

## 5 Staples to Keep In Your Kitchen For Simple, Healthy Meals

Eating nutritious foods doesn't have to be expensive, stressful, or time-consuming. Keeping the right ingredients in your home can make the process so much easier and less daunting. By stocking your kitchen with a few essential staples, you can create and prep delicious, healthy meals without the stress. Here are five must-have items to keep in your fridge and pantry for simple, nutritious meals, and some ideas for what to do with them:

### 1. Eggs

Eggs are packed with protein, along with vitamin D, B12, choline, and iron, and they're incredibly versatile, making them a great ingredient for quick meals any time of the day. Keeping a carton of eggs in your fridge will make mealtimes easier and help you put together a nutritious meal in a pinch.

**Cooking tip:** On a Sunday, boil a bunch of hard-boiled eggs to keep in the fridge for easy meals during the week. You can put them in your salads, or eat them on whole wheat crackers as a quick snack.

### 2. Greek Yogurt

Greek yogurt is another great protein source. You can have it for breakfast, or use some as a creative swap in recipes that require mayo or sour cream. You can also add some peanut butter for some healthy fats and make a peanut butter dip for apple slices as a nutritious, satisfying snack.

**Cooking tip:** Use Greek yogurt as a base for smoothies! Blend in your favorite frozen fruits and a handful of spinach, and enjoy.

### 3. Whole Grains

Some examples of whole grains are brown rice, farro, buckwheat, oats, quinoa, and bulgar. "Starches are our bodies' main source of fuel," says Leigh Merotto, a registered dietitian and nutrition coach. Merotto recommends keeping whole grains on hand to add to your meals, and making sure to incorporate protein into the dish for a well-balanced meal. "Whole grains have key nutrients like iron, B vitamins and magnesium."

**Cooking tip:** Try making a grain bowl for dinner tonight, with your whole grain of choice as the base, a protein source such as chicken or salmon, and some roasted veggies.

### 4. Hummus

Store bought or homemade hummus is a great dip to keep in the fridge for different meals. Hummus is a popular Middle Eastern dip or spread made primarily from cooked and mashed chickpeas, often blended with tahini, lemon juice, and olive oil. Chickpeas are a good source of protein, fiber, and B vitamins, making it a great food to have handy.

**Cooking tip:** Spread hummus on whole-grain toast for a quick and filling snack! Top it with fresh arugula, avocado slices, or mixed seeds for an added crunch.

## 5. A variety of spices

Consider buying some new spices, like turmeric, cinnamon, cayenne pepper, or garlic powder. Keeping a well-stocked spice rack is a useful tool for transforming simple ingredients into a delicious meal. Spices not only enhance the taste of your food, but they also often include anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties.

**Cooking tip:** Try adding turmeric and black pepper to scrambled eggs for an anti-inflammatory boost, or sprinkle cinnamon on Greek yogurt to sweeten your breakfast without the added sugar.