plan

Meal/Snack	Food Group	Example
Breakfast		
Time:		
Morning Snack		
Time:		
Lunch		
Time:		
Afternoon Snack		
Time:		
Dinner		
Time:		
Bedtime Snack		
Time:		