

# DIETITIAN'S DISH

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER BROUGHT TO YOU BY:  
YOUR MGH WEIGHT CENTER REGISTERED DIETITIANS



**MINDFUL TRAVEL NUTRITION**

**HEALTHFUL TRAVEL SNACKS**

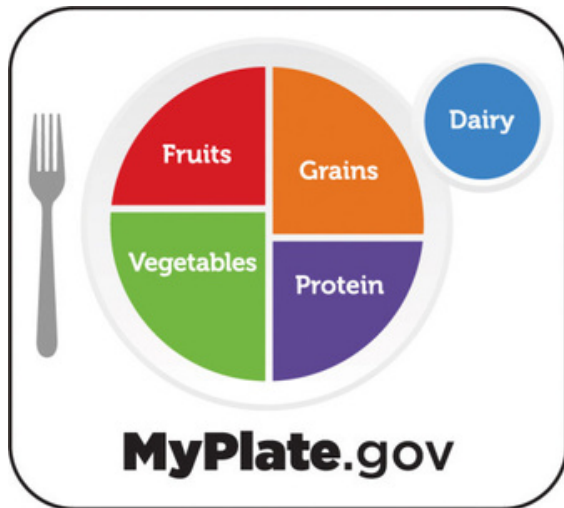
**FACTS & MYTH: BERBERINE VS OZEMPIC**

**SUMMER RECIPES**

# Mindful Travel Nutrition

*Summertime is here! Warm sun, fresh air and time off for vacationing! Whether you have an annual family vacation or, a weekend road trip planned, you're going to need to eat! Avoid those feelings of "getting off track" with activity or, "cheating" on your eating and practice mindfulness while on vacation:*

**Destinations:** when planning your travel, choose a location that will allow you to be physically active. A hotel with a fitness center, a local walking/hiking route, or plan an excursion that gets you moving!



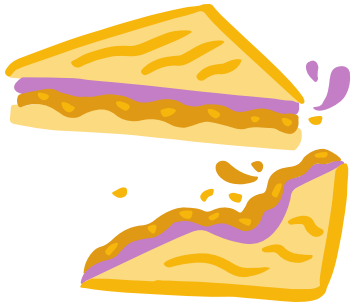
**Travel:** whether you're traveling by plane, train or automobile, plan nutrition ahead so you don't need to rely on fast food or eating out at every meal. This may include waking up early & eating breakfast before traveling or packing to-go sandwiches or protein & fiber rich snacks. Avoid going long periods of time without eating and aim for nutrition every 4-5 hours.

**Eating Out:** often a more frequent occurrence when vacationing and that's OK! Keep these ideas in mind when eating meals out:

- Follow the MyPlate method for food choices & portion control
- Split an entree or, ask for a to-go box or, order a la carte
- Choose grilled, broiled, roasted, seared or poached proteins
- Add steamed or roasted vegetables, a side salad or fruit
- Ask for whole grain bread, pasta, rice or, baked/roasted potatoes
- Choose oil-based salad dressings or, tomato & wine based sauces for added flavor
- Skip the sugar-sweetened beverages and opt for water

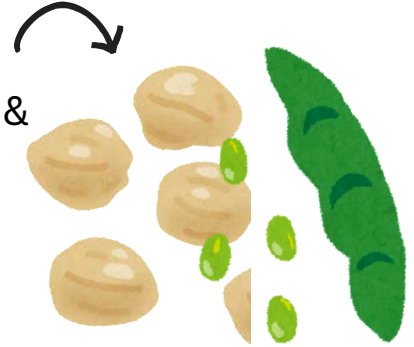
# Healthful Travel Snacks

Pack these protein & fiber rich snacks to help fuel your next travel day!



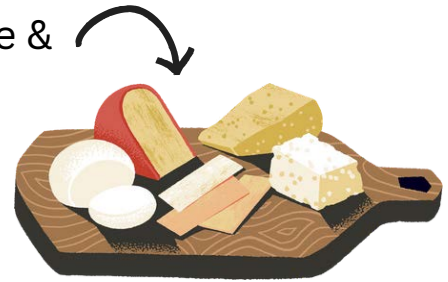
The classic PB&J, on whole grain bread!

Protein packed roasted chickpeas & edamame



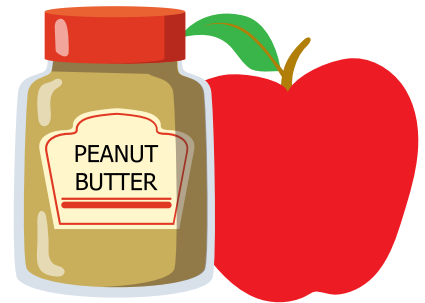
Protein bar with <10g sugar and at least 10g protein

2-3 oz of cheese & whole grain crackers



Small handful of mixed nuts

Good ol' fashion apples & PB



## Homemade PB Energy Bites



Ingredients:

- 1.5 cups of rolled oats
- 2 tbsp honey
- 1 scoop protein powder
- 1/2 cup of peanut butter
- Bonus: add chocolate chips, dried fruits or flax seeds

Directions:

1. Add all ingredients to bowl and combine well
2. Place in the freezer for 20-30 minutes.
3. Roll into tbsp size balls & enjoy!

# Is Berberine Nature's Ozempic?

The simple answer is NO but let's break it down.

## What is Berberine?

Berberine is a naturally occurring substance that can be found in a variety of plants such as Oregon grapes, barberry, goldenseal, gold thread, etc. These plants have been used in Chinese medicine and other cultures for thousands of years. In more recent history, berberine has been used for infections, skin diseases, digestive disorders, and other conditions. Berberine has been getting attention on social media lately as an aid to lose weight and has been coined "nature's Ozempic".



**Myth:** Berberine has proven to be an effective way for people to lose weight

**Fact:** Berberine may reduce blood sugar levels, cholesterol, and have beneficial effects on high blood pressure in those with diabetes and heart conditions. Small amounts of weight loss may occur in this specific population.

**Myth:** Berberine has been studied extensively in terms of weight loss in people

**Fact:** Berberine as a weight loss supplement has not been confirmed by large, peer reviewed studies. Much of the research has been done in mice, not humans.

## Is Berberine safe to take?

Generally, berberine is well tolerated when taken orally. However, there have been reports of gastrointestinal symptoms such as abdominal pain, constipation, diarrhea, nausea, and bloating. Additionally, berberine may interact with other medications. It is important to speak with your physician and/or dietitian before you begin to take this as a supplement.



## What is Ozempic?

Ozempic is a GLP-1 receptor agonist medication prescribed by healthcare providers to improve blood sugar control and reduce cardiovascular risks in adults with type 2 diabetes, alongside diet and exercise. It also promotes modest weight loss in some individuals.

# Is Berberine Nature's Ozempic? Continued

## What did we learn?

While berberine has gained popularity for its potential benefits in weight management, it is important to note that its mechanisms differ from pharmaceuticals like Ozempic (semaglutide), which enhances insulin secretion to lower blood sugar levels in type 2 diabetes. Further research is crucial to fully understand berberine's effectiveness, safety, and applicability across diverse populations. If considering berberine as a supplement, consult healthcare providers for guidance beyond weight loss.

## Awareness of Regulatory Differences Between Medications and Supplements

Some people may prefer supplements over medications because they perceive them to be more natural. However, it's important to understand the distinction between the regulation of medications and supplements. Medications are regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and must undergo numerous clinical trials to demonstrate their safety and effectiveness. Conversely, supplements are categorized as food products and do not require pre-market testing for safety or efficacy. The FDA only intervenes if a supplement is found to cause health issues. Therefore, while medications undergo rigorous testing, the safety of supplement products is assumed rather than verified through clinical trials.

### References

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2023, November). Berberine and weight loss: What you need to know. National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health. <https://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/berberine-and-weight-loss-what-you-need-to-know>
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2023, June). In the news: Berberine. National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health. <https://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/in-the-news-berberine>
- What is Ozempic®?: Ozempic® (SEMAGLUTIDE) injection. What is Ozempic®? | Ozempic® (semaglutide) injection. (n.d.). <https://www.ozempic.com/why-ozempic/what-is-ozempic.html>

# Budget Friendly Balanced Meals

With the rising cost of food, finding 'healthy' options on a budget can be challenging. While there's a perception that healthier foods are more expensive, in reality, purchasing whole foods is often more economical than buying their processed, pre-cut, or pre-cooked counterparts. For example, opting for dry rice over pre-cooked packets or purchasing a whole block of cheese instead of shredded cheese packets can save money. Additionally, frozen vegetables and fruit can also be a cost-effective alternative, providing similar nutritional benefits at a lower price point compared to fresh produce.

A balanced diet consists of consuming the macronutrients (carbohydrates, proteins, and fats) and micronutrients (vitamins and minerals) our bodies need while allowing room for extras.



## Example of a what a balanced plate may look like!

- ½ plate non-starchy vegetables & fruit
- ¼ plate whole grains
- ¼ plate protein

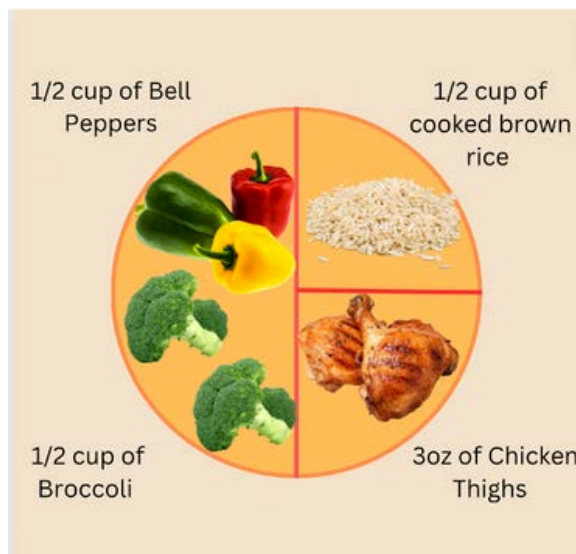


## Budget Friendly Shopping Tips

1. Plan meals and make a shopping list to avoid overspending/impulse purchases.
2. Take inventory of what you already have before shopping.
4. Compare prices, use coupon/discount codes, and choose generic/store brands.
5. Buy in Bulk (for non-perishable items).
5. Opt for frozen foods or freeze fresh items to extend shelf life.
6. Choose economical cuts of meat like chicken thighs over breast.
7. Incorporate more plant-based proteins to reduce meat costs.
8. Explore local farmers markets and international stores for better deals.
9. Buy fruits and veggies in season for lower prices.
10. Stay hydrated with free water instead of buying beverages.

# Sample Meals Under \$5

## Sample Shopping at Major Grocery Chains



- 5lb bag of dry rice from the Stop & Shop brand costs \$5.99: 1/2 cooked brown rice (1/4 cup dry) = \$0.12
- Sop & Shop brand bone-in chicken thighs about \$1.89 per pound: 3oz of chicken thighs = \$0.37
- 16 oz of frozen mixed bell peppers from the Stop & Shop brand costs \$2.29: 1/2 cup bell peppers (about 3oz) = \$0.42
- 16oz of frozen broccoli from Stop & Shop brand is \$2.29: 1/2 cup (about 3 oz) = \$0.43

**Total Meal = \$1.34**

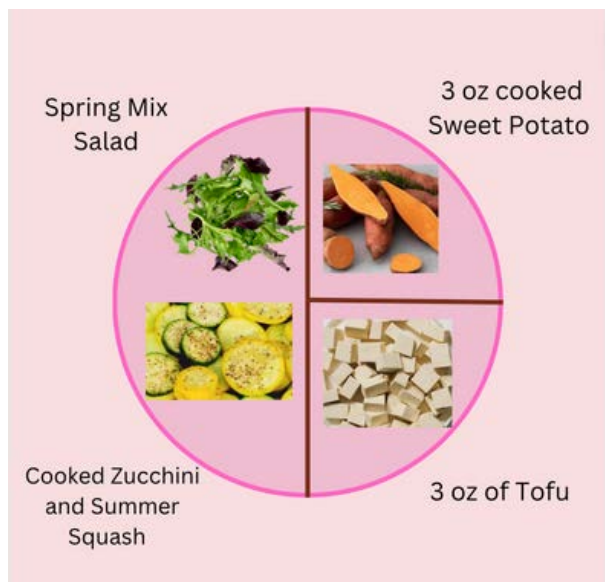
- 24oz bag of quinoa from Nature's Earthly Choice is \$7.29: 1/4 cup dry (1/2 cooked) = \$0.45
- 12oz Nature's Promise frozen salmon is \$9.89: 3oz = \$2.47
- 10oz pack of spinach from Dole is \$4.99: 2oz = \$0.99
- 16oz bag of kale from Stop & Shop brand is \$2.00: 2oz = \$0.25
- 1 cucumber from Stop & Shop prodouce is \$0.99: 1/4 cucumber = \$0.25

**Total Meal = \$4.41**



- 5lb bag of whole sweet potatoes from Stop & Shop produce is \$4.99: 3oz = \$0.18
- 14 oz of Nature's Promise Extra Firm Tofu is \$2.79: 3 oz = \$0.40
- 10oz pack of Dole Spring mix is \$4.99: 2oz = \$0.99
- 16oz frozen Zucchini from Stop & Shop brand is \$2.29: 2oz = \$0.29
- 1 summer/ yellow squash from Stop & Shop is \$0.91: 1/3 squash = \$0.30

**Total Meal = \$2.16**



# Strawberry Kale Salad

Total time: 15 minutes Servings: 4

## Ingredients

8 cups chopped kale  
 4 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil, divided  
 1/2 tsp salt, divided  
 1 Tbsp apple cider vinegar  
 1 tsp dijon mustard  
 1/4 tsp ground pepper  
 1 1/2 cups halved fresh strawberries  
 2 ounces garlic and herb goat cheese, crumbled  
 1/3 chopped toasted walnuts



### Fun Fact:

You'll notice step 1 of this recipe has you massage kale with olive oil and salt prior to assembling your salad. This helps break down kale's fibrous texture and makes it more enjoyable to eat!

For a lower calorie option you can substitute water for olive oil for the same effect.

## Directions

- Combine kale, 1 Tbsp oil and 1/4 tsp salt in a large bowl using your hands. Massage the kale until well coated, about 1 minute.
- Whisk vinegar, mustard, pepper and the remaining 1/4 tsp salt in a small bowl, whisking constantly. Slowly drizzle in the remaining 3 Tbsp oil.
- Add strawberries, goat cheese and walnuts to the kale, drizzle the dressing over the salad and gently toss to combine



# Hot Honey Chicken and Pineapple Kebobs

Total time: 40 minutes Servings: 4

## Ingredients

- 2 cups fresh pineapple chunks
- 1 Tbsp hot honey
- 1 1/2 Tbsp lower-sodium soy sauce
- 1 medium clove garlic, minced
- 1/2 tsp grated ginger
- 1/2 tsp toasted sesame oil
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 sweet onions, cut into 8 wedges
- 2 small bell peppers, cut into 1-inch pieces
- Chopped fresh cilantro for garnish
- Sesame seeds for garnish



## Directions

- Place 2 Tbsp (about 2 chunks) pineapple on a cutting board and finely chop. Drag the flat side of a large knife back and forth over the chopped pineapple to form a paste. Transfer to a medium bowl. Add hot honey, soy sauce, garlic, ginger, sesame oil and 1/8 tsp salt; whisk to combine. Transfer 1 Tbsp of the mixture to a small bowl and set aside.
- Preheat grill or oven to medium-high heat (400 - 450 F). Thread chicken, onion wedges, bell pepper and remaining pineapple chunks onto metal or wooden skewers.
- Place the kebobs on the grill or in the oven, uncovered, turning occasionally and repositioning as needed brushing with remaining hot honey mixture, during final 2 minutes of cooking. Cook until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest portion of the chicken registers at least 165F. (takes about 12 minutes)
- Transfer the kebobs to a platter and brush with preserved 1 Tbsp of hot honey mixture. Garnish with cilantro and sesame seeds if desired.