

Summer Meal Planning Challenges for Teenagers

Teenagers looking to stay healthy during summer vacation need menus that are dense in nutrition.

When it's hot, and you're busy with a summer job or fun, a structured plan makes meal preparation quick and nutrition automatic. Skipping meals to save calories is a bad idea while you're still growing. To get all the protein, vitamins, minerals, and healthy fats and carbs that you need, eat a choice from each food group at every meal.

Source: www.livestrong.com/article/454921-summer-meal-plan-for-teenagers



Top 5 Nutrition Tips for Teens with Busy Schedules:

1. **Establish a routine.** Try to rise early enough to ensure you are able to consume a healthy breakfast at a reasonable time. This will help set the pace for the day. Getting breakfast in at a reasonable time will help you remain on track for the rest of the day and keep you from missing vital nutrients. For example: Breakfast by 10 am; Lunch by 2 pm; Dinner with the family at the normal time
2. Adhere to a meal plan to ensure you are receiving adequate nutrition. Monitor your progress daily via apps, written journal if necessary, or even a picture journal.
3. If you miss a scheduled snack, eat a protein-carbohydrate combination to help get you back on track. Having the snacks and fluids on hand will also help you stick to your meal plan and help you avoid practicing bad habits such as eating larger portions or skipping meals.
4. If you are active in sports or have a summer camp or job that will keep you busy or active for long periods of time, pack healthy snacks for both pre and post sports fueling. For example: energy bars and chocolate milk. Remember to practice proper hydration.
5. Remember to hydrate well and drink until your urine is light yellow. Keep a cold-water bottle or sports beverage with you if you are in the heat. Most teens need 60–80 oz of hydrating fluids per day. What counts as a hydrating beverage?
 - water
 - juice
 - sport beverage
 - milk
 - yogurt drinks
 - veggie juice
 - smoothies
 - decaf tea, soda, coffee

Snacks on the Go

- canned beans
- dehydrated fruit mangos
- dried fruit leathers or gummies
- pouches (fruit/ vegetable combination)
- quinoa (instant kind)
- snack cups
- oatmeal cups
- peanut butter crackers
- pretzels (individually packaged)

Some brands to look for:

- Archer Farms nut bags
- Bare organic snacks
- Clif nut-filled bars
- Harvest Snaps
- Jif bars
- Nature's Bakery Fig Bar
- Power Cakes
- RX Bar