

# **PART 1 – HEALTHY FOOD EXAMPLES**

## **(ADD These To Your Diet)**

It's easy to get confused about which foods are healthy and which aren't, which help fat loss and which promote fat gain.

You generally want to avoid certain foods if you want to lose weight and prevent chronic long-term diseases and illnesses.

In this short guide, we'll give you some of the most common examples of refined foods, and a list of foods you need to add, include in your diet.

Let's go!

## **FOODS TO ADD TO YOUR DIET**

It's easy to wonder which foods are healthiest.

A vast number of foods are both healthy and tasty. By filling your plate with fruits, vegetables, quality protein, and other whole foods, you'll have meals that are colourful, versatile, and good for you.

Here are some of the most incredible and healthy foods. Best part - most of them are surprisingly delicious.

### **1-6: FRUITS AND BERRIES**

Fruits and berries are among the world's most popular health foods.

These sweet, nutritious foods are very easy to incorporate into your diet because they require little to no preparation.

1. Apples - Apples are cheap, high in fiber, vitamin C, and numerous antioxidants. They are very filling and make the perfect snack if you find yourself hungry between meals.

2. Avocados – Not very cheap in India (but they are becoming cheaper every year), Avocados are different than most fruits because they are loaded with healthy fats instead of carbs. Not only are they creamy and tasty but also high in fiber, potassium, and vitamin C.

3. Bananas - Bananas are among the world's best sources of potassium. They're also high in vitamin B6 and fiber, as well as convenient and portable.

4. Blueberries – Though rare (and costly) in India, blueberries are not only delicious but also among the most powerful sources of antioxidants in the world.

5. Oranges - Oranges are well known for their vitamin C content. What's more, they're high in fiber and antioxidants, and easily available.

6. Strawberries - Strawberries are highly nutritious and low in both carbs and calories. Again, very easy to obtain in India.

They are loaded with vitamin C, fiber, and manganese and are arguably among the most delicious foods in existence.

Other healthy fruits - Other health fruits and berries include cherries, grapes, grapefruit, kiwifruit, lemons, mango, melons, olives, peaches, pears, pineapples, plums.

## **7. EGGS**

Eggs are among the most nutritious foods on the planet.

They were previously demonized for being high in cholesterol, but new studies show that they're perfectly safe and healthy.

## **8-10: MEATS**

Unprocessed, gently cooked meat is one of the most nutritious foods you can eat.

## 8. Lean red meat

Lean red meat (goat) is among the best sources of protein in existence and loaded with highly bioavailable iron. Choosing the fatty cuts is fine if you're on a low-carb diet.

## 9. Chicken breasts

Chicken breast is low in fat and calories but extremely high in protein. It's a great source of many nutrients. Again, feel free to eat fattier cuts of chicken if you're not eating that many carbs.

## 10. Lamb

Lambs are usually grass-fed, and their meat tends to be high in omega-3 fatty acids.

# 11–15: NUTS AND SEEDS

Despite being high in fat and calories, nuts and seeds may help you lose weight.

These foods are crunchy, filling, and loaded with important nutrients that many people don't get enough of, including magnesium and vitamin E.

They also require almost no preparation, so they're easy to add to your routine.

## 11. ALMONDS

Almonds are a popular nut loaded with vitamin E, antioxidants, magnesium, and fiber. Studies show that almonds can help you lose weight and improve metabolic health.

## 12. CHIA SEEDS

Chia seeds are among the most nutrient-dense foods on the planet. A single serving packs a lot of fiber and significant amounts of magnesium, manganese, calcium, and various other nutrients.

## **13. COCONUTS**

Coconuts are loaded with fiber and powerful fatty acids called medium-chain triglycerides (MCTs).

## **14. WALNUTS**

Walnuts are highly nutritious and loaded with fiber and various vitamins and minerals.

## **15–24: VEGETABLES**

Calorie for calorie, vegetables are among the world's most concentrated sources of nutrients.

There's a wide variety available, and it's best to eat many different types every day.

15 Asparagus - Asparagus is an awesome vegetable and is now becoming very popular in India. It's low in both carbs and calories but loaded with vitamin K.

16. Bell peppers

Bell peppers come in several colors, including red, yellow, and green. They're crunchy and sweet, as well as a great source of antioxidants and vitamin C.

17. Broccoli

Broccoli is a cruciferous vegetable that tastes great both raw and cooked. It's an excellent source of fiber and vitamins C and K and contains a decent amount of protein compared with other vegetables.

18. Carrots

People born in the 80s might remember the detective serial "Karamchand" on Doordarshan. Actor Pankaj Kapoor (in the title role) used to munch on carrots all through the episodes... and for good reason!

Carrots are super cheap, incredibly tasty and juicy, extremely crunchy and loaded with nutrients like fiber and vitamin K.

Carrots are also very high in carotene antioxidants, which have numerous benefits.

#### 19. Cauliflower

Cauliflower is a very versatile cruciferous vegetable. It can be used to make a multitude of healthy dishes — and also tastes good on its own.

#### 20. Cucumber

Cucumbers are one of the world's most popular vegetables. They're very low in both carbs and calories, consisting mostly of water. However, they contain a number of nutrients in small amounts, including vitamin K.

#### 21. Garlic

Garlic is incredibly healthy. It contains bioactive organosulfur compounds that have powerful biological effects, including improved immune function (8Trusted Source).

#### 22. Spinach

Good old Popeye loved his spinach, and again, for good reason. Spinach is incredibly high in fiber, vitamins C and K, and a number of other nutrients. It adds a satisfying crunch to salads and other dishes.

#### 23. Onions

Onions have a very strong flavor and are very popular in most Indian recipes. They contain a number of bioactive compounds believed to have health benefits.

#### 24. Tomatoes

Tomatoes are usually categorized as a vegetable, although they are technically a fruit. They are tasty and loaded with nutrients like potassium and vitamin C.

More healthy vegetables

Most vegetables are very healthy. Others worth mentioning include most green veggies, cabbage, eggplant, lettuces, mushrooms, radishes, squash, turnips, and zucchini.

## **25–30: FISH AND SEAFOOD**

Fish and other seafood tend to be very healthy and nutritious.

They're especially rich in omega-3 fatty acids and iodine, two nutrients in which most people are deficient.

Studies show that people who eat the highest amounts of seafood — especially fish — tend to live longer and have a lower risk of many illnesses, including heart disease, dementia, and depression.

### 25. Salmon

Salmon is a type of oily fish that's incredibly popular due to its excellent taste and high amount of nutrients, including protein and omega-3 fatty acids. It also contains some vitamin D.

### 26. Sardines

Sardines are small, oily fish that are among the most nutritious foods you can eat. They boast sizable amounts of most nutrients that your body needs.

### 27. Shellfish

Shellfish ranks similarly to organ meats when it comes to nutrient density. Edible shellfish include clams, mollusks, and oysters.

### 28. Shrimp

Shrimp is a type of crustacean related to crabs and lobsters. It tends to be low in fat and calories but high in protein. It's also loaded with various other nutrients, including selenium and vitamin B12.

### 29. Trout

Trout is another type of delicious fish, similar to salmon, usually found in northern India.

### 30. Tuna

Tuna is very popular in Western countries and tends to be low in fat and calories while high in protein. It's perfect for people who need to add more protein to their diets but keep calories low.

However, if you do buy in India, you should make sure to buy low-mercury varieties.

## **31–33: GRAINS**

Although grains have gotten a bad rap in recent years, some types are very healthy.

Just keep in mind that they're relatively high in carbs, so they're not recommended for a low-carb diet.

### 31. Brown rice

Rice is one of the most popular cereal grains and is currently a staple food for more than half of the world's population. Brown rice is fairly nutritious, with a decent amount of fiber, vitamin B1, and magnesium.

### 32. Oats

Oats are incredibly healthy. They are loaded with nutrients and powerful fibers called beta glucans, which provide numerous benefits.

### 33. Quinoa

Quinoa has become incredibly popular among health-conscious individuals in recent years. It's a tasty grain that's high in nutrients, such as fiber and magnesium.

It is also an excellent source of plant-based protein.

## **34–35: BREADS**

Many people eat a lot of highly processed white bread.

For those trying to adopt a healthier diet, it can be extremely challenging to find healthy breads. Even so, options are available.

### 34. Whole wheat bread

Few brands in India are bringing out whole wheat breads. Check ingredient labels. Also, do consume bread in moderate quantities.

### 35. Homemade low-carb breads

Overall, the best choice for bread may be that which you can make yourself. Bread makers are becoming very cheap, and you can think of investing in one if you eat a lot of bread.

## **36–37: LEGUMES**

Legumes are another food group that has been unfairly demonized by nutritionists.

While it's true that legumes contain anti-nutrients, which can interfere with digestion and absorption of nutrients, they can be eliminated by soaking and proper preparation.

Therefore, legumes are a great plant-based source of protein.

Some of the best legumes are:

### 36. Kidney beans (*Rajma*)

Kidney beans are loaded with fiber and various vitamins and minerals. Make sure to cook them properly, as they're toxic when raw.

### 37. All Lentils

Lentils are another popular legume. They're high in fiber and among the best sources of plant-based protein.



## 38. PEANUTS

Peanuts (which are technically legumes, not a true nuts) are incredibly tasty and high in nutrients and antioxidants. Several studies suggest that peanuts can help you lose weight.

However, take it easy on the peanut butter, as it's very high in calories and easy to overeat.

## 39–41: DAIRY

For those who can tolerate them, dairy products are a healthy source of various important nutrients.

Full-fat dairy seems to be the best, and studies show that people who eat the most full-fat dairy have a lower risk of obesity and type 2 diabetes.

If the dairy comes from real grass-fed cows, it may be even more nutritious — as it's higher in some bioactive fatty acids like conjugated linoleic acid (CLA) and vitamin K2.

### 39. Cheese

Cheese is incredibly nutritious, as a single slice may offer about the same amount of nutrients as an entire cup (240 ml) of milk. For many, it's also one of the most delicious foods you can eat.

### 40. Whole milk

Whole milk (from buffalo) is very high in vitamins, minerals, quality animal protein, and healthy fats. What's more, it's one of the best dietary sources of calcium.

### 41. Yogurt (*dahi*)

Yogurt is made from milk that's fermented by adding live bacteria to it. It has many of the same health effects as milk, but yogurt with live cultures has the added benefit of friendly probiotic bacteria.

## **42–44: FATS AND OILS**

Many fats and oils are now marketed as health foods, including several sources of saturated fat that were previously demonized.

### 42. Butter from grass-fed cows

Butter from grass-fed cows is high in many important nutrients, including vitamin K2.

### 43. Coconut oil

Coconut oil contains relatively high amounts of MCTs, may aid Alzheimer's disease, and has been shown to help you lose belly fat (15Trusted Source, 16Trusted Source).

### 44. Extra virgin olive oil

Extra virgin olive oil is one of the healthiest vegetable oils you can find. It contains heart-healthy monounsaturated fats and is very high in antioxidants with powerful health benefits.

## **45–46: TUBERS**

Tubers are the storage organs of some plants. They tend to contain a number of beneficial nutrients.

### 45. Potatoes

Potatoes are loaded with potassium and contain a little bit of almost every nutrient you need, including vitamin C.

They'll also keep you full for long periods. One study analyzed 38 foods and found that boiled potatoes were by far the most filling (17Trusted Source).

### 46. Sweet potatoes

Sweet potatoes are among the most delicious starchy foods you can eat. They're loaded with antioxidants and all sorts of healthy nutrients.

## **47. APPLE CIDER VINEGAR**

Apple cider vinegar is incredibly popular in the natural health community. Studies show that it can help lower blood sugar levels and cause modest weight loss.

It's great to use as a salad dressing or to add flavour to meals.

## **48. DARK CHOCOLATE**

Real dark chocolate is loaded with magnesium and serves as one of the planet's most powerful sources of antioxidants.

### **THE BOTTOM LINE**

Whether you want to overhaul your diet or simply change up your meals, it's easy to add a number of these foods to your routine.

Many of the foods above not only make a great snack but are also packed with vitamins and antioxidants. Some of them may even aid weight loss.

If you don't normally challenge your palate, don't be afraid of trying something new.

# PART 2 – REFINED FOOD EXAMPLES

(Avoid These As Much As You Can)

## 1. SUGARY DRINKS

Added sugar is one of the worst ingredients in the modern diet.

However, some sources of sugar are worse than others, and sugary drinks are particularly harmful.

When you drink liquid calories, your brain doesn't appear to register them as food. Thus, you may end up drastically increasing your total calorie intake.

When consumed in large amounts, sugar can drive insulin resistance and is strongly linked to non-alcoholic fatty liver disease. It's also associated with various serious conditions, including type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

Some researchers believe that sugary drinks are the most fattening aspect of the modern diet — and drinking them in large amounts can drive fat gain and obesity.

**Alternatives** - Drink water, soda, coffee, or tea instead. Adding a slice of lemon to water or soda water can provide a burst of flavour.

## 2. MOST PIZZAS

Pizza has become one of the world's most popular junk foods.

Most commercial pizzas are made with unhealthy ingredients, including highly refined (meaning no fiber, no nutrients) dough and heavily processed meat and veggies. Pizza also tends to be extremely high in calories.

**Alternatives** - Some restaurants offer healthier ingredients. Homemade pizzas can also be very healthy, as long as you choose wholesome ingredients.

## 3. WHITE BREAD

Most commercial breads are unhealthy if eaten in large amounts, as they're made from refined wheat, which is low in fiber and essential nutrients and may lead to rapid spikes in blood sugar (leading to insulin resistance > leading to long-term fat gain).

**Alternatives** - Whole-grain bread is healthier than white bread.

## 4. MOST FRUIT JUICES

Fruit juice is often assumed to be healthy.

While juice contains some antioxidants and vitamin C, **it also packs high amounts of liquid sugar!**

In fact, fruit juice harbors just as much sugar as sugary drinks like Coke or Pepsi — and sometimes even more.

Alternatives - Some fruit juices have been shown to have health benefits despite their sugar content, such as pomegranate and blueberry juices.

However, these should be considered occasional supplements, not an everyday part of your diet. The best option is to eat the WHOLE fruit instead of its juice!

## 5. SWEETENED BREAKFAST CEREALS

Becoming very popular in India, breakfast cereals are processed cereal grains, such as wheat, oats, ragi, or corn.

They're especially becoming popular among children (no time for working mothers these days!) and frequently eaten with milk.

To make them more palatable, the grains are roasted, shredded, pulped, rolled, or flaked. They're generally high in added sugar.

The main downside of most breakfast cereals is their high added sugar content. Some are so sweet that they could even be compared to candy.

**Alternatives** - Choose breakfast cereals that are high in fiber and low in added sugar. Even better, make your own oat porridge from scratch. Very easy, just ask us in the free group for ideas! :)

## 6. FRIED, GRILLED, OR BROILED FOOD

Commercial frying and grilling are among the unhealthiest cooking methods.

Foods cooked in these ways are often highly palatable and calorie-dense. Several types of unhealthy chemical compounds also form when food is cooked under high heat.

These include acrylamides, acrolein, heterocyclic amines, oxysterols, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and advanced glycation end products (AGEs).

These don't sound very nice, right. Well they are not!

Many of these chemicals formed during high-heat cooking have been linked to an increased risk of cancer and heart disease.

**Alternatives** - To improve your health, choose milder and healthier cooking methods, such as boiling, stewing, blanching, and steaming.

## 7. BISCUITS, COOKIES, CAKES AND BAKERY PRODUCTS

Most pastries, biscuits cookies, and cakes are unhealthy if eaten in excess.

Packaged versions are generally made with refined sugar, refined wheat flour, and added fats. "EDIBLE VEGETABLE FAT", which in India usually means unhealthy trans fats, is often added.

These treats might be tasty, but they have almost no essential nutrients, copious calories, and many preservatives.

**Alternatives** - If you can't stay away from dessert, spring for *dahi* yogurt + fresh fruit + some whey protein, or even a piece or two of real dark chocolate (above 50-70% cocoa solids).

## 8. FRENCH FRIES AND POTATO CHIPS

Whole, white potatoes are very healthy.

However, the same cannot be said of French fries and potato chips!

These foods are very high in calories, and it's easy to eat excessive amounts. Several studies link French fries and potato chips to weight gain.

These foods may also contain large amounts of acrylamides, which are carcinogenic substances that form when potatoes are fried, baked, or roasted.

**Alternatives** - Potatoes are best consumed boiled, not fried. If you need something crunchy to replace potato chips, try baby carrots or nuts.

## 9. GLUTEN-FREE JUNK FOODS

"Gluten-free" is the latest craze in India. However, the majority need not worry about gluten sensitivity because it's NOT a common problem.

Yet, people often replace healthy, gluten-containing foods with processed junk foods that happen to be gluten-free!

These gluten-free replacement products are often high in sugar and refined grains like corn starch or tapioca starch. These ingredients may trigger rapid spikes in blood sugar and are low in essential nutrients, all pre-cursors to fat gain!

**Alternatives** - Choose foods that are naturally gluten-free, such as unprocessed plant and animal foods, and even gluten containing foods like whole wheat or barley if you don't have any issues with it.

## 10. AGAVE NECTAR

Not very popular in India, but Agave nectar is a sweetener that's becoming available these days.

However, it's highly refined and extremely high in fructose. High amounts of fructose from added sweeteners can be absolutely disastrous for health.

In fact, agave nectar is even higher in fructose than many other sweeteners.

Whereas table sugar is 50% fructose and high-fructose corn syrup around 55%, agave nectar is 85% fructose.

**Alternatives** - Stevia and Erythritol are healthy, natural, and calorie-free alternatives.

## 11. LOW-FAT AND PACKAGED DAHI/YOGURT

Yogurt (*dahi*) can be incredibly healthy.

Nonetheless, most packaged yogurts found in the grocery store are bad for you.

They're often low in fat but loaded with sugar to compensate for the flavor that fat provides. Put simply, most yogurt has had its healthy, natural fats replaced with an unhealthy ingredient.

Additionally, many yogurts don't provide probiotic bacteria as generally believed or marketed. They're often pasteurized, which kills most of their bacteria.

**Alternatives** - Choose regular, home-made full-fat yogurt that contains live or active cultures (probiotics).

## 12. LOW-CARB JUNK FOODS

Low-carb diets have always been popular, and for good reason.

But while you can eat plenty of whole foods on such a diet, you should watch out for processed low-carb replacement products. These include low-carb junk foods and meal replacements.

These foods are often highly processed and packed with additives.

**Alternatives** - If you're on a low-carb diet, aim for foods that are naturally low in carbs, which include eggs, meat, seafood, leafy greens.

## 13. ICE CREAM

*(Ahhhhh this one is my weak point! – Amod)*

Ice cream may be delicious, but it's loaded with sugar.

This dairy product is also high in calories and easy to overeat. If you eat it as a dessert, you're usually piling it on top of your normal calorie intake.



**Alternatives** – Currently in India, it's next to impossible to opt for healthier brands (there are none!). The best option is to make your own ice cream using fresh fruit, whey protein and less sugar.

## 14. NUTELLA

Nutella is incredibly unhealthy. Period.

It's high in sugar and processed fats while also very low in essential nutrients.

What's more, these treats will leave you hungry because of the way that your body metabolizes these sugar bombs.

**Alternatives** - Eat fruit or a piece of quality dark chocolate instead.

## 15. PROCESSED MEAT

Even though unprocessed meat can be healthy and nutritious, the same is not true for processed meats (salami, hot dogs, or other typical frozen meats available in malls, food stores).

Studies show that people who eat processed meats have a higher risk of many serious ailments, including colon cancer, type 2 diabetes, and heart disease.

Most of these studies are observational in nature, meaning that they can't prove that processed meat is directly to blame. However, the statistical link is strong and consistent between studies.

**Alternatives** – Replace salami, sausages with real meat.

## 16. PROCESSED CHEESE

Cheese is healthy in moderation.

It's loaded with nutrients, and a single slice packs all the nutrients as a glass of milk.

Still, processed cheese products are nothing like regular cheese. They're mostly made with filler ingredients that are engineered to have a cheese-like appearance and texture.

Make sure to read labels to confirm that your cheese contains dairy and few artificial ingredients.

**Alternatives** - Eat real cheese instead. Healthy types include feta, mozzarella, and cottage cheese (*paneer*).

## 17. MOST FAST FOOD MEALS

Generally speaking, fast-food chains serve junk food.

Most of their offerings are mass-produced and low in nutrients.

Despite their low prices, fast foods may contribute to disease risk and harm your general wellness. You should especially watch out for fried items.

**Alternatives** - As a result of mounting pressure and nutrition awareness, some fast-food chains have started offering healthy options. But these are very scarce in India, so better avoid fast foods as much as you can. The good thing here is, once you “wean yourself” off these foods, your cravings will quickly go down!

## 18. HIGH-CALORIE “COFFEE”

Coffee is loaded with antioxidants and offers many benefits.

Notably, coffee drinkers have a lower risk of serious diseases, such as type 2 diabetes and Parkinson’s.

At the same time, the so-called coffee you get at coffee chains with the creamers, syrups, additives, and sugars are highly unhealthy.

These products are just as harmful as any other sugar-sweetened beverage.

**Alternatives** – Make your own coffee! Or drink plain coffee (Espresso fans anyone?) instead. You can add small amounts of cream or full-fat milk if you desire.

## 19. ANYTHING WITH ADDED SUGAR OR REFINED GRAINS

It’s important to avoid — or at least limit — foods that contain added sugar, refined grains, and trans fats (watch out for the words “edible vegetable fat” on foods).

These are some of the unhealthiest but most common ingredients in the modern diet. Thus, the importance of reading labels cannot be overstated.

This even applies to so-called health foods.

**Alternatives** - Aim for nutrient-dense whole foods, such as fresh fruits and whole grains.

## **20. MOST HIGHLY PROCESSED FOODS**

The simplest way to eat healthy and lose weight is to avoid processed foods as much as possible! Processed goods are often packaged and loaded with excess salt or sugar.

**Alternatives** - When you're shopping, make sure to read food labels. Try to load up your bag/cart with plenty of real veggies and other whole foods.

Tip: Do not shop for food on an empty stomach.

### **THE BOTTOM LINE**

Though the modern Indian diet packs plenty of junk food, you can maintain a healthy diet if you steer clear of the processed, high-sugar items mentioned above.

Plan your meals, add whole foods, fruits and overall more protein to your diet, and you'll be well on your way to losing fat, feeling better and reclaiming your health.

Plus, practicing mindfulness when you eat by listening to your body's cues and paying attention to flavours and textures can help you be more aware of how much and what you eat, allowing you to achieve a better relationship with food.