

Healthy Ethnic Meals

Culture often shapes the foods people eat, how they prepare their meals and the overall experience and meanings associated with food. Many traditional dishes across cultures are already full of vegetables, whole grains, beans, and lean proteins. With a few simple choices or swaps, you can make these meals even healthier:

- Choose plant forward dishes: Many cultures offer vegetable based meals like stir fries, lentil soups, and bean dishes. These foods are rich in fibre, vitamins, and minerals while being lower in unhealthy fats.
- Choose lean proteins: Try grilled, baked, steamed, or braised chicken, fish, tofu, or beans instead of fried or breaded options.
- Be mindful with cooking methods: Steaming, roasting, simmering, or stir frying with little oil is healthier than deep frying. Soups, curries, and stews can also be nutritious when they aren't too creamy or oily.
- Watch portions of refined grains: White rice, naan, and noodles are common in many cuisines. Try filling half your plate with vegetables and choosing whole grain options when you can.
- Limit heavy sauces: Creamy or coconut based sauces can be high in saturated fat. Enjoy them in small amounts and choose tomato or broth based sauces more often.
- Pay attention to salt: Sauces, pickled foods, and condiments can be high in sodium. Drinking water and adding fresh vegetables can help balance your meal.
- Enjoy flavour: Herbs and spices like garlic, ginger, turmeric, and chilies add taste without extra calories and can support good health.

Scan the QR code to access a short Cleveland Clinic Canada video with even more tips on how to eat healthier while on the run.

