

Thinking Outside the Box!



Fajita Bowl

The large majority of registered dietitians and other licensed health professionals advise Americans the best way to promote optimal health is to build a healthy eating pattern that can be maintained long-term. Restrictive eating patterns or fad diets being promoted by untrained professionals may result in the desired weight loss and or gains in muscle mass; however, if these diets can't be maintained, oftentimes people return to their old eating habits. More often than not, once old habits return, so does the lost weight along with an increase in body fat. When this happens, many will again go on a restrictive diet. Experts agree, this cycle is truly not the best habit for optimal health and may even result in causing poor health.

Another concerning diet trend is aiming for perfect eating or eating only clean foods. Placing a value on your worth if you eat perfectly, or demonizing foods as good or bad or clean vs. unclear, can lead to an unhealthy relationship with food.

Building a healthy eating pattern means more than eating optimally to nourish one's body. A healthy eating pattern should also nourish your mind and spirit. This means that the very act of eating any food shouldn't cause negative feelings, and the eating pattern doesn't cause an extreme burden and stress. The fact is, a healthy eating pattern doesn't mean eating perfectly all the time. It's about adopting overall healthy habits that are easy to maintain and can be done most of the time. If you can't maintain a diet, the benefits to your health are short lived. It is better to aim for the cumulative lifelong benefits of an eating pattern that is healthy rather than short lived perfection. To get you started on adopting a maintainable eating pattern for the long haul, aim to practice these suggestions most of the time:



- Fill $\frac{1}{2}$ your plate with fruits and vegetables, $\frac{1}{4}$ lean protein, $\frac{1}{4}$ grains (with most choices being whole grains)
- Cook and prepare most of your meals at home and eat mindfully (limit distractions and make it a point to enjoy meals and snacks).
- Aim to sit at the dinner table with the TV off and don't eat at your desk while working.
- When eating out, practice portion control and know that it is okay to only eat half and take home or share the rest.
- Consume indulgences mindfully and limit the amount to just one serving.
- Water is best. Don't drink your calories. Limit sugar sweetened beverages. Choose non-fat dairy products.
- Most of the time, select products that are made up of mostly ingredients that you know. Aim for products with the fewest ingredients.
- Keep fresh vegetables and fruit at-the-ready and visible for a quick, nutritious, and low-calorie snack.

Add this meal to your healthy eating pattern. It can even be prepped on Sunday and used for your office lunches. Try it for dinner and your family will ask you to make it again.

Ingredients: 8 servings

- 2 cups instant brown rice
- 1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breast
- 1 tbsp. paprika
- 1 tsp. red pepper flakes
- 1 tbsp. garlic
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 lime
- Sliced frozen peppers
- 1 can black beans, drained
- 1 can corn, drained
- 1 avocado
- 1 lime
- 1 cup nonfat Greek yogurt
- Cilantro, chopped

Directions:

1. Prepare the rice according to package directions.
2. Combine the paprika, red pepper, garlic, olive oil, and juice from half a lime into a marinade for the chicken. Evenly coat and let sit for at least five minutes.
3. Bring the frying pan to medium-heat and cook the peppers until tender.
4. Add the chicken and cook until no longer pink. Once it's ready, slice the chicken into pieces.
5. Heat the corn and black beans in a separate stove top pot or in the microwave.
6. In a bowl put $\frac{1}{8}$ of the rice, corn, and beans, then top with $\frac{1}{8}$ of the chicken and peppers. Garnish with $\frac{1}{8}$ of the avocado and some cilantro.

Notes:

- Season with your favorite hot sauce.
- For additional flavor, you can add some canned tomatoes with green chilies.

DISCLAIMER:

THIS RECIPE DOES NOT CONSTITUTE AN ENDORSEMENT BY DOD OF ANY INDIVIDUAL VENDOR. ANY PRODUCT OF SIMILAR SPECIFICATION MAY BE USED TO MAKE THIS HEALTHY CHOICE MEAL.

FOR ADDITIONAL MEAL SOLUTIONS, PLEASE [CLICK HERE](https://www.commissaries.com/healthy-living/healthy-eats) [COMMISSARIES.COM/HEALTHY-LIVING/HEALTHY-EATS](https://www.commissaries.com/healthy-living/healthy-eats)