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# Nutrition for Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS)

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Women with PCOS often have higher levels of insulin (a hormone) in their blood and many have trouble maintaining a healthy weight. Knowing the right foods to eat and to limit can improve the way you feel. It may help you lose weight.

**Eat 3 times a day.** Eating consistently during the day will sustain energy levels, prevent nausea and boost metabolism. Including lean protein with meals and snacks may improve feeling full and stabilize blood sugar levels.

**Insulin and Carbohydrates.** The insulin level in your blood goes up after you eat. The insulin level is highest after consuming carbohydrates such as grains (bread, rice, pasta), starchy vegetables (corn, potatoes, peas), fruit and fruit juice, milk and yogurt, sweets and sugary beverages (soda, sports drinks). **Aim to eat consistent, portion-controlled amounts of carbohydrates throughout the day for stable blood sugar levels.**

**Carbohydrates with Fiber.** Carbohydrates with fiber are better choices than sugary or refined foods (regular soda, fruit juice, white bread, white rice). High fiber foods raise blood sugar levels gradually and are filling.

## Good sources of Fiber:

- Whole grain breads and cereals
- Brown rice
- Whole grain pasta
- Oatmeal
- Beans (kidney, baked, navy, etc.)
- Fresh fruit
- Non-starchy vegetables (broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, leafy greens)

**Drink plenty of fluids.** Aim to drink 6-8 cups of non-caffeinated fluids every day. Water and other fluids are needed to prevent constipation and to keep the body working well.

**Be active.** Exercise can lower insulin levels and help with weight loss. Aim for at least 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity or 75 minutes per week of vigorous aerobic activity.

Moderate	Vigorous
Brisk walking (at least 2.5 miles per hour)	Hiking uphill or with a heavy backpack
Water aerobics	Running
Dancing (ballroom or social)	Swimming laps
Gardening	Aerobic dancing
Tennis (doubles)	Heavy yardwork like continuous digging or hoeing
Biking slower than 10 miles per hour	Tennis (singles)
	Biking 10 miles per hour or greater

## Sample Menus

Breakfast (300-350 calories)	Lunch (400 calories)	Dinner (400 calories)	Snack
1 package plain oatmeal with 1 Tbsp. peanut butter or 2 Tbsp. nuts	1 whole wheat pita with 3 oz. chicken breast, 1/4 cup 2% shredded cheese, lettuce/tomatoes, 2 Tbsp. light sour cream  Side salad with dressing on side  1 fruit	<u>Healthy Chicken Parmesan</u> 3 oz. chicken breast breaded with egg white, Italian-seasoned breadcrumbs, 2 Tbsp. reduced-fat parmesan cheese, 2/3 cup whole wheat pasta & top with 1/2 cup tomato sauce, 1 cup fresh spinach	1 fruit and low-fat string cheese  6 oz. non-fat, low sugar Greek yogurt with 2 Tbsp. chia seeds
1 whole wheat waffle with 1 Tbsp. peanut butter	Individual whole grain pizza  Side salad with dressing on side	<u>Healthy Quesadillas</u> Fold 1 whole wheat tortilla over 1/4 cup 2% shredded cheese, 4 oz. chopped chicken and cook 2 minutes per side in pan, top with 2 Tbsp. light sour cream & salsa, 2 slices of avocado  Side salad with dressing on side.	Apple or celery and 2 Tbsp. natural peanut butter  1/2 cup low-fat cottage cheese and 1/2 cup canned mandarin oranges or peaches in their own juice

<p>3/4 cup whole grain cereal with low-fat milk, 1 egg, low-fat yogurt</p>	<p>15 whole wheat crackers</p> <p>4 slices (2-3 oz.) deli meat</p> <p>2% cheese stick</p> <p>1 small fruit</p>	<p><u>Healthy Taco Salad</u></p> <p>4 cups lettuce &amp; tomato, 1/4 cup 2% shredded cheese, 2/3 cup ground turkey browned on stove with taco seasoning, 2 Tbsp. light sour cream, 2 thin slices avocado &amp; salsa, 6 baked tortilla chips</p>	<p>2 hard-boiled eggs</p> <p>1/2 cup plain oatmeal with 1 Tbsp. chopped walnuts and a drizzle of honey</p>
<p>1 whole grain English muffin with 1 Tbsp. peanut butter, 2 slices of lean Canadian bacon</p>	<p>Whole grain wrap with 1 slice cheese, 4-5 slices of deli meat, lettuce, tomato, veggies &amp; 1 Tbsp. low-fat mayo</p> <p>1 cup strawberries</p>	<p><u>Pita Pizza</u></p> <p>1 whole wheat pita with 1/4 cup tomato sauce, 1/4 cup 2% shredded cheese, top with pepperoni or ham. Broil in oven for 4-5 minutes.</p> <p>Salad with dressing on side.</p>	<p>Single-serving pouch tuna in water with 6-8 whole grain crackers</p> <p>1-2 squares dark chocolate (at least 60% cacao or higher)</p>
<p>1 whole wheat English muffin with 1 slice of Canadian bacon, 1 slice 2% cheese, 1 egg</p>	<p>300 calorie Frozen single serving meal</p> <p>Side salad with dressing on side</p>	<p><u>Wrap</u></p> <p>1 whole wheat tortilla, toasted with 3 oz. grilled chicken breast, lettuce/tomato, 1 slice low-fat cheese</p> <p>10 whole wheat crackers</p> <p>Salad with dressing on side.</p>	<p>1/4 cup hummus and raw veggies for dipping</p> <p>1 1/4 cup edamame pods (about 1/2 cup shelled)</p>