

# MOOD + FOOD

*Are you aware of the connection between mood and food? Diet culture tends to push us towards extremes by tempting us to make drastic changes. Instead of living at these extremes, we suggest finding moderation to best support mood and energy levels.*

## **CONSISTENCY IS KEY:**

- Try eating every 3-5 hours during your waking hours.
- Skipping meals or eating erratically often leads to mental and physical fatigue.

## **TRY TO INCLUDE A VARIETY OF FOOD GROUPS:**

- Mix it up with starches/grains, fruit, vegetables, dairy, protein & fats. Combining different types of foods & food groups at meals/snacks can help maintain energy.
- Experiment with new foods, combinations, and a variety of colors such as: raisins in your oatmeal, peanuts with your pretzels, or tomato on your sandwich.

## **EAT WHAT SOUNDS GOOD:**

- If a food sounds appealing, include it with a meal or snack. All foods can fit.
- Practice noticing how your body feels after eating. Which foods satisfy you and give you lasting energy?

## **BE FLEXIBLE:**

- Breakfast doesn't have to include eggs, and pancakes can be eaten for dinner!
- Meals can consist of multiple "snacks" from different food groups.

## **USE CAUTION WITH SUBSTANCES:**

- Feeling sluggish & reaching for caffeine (coffee, energy drinks, etc.) again? If you're hungry, add a snack which will provide more sustained energy with less of a crash.
- Alcohol, caffeine & marijuana can disrupt sleep patterns and mood. Sleep is essential to restore your systems and give your mind/body a break.

## **PERFECTION IS NOT THE GOAL:**

- Unsure you're choosing "the right thing?" Giving your body fuel, no matter what it is, is better than skipping a meal or snack when you know you're physically hungry.
- Go easy on yourself - use convenience foods and cook if you are able.

## **EXPLORE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

- If you'd like help putting these tips into practice, call UHS at 608-265-5600 to schedule a visit with a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist.
- Looking for financial assistance with food? Learn what's available on campus at: [financialaid.wisc.edu/success/basic-needs-resources/](https://financialaid.wisc.edu/success/basic-needs-resources/). Scroll down for the Food Resources section.



## MEAL IDEAS

- Tofu and broccoli teriyaki bowl, with rice & a glass of soy milk
- Sandwich with turkey, cheese, mayo, mustard, lettuce, tomato & chips & an apple
- Black bean & cheese quesadilla & side salad
- Ramen noodles with added egg & veggies & glass of milk
- Bagel with cream cheese, with Greek yogurt and fruit
- Crackers, cheese, grapes, carrots & trail mix

## SNACK IDEAS

- Banana bread with milk/yogurt
- Hummus with pita chips & carrots
- Peanut butter with pretzels
- Applesauce & string cheese
- Cookie & milk/soy milk
- Granola bar & fruit

For more information on food groups, link to [myplate.gov/eat-healthy/food-group-gallery](https://myplate.gov/eat-healthy/food-group-gallery).