

STARTER RECIPE SET

By Julie Cottrell, MS, RD, LD

Lower carb, protein-rich recipes to inspire some tasty, health-promoting, home-cooked meals!

This recipe set gives you a place to get started!


1. Look through the recipes below to see which ones you would like to try.
2. Print out a copy of the "**MEAL PLAN TEMPLATE**" (from the Direct Access website).
3. Write down the names of several recipes you like (on the top section of the Meal Plan template page).
4. Consider which day it/they may fit best, then jot them down on those days.
5. Make a grocery list of the ingredients needed so you will have them on hand.
6. Give your plan a try and see how it goes!

BASIC DEVILED EGGS

Julie's Tip: A couple of these deviled eggs could be a **smart snack option**; or serve along with other meals that don't have quite enough protein. You also may use these (or just plain boiled eggs) as part of a **strategy for delaying breakfast**; take these with you and wait to eat them until you are truly hungry. The protein + fat is satiating and may hold you over til lunch.

Makes 12 servings

Per each: 52 calories, 2.8 g protein, 0.3 g carb, 4.2 g fat

<p><u>Ingredients:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 eggs • 2 Tbsp healthy mayo* • 1 Tbsp dijon mustard • Salt and pepper <p>Optional: jalapenos or other seasonings/spices</p> 	<p><u>Directions:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Add eggs to a medium saucepan and cover with an inch or two of water. Place on the stove and heat on high until water just begins to bubble. Turn off heat and cover with a lid. Set a timer: 10 minutes will give a nice soft-boiled yolk. Add 1-2 minutes if you prefer a firmer yolk. Drain water and submerge the eggs in an ice bath. I like to submerge them in a stainless steel bowl of cold water plus ice. Allow eggs to cool for several minutes, then crack and peel. 2. Slice the eggs in half lengthwise and scoop the yolks into a small bowl. Neatly place the whites in a medium-sized storage container. Mash the yolks with a fork and add mayo, mustard, salt and pepper. Add yolk mixture back to the egg whites and distribute as evenly as possible. You can use a pastry bag to make it pretty or keep it simple by just using a spoon. 3. To serve, add additional spices or jalapenos, or be creative and think of other additions you would enjoy. Maybe a slice of bacon crumbled over the top?
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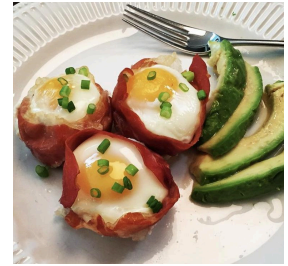
* Healthy mayo options are usually made from **avocado oil** instead of **soybean oil**. See **HEALTHY FATS** for examples.

Note: **Smoked paprika, celery seed or dill weed** are all simple and delicious options to sprinkle on top. **Hot sauce** works too if you like it spicy! **Salsa or pesto** are also good options to add! **BE CREATIVE!!**

A FEW BREAKFAST IDEAS

PROSCIUTTO EGG CUPS WITH AVOCADO

Julie's Tip: "Egg Cup" recipes are available in various forms on the internet. We will start with a [simple](#) version here, but you can also check out these [EGG MUFFIN CUP](#) recipe ideas. Plenty of variety for everyone! Also note that this is a great recipe to make ahead of time and store in the fridge for busy mornings.



Makes 6 egg cups

- ❖ Per each egg cup: 105 calories, 9 g protein, 0.6 g carbs, 7 g fat
- ❖ Per egg cup + 20 g avocado (~1/6 avocado): 139 calories, 9.5 g protein, 2 g carb (1 g fiber), 10 g fat

<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 slices prosciutto (substitute thinly sliced ham if you prefer) • 6 eggs, organic preferred • Olive oil (to spray in muffin tin) • Optional: Scallions, diced • Optional: Avocado, 20 grams or 1/6 avocado per egg cup 	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. 2. Prepare a muffin tray by spraying with olive or other acceptable oil. 3. Arrange 1 slice prosciutto in each cup to cover the bottom and sides, then crack one egg into each. 4. Bake in the oven for 12 minutes, until egg white is cooked but yolk is still a bit runny. 5. Carefully remove each cup from the tin and place on a serving plate. Top with scallions if desired. Serve with sliced or mashed avocado.
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OMELET (Canadian Bacon, Spinach and Feta pictured here)

Recipe by Julie Cottrell, MS, RD

Julie's Tip: Use whichever veggies and cheeses you prefer! An omelet is a "flexible" menu option and can be made exactly as you like it. See the PDF [BREAKFAST AND BRUNCH](#) for other ways to make omelets too! You may not have time for this during the week, but it's great for brunch or even dinner.



Makes 1 serving

Per serving: 441 calories, 32 g protein, 9 g carb (4 g fiber), 31 g fat

<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 eggs • 1/2 cup frozen spinach (substitute other veggies as desired) • 2 slices Canadian bacon • 1 oz feta cheese (substitute mozzarella or other cheese as desired) • 2 teaspoons olive oil • 3 grape tomatoes, diced 	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If using frozen spinach, portion out one serving and microwave. Press out all excess water with paper towels. If using fresh spinach, rinse, then saute in a small skillet with a dash of olive oil. Set aside. 2. In a small skillet, add 1 tsp olive oil, heat to medium, and add Canadian bacon. Brown on both sides, about 1 minute per side. Remove from heat. Once cool, dice into smaller pieces. 3. Break 3 eggs into a small bowl and mix with a fork. Add 1 tsp olive oil back to the small skillet, heat to medium, and add the eggs. Lift the edges of the egg as it cooks, allowing the uncooked egg to run underneath. 4. Once the egg is adequately cooked, distribute spinach, feta, Canadian bacon and tomatoes over one half of the egg. Fold the other half over. Allow to sit in the pan for a minute to allow the cheese to melt a bit.
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A FEW MORE BREAKFAST IDEAS

Options below have a **fair amount of protein**, but **more carbs** than options on the previous page.

❖ COTTAGE CHEESE OR GREEK YOGURT + FRUIT

- Use at least 1 cup of cottage cheese or lower-sugar Greek yogurt as the base; see [PROTEIN FOODS](#) for best options.
- Add 1/4 to 1/2 cup of fruit (fresh or frozen/warmed up); berries are a great choice! See [FRUIT](#) to learn about the carbs and fiber in each fruit.
- Optional: 2 Tbsp chopped or slivered nuts; be careful with volume as the calories will add up quickly!



Macros for 1 cup 2% cottage cheese + 1/2 cup raspberries + 2 Tbsp slivered almonds: 306 calories, 27 g protein, 21 g carbs, 5 g fiber, 16 g net carbs, 14 g fat

❖ GREEK YOGURT + STEEL CUT OATS OR CHOPPED NUTS

- Use at least one cup (8 ounces) of Greek yogurt as the base. Picture (right) shows a combination of 5 oz vanilla flavor Oikos Triple Zero + 5 ounces of another flavor. Lots of flavor combos!
- **Option #1: Steel Cut Oats**
[Steel cut oats](#) are different from rolled oats. They're coarser, chewier, and nuttier in flavor than most common oats. Soaking them overnight in yogurt allows them to become softer, but you can also eat these right after stirring them in. Use 1 Tbsp steel cut oats per 4 or 5 ounces of yogurt.
- **Option #2: Chopped Nuts**
Choose whichever nuts you like or have on hand. Use 2-4 tablespoons (1/2 to 1 ounce). This will add 80-160 calories, depending on how much you add.



Macros for 10 ounces Oikos Triple Zero + 2 Tbsp steel cut oats: 285 calories, 32 g protein, 41 g carbs, 14 g fiber, 27 g net carbs, 2 g fat

Macros for 10 ounces Oikos Triple Zero + 2 Tbsp slivered almonds: 287 calories, 33 g protein, 30 g carbs, 12 g fiber, 18 g net carbs, 8 g fat

❖ OVERNIGHT OATS (link to recipes [here](#))

- Use 1 part old fashioned rolled oats to 1 part milk (the milk can be whichever one you choose).
- Optional ingredients include: chia seeds, Greek yogurt, protein powder, collagen, nuts, vanilla extract, sweeteners, fruit, etc. Be careful with these to avoid adding an excessive amount of calories and sugars.
- This could be a great option for kids and more active people who can tolerate a bit more carbs.



Macros will vary depending on add-ins. A basic recipe of 1/2 cup old fashioned oats + 1/2 cup whole milk provides 264 calories, 10 g protein, 39 g carbs, 5 g fiber, 34 g net carbs, 7 g fat

See the [BREAKFAST & BRUNCH](#) recipe set for more ideas.

SIMPLE LUNCH OPTIONS

TUNA SALAD WITH SLICED CUCUMBER

Recipe by Julie Cottrell, MS, RD

Julie's Tip: This is an easy lunch option as is, or use ½ recipe for a high protein snack. Serve with sliced cucumber instead of crackers to save carbs and avoid eating a processed food item (crackers). Also try it wrapped in lettuce or cabbage. Celery is also great for dipping!

Makes 1 serving

Per Serving: 351 calories, 39 g protein, 4 g carb (2 g fiber), 2 g net carbs, 20 g fat



<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● (2) pouches light tuna in water (2.6 oz/pouch each) or (1) 5-oz can, drained ● 1 1/2 tablespoons acceptable mayo ● 1 tablespoon whole grain mustard ● 1 dill pickle, diced, plus 1-2 tablespoons pickle juice ● sea salt and pepper, to taste ● Optional: 1 cup sliced cucumber 	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Add tuna to a small bowl and toss with a fork. 2. Add mayo and/or oil, mustard and diced pickle. Add salt and pepper to taste. If desired, add 1-2 tbsp pickle juice; this provides extra moisture and may be a source of probiotics (depends on which pickles you are using). 3. Serve with sliced cucumber for a very low-carb option. If you prefer crackers or bread, see the pdf FIBER (page 4) for some examples of quality options.
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CHICKEN SALAD

Recipe by Julie Cottrell, MS, RD

Julie's Tip: Use any chicken you have on hand. Canned or rotisserie chicken can both work if fresh chicken is not available.

Makes 4 servings

Per Serving:

Chicken Salad only: 439 calories, 45 g protein, 4 g carbs (2 g fiber), 26 g fat
 With Cabbage Bowl: 462 calories, 46 g protein, 9 g carb (4 g fiber), 26 g fat



<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 20 oz cooked chicken, weighed after cooking (Rotisserie or canned chicken may be used) ● 1 cup celery, diced ● 4 tablespoons mayonnaise ● 1 tablespoon brown mustard ● 36 pecan halves, chopped (54 grams) ● juice from one lemon ● 1 teaspoon dried dill weed ● 8 medium-sized leaves of cabbage (cut into 4 wedges/serving) ● Salt and pepper 	<p>For the Chicken (If making from fresh): Fill a large pot with water and place on the stove. Add chicken breasts, salt and pepper (to taste) and bring to a boil, then turn down heat to simmer and cover with a lid. Allow to simmer for 10-15 minutes. See these directions for more tips on boiling chicken. Once cooked, remove chicken from water. Allow chicken to cool, then cut into bite-sized pieces. Alternatively, substitute with 20 ounces rotisserie chicken that is already cooked.</p> <p>For the Salad:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To a large bowl, add the diced chicken and celery, and toss together. 2. To a small bowl add the mayonnaise, brown mustard and lemon juice. Stir to thoroughly combine, then pour over the chicken mixture. Add salt and pepper to taste, plus dill weed. Toss to thoroughly combine all ingredients. Cover and chill in the refrigerator for 1 - 2 hours. <p>To Serve: Slice 4 leaves from a head of cabbage and arrange in a "bowl" shape. Place one serving of chicken salad on top of cabbage and sprinkle with one serving chopped pecans. Alternatively, serve with lettuce or straight up on a plate.</p>
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SALMON OR CHICKEN CAESAR SALAD

Recipe by Julie Cottrell, MS, RD

Julie's Tip: Substitute chicken for the salmon if you prefer. If using store-bought dressing, be sure to find one made from healthy oils. Also try making your own dressing. And skip the croutons; they are a processed food that isn't needed! This item is listed under **lunch** options (you might go out for lunch and find a similar option on the menu); or you may want to make this for a **dinner** meal at home. Consider making an extra one to take for lunch the next day if you do make it for dinner.



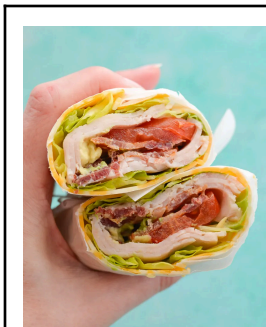
Makes 1 serving

Per Serving: 507 calories, 52 g protein, 9 g carb (3 g fiber), 29 g fat

<p>Salad Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 head Romaine lettuce (120 grams in weight) • 3 Tbsp Parmesan cheese • 2 Tbsp Caesar dressing <p>Salmon Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 salmon filet, 6 oz, wild caught preferred • 1 tablespoon butter, olive oil or avocado oil • salt and pepper 	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. 2. Chop the Romaine and place into a medium sized bowl. Add dressing and Parmesan and toss. Add the tossed salad to a dinner plate.. Set aside. 3. Pat salmon dry with paper towels, then season with salt and pepper. 4. Heat an oven-safe skillet over medium high and add butter, ghee or oil. 5. Add salmon to skillet and sear ~2 minutes, then flip and sear another 1-2 minutes. Turn off the stove, cover with a lid and place in the oven to finish cooking for 8-10 minutes. Carefully remove from the oven and place salmon on top of the salad plate. If salmon has skin on it, remove skin before plating (it should peel right off). I actually like to eat the skin though!
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Note: This recipe represents the idea of a **bed of greens + protein on top** (at least the size of a deck of cards). Add other salad veggies, perhaps some cheese (more protein) and a healthy dressing option (olive or avocado oil based ones are preferred) and you have a complete meal.

DELI MEAT/CHEESE/LETTUCE WRAP



A wrap can be made using **lettuce** and/or a **low-carb tortilla** plus protein sources like **turkey, chicken, roast beef, tuna**, etc, and some **healthy fats** (avocado, mayo, pesto, etc). Boar's Head is a really good brand of deli meat.

See [SOUP, SANDWICHES AND WRAPS](#) for more ideas for wraps. These are easy to prepare and carry along with you. For inspiration here is the recipe for a [Keto Turkey Bacon Ranch Wrap](#).

A simple container of lower sugar **Greek yogurt** can complete the meal.

Tortilla and tortilla-like options:

- ❖ Egg White Wraps: [Eggland](#) brand is good.
- ❖ Low Carb Tortillas: Best options are made by [Extreme Wellness](#) and [Ole'](#) (not Mission).
- ❖ Cheese Folios: You can buy ones like [these](#) or you could [make your own](#).
- ❖ Homemade versions using things like cottage cheese, eggs/egg whites, pureed veggies, etc. Check out [this Instagram page](#) for some ideas!

EXAMPLE DINNER MEALS

SPAGHETTI SQUASH WITH MEAT SAUCE

Recipe by Julie Cottrell, MS, RD

Julie's Tip: This recipe satisfies the need for a spaghetti meal without so many carbs from the pasta. Using spaghetti squash also increases the nutrient-density of the meal. Also, if your entire family doesn't want spaghetti squash, you could easily prepare a pot of pasta for them to use as their base. Family friendly meal!

Makes 4 servings

Per Serving: 462 calories, 43 g protein, 20 g carb (3 g fiber), 23 g fat



<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 cups cooked spaghetti squash • 2 cups Rao's brand Marinara Sauce (or other low carb alternative) • 1 pound 93% lean ground beef (grass-fed preferred) • 2 cloves garlic, minced • 1/2 tsp fennel seed (optional) • 1 cup shredded mozzarella • 8 Tbsp (1/2 cup) shredded parmesan cheese 	<p>For the spaghetti squash: Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Place the entire squash into the oven on the oven rack. Cook for 35-40 minutes, until you see light brown on the squash exterior, and it is mildly soft to touch, and pleasantly fragrant. Remove from the oven with oven mitts and allow to rest on the counter to cool. Once cool enough to touch, slice open and remove seeds with a spoon. Then use a fork to pull squash strands from the squash. Place 1 1/2 cups squash on each dinner plate.</p> <p>For the meat sauce: Brown the hamburger meat in a large skillet over medium heat, tossing frequently, and breaking meat into tiny pieces. Continue to cook until completely browned. Drain excess fat (if desired) and then add the garlic and cook for another minute. Add the marinara sauce to the mixture and turn heat to medium low. Add fennel seed if desired. Stir occasionally. Allow to cook for 10 minutes or more to allow flavors to blend.</p> <p>To serve: Add 1/4 of the meat sauce to cover the spaghetti squash on each plate. Top each plate with 1/4 cup mozzarella and 2 Tbsp parmesan cheese. Optional additions: oregano or basil. Steamed broccoli makes a nice side dish.</p>
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Note: If desired, you could portion out the spaghetti squash into oven-safe, individual casseroles; top with meat sauce and mozzarella, then bake in the oven to melt the cheese. Broil for 1 minute (optional) to brown the cheese. Pic shown above used this technique.

Side Dishes:

An easy side to go along with this is steamed broccoli or any steamed green veggie. A small side salad would also work well! Check out [HEALTHY SIDE DISHES](#) for more options.

PASTA ALTERNATIVES:

- ❖ This recipe teaches you to use **spaghetti squash** in place of pasta or spaghetti.
- ❖ **Other very low-carb options include:** [zucchini noodles](#), [cabbage noodles](#), or [shirataki noodles](#)
 - Future recipes will incorporate these options.
- ❖ Note that "whole wheat" pasta isn't lower in carbs but has slightly more fiber and nutrients.
- ❖ There are some commercially made lower-carb pasta options out there.
 - [Perfect Keto](#) is a company that sells some; this is something you can explore in the future.
 - [Kaizen](#) is another. You can find their rice and pasta products on Amazon.

Our true goal is to use minimally processed, whole, real foods - spaghetti squash meets these criteria. See how you like it using this recipe, and then you can explore other options!

SIMPLE BURGER

Recipe by Julie Cottrell, MS, RD

Julie's Tip: There is no need to fear using red meat. Select 85% lean if you wish, or save some calories and fat grams by choosing 93% lean. Macros below are based on 85% lean. Optional ingredients are not included in daily totals, but please use as desired. Make your meals tasty and satisfying, and you won't be wanting to snack in an hour!



Makes 1 serving

Per Serving: 408 calories, 47 g protein, 4 g carb (1.6 g fiber), 22 g fat

<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 oz 93% lean ground beef (the highest quality you can afford) • 1 stalk fresh kale, stem removed (or lettuce) • Onion, 3 sliced rings, any color • Salt and pepper • Dill pickle, ¼ whole or 5-6 slices • Mustard, 2 tsp, any variety • Optional toppings 	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For the burger: If it is not a pre-formed patty, shape ground beef into a 4-oz portion. Season with salt and pepper on each side. Heat an oven-safe skillet to medium. Add burger to skillet. Cook 3-4 minutes first side, flip, then cook 3-4 minutes second side. Turn off heat, add cheese, if using, and cover with the lid for ~1 minute. Alternatively, you could cook the burger on the grill. 2. Meanwhile, prep kale (if using) by rinsing in water and removing the center stalk. Place on a paper towel and heat in the microwave for 10 seconds to soften the kale. Alternatively, use lettuce leaves as the base. Place the kale on a dinner plate and season with oil, salt and pepper if desired or add lettuce to the plate. 3. Place the burger on top of the kale or lettuce, and add onion, pickle and mustard. 4. *Add other optional ingredients (e.g. cheese, cooked bacon, sliced avocado or guacamole).
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- To keep the meal low in carbs, avoid using the bun. Other family members may use a bun if desired. There are recipes for low-carb buns you can try at some point (see [BREAD AND BREAD ALTERNATIVES PDF](#)), but keep it simple as you get started.
- Choose a low-carb side dish to go along with the burger. Cucumber Tomato Salad (below) is one option, or any simple side salad. Also, check out [HEALTHY SIDE DISHES](#) for more inspiration.

CUCUMBER TOMATO SALAD

Recipe by Julie Cottrell, MS, RD

Yield: 2 servings

Per Serving:

150 calories, 1 g protein, 6 g carbs, 1 g fiber, 5 g net carbs, 14 g fat



<p>INGREDIENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Tbsp red wine vinegar • 2 teaspoons balsamic vinegar • 1 Tbsp lemon juice • 1 1/2 Tbsp olive oil • 1 1/2 cups sliced cucumber • 6 grape-sized tomatoes • 1 Tbsp finely diced red onion • fresh basil, 1-2 leaves, thinly sliced 	<p>DIRECTIONS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Measure liquid ingredients (vinegars, lemon juice and oil) into a small bowl and mix with a spoon. 2. Slice the cucumber, tomatoes, and onions, then distribute into 2 small serving dishes. Alternatively, add to one large container, especially if you are doubling or tripling the recipe for ongoing use. 3. Distribute the dressing over the veggies. This can be eaten immediately or it may sit in the fridge for a day or two, if you make it in advance. I prefer to eat this one with a spoon!
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WHITE CHICKEN CHILI

Recipe source: www.kalynskitchen.com

Link to original recipe [here](#).

Recipe modified slightly by Julie Cottrell, MS, RD, LD

Yield: 6 servings

Per Serving:

Calories: 349

- ❖ **Protein:** 35 grams
- ❖ **Carbs:** 26 grams
 - Fiber: 5 grams
 - Net Carbs: 21 grams
- ❖ **Fat:** 9 grams



<u>INGREDIENTS:</u>	<u>STOVETOP DIRECTIONS:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 4 tsp olive oil ● 1 small onion, chopped ● 1 tsp minced garlic (or more) ● 2 tsp ground cumin ● 2 tsp dried oregano (use Mexican oregano if available) ● 1/2 tsp ground cayenne pepper (or more if you want it spicy) ● (2) 4-oz cans diced green chiles, with juice ● (2) 14-oz cans chicken stock ● (2) 14.5-oz cans white beans (not drained) ● 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts (or use about 4 cups diced leftover chicken or turkey if you prefer.) ● Optional: 1 small bunch cilantro, chopped (about 1/2 - 3/4 cup chopped) ● salt and fresh-ground black pepper to taste ● grated cheese for serving (optional, not included in nutritional info) ● Green Tabasco Sauce for serving 	<p><i>Note: Directions for preparing in an Instant Pot can be found using the original recipe link.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Trim all visible fat and tendons from the chicken breasts, then heat 2 tsp. oil in a heavy non-stick pan, add chicken and cook until the chicken is cooked through and barely starting to brown. Remove from the pan and let cool. 2. While the chicken is cooking, heat the other 2 teaspoons of oil in a heavy soup pot, then cook onions until they're softened and just starting to brown, about 5 minutes. 3. Add minced garlic and cook about 1 minute more, then add the ground cumin, oregano, and ground cayenne pepper and cook a couple minutes more. 4. Add canned diced green Anaheim chilis, 2 cans white beans, and 4 cups chicken stock or broth. 5. Turn heat to low simmer and let cook for 30 minutes. 6. While the chili simmers, use your fingers or a fork to shred the chicken into bite-sized pieces. (Don't cut, because cut chicken pieces will shred apart into strings in the chili when they cook.) 7. After the chili has simmered for 30 minutes, add the chicken and simmer for 10-15 minutes more. 8. If using cilantro, chop it while the chili simmers the last 10-15 minutes with the chicken added. 9. Then add the chopped cilantro and simmer for about 5 minutes more. Serve hot.

TIPS AND SERVING SUGGESTIONS:

- ❖ Add a dollop of sour cream, fresh avocado, sliced jalapenos and/or diced tomatoes (if in season). Grated cheese is good too! [Plain Greek yogurt](#) may also be used in place of sour cream; a great way to add more protein!
- ❖ The carb content is a little higher due to the beans. However, beans provide fiber, which helps slow the absorption of the carbohydrate and also feeds the gut bacteria.
- ❖ You could make a low-carb bread to serve with this; see [BREAD AND BREAD ALTERNATIVES](#) for inspiration.

FAJITA BOWLS WITH STEAK, SHRIMP OR CHICKEN

Recipe source: www.castironketo.com. Link to original recipe [here](#).

Recipe modified by Julie Cottrell, MS, RD, LD


Yield: 3 servings

Per Serving (calculated using chicken)

Calories:

- ❖ **Protein:** 48 grams
- ❖ **Carbs:** 8 grams
 - Fiber: 2 grams
 - Net Carbs: 6 grams
- ❖ **Fat:** 16 grams



<p><u>FAJITA INGREDIENTS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 tablespoons avocado oil, divided - don't use olive oil as it won't be able to handle the heat to char the chicken • 1 pound boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into strips (substitute with steak or shrimp, if desired) • 1 medium onion, thinly sliced • 1/2 green, red, yellow and orange bell pepper, thinly sliced (2 total peppers, colors can vary), seeded and thinly sliced • 1 1/2 tablespoons taco seasoning • Sea salt, to taste <p><u>TACO SEASONING INGREDIENTS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 tablespoons chili powder • 2 tablespoons cumin • 1 tablespoon paprika • 1 tablespoon salt • 1 teaspoon garlic powder • 1 teaspoon onion powder • 1 teaspoon oregano • 1 teaspoon black pepper • 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes 	<p><u>DIRECTIONS FOR FAJITAS:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Heat a 10" or larger cast-iron (or other) skillet over medium-high heat. Add in 1 tablespoon of avocado oil. 2. Season the chicken strips liberally with taco seasoning. Working in batches, add the chicken to the skillet in a single layer. Cook for 2-3 minutes on each side until browned and slightly charred. After all of the chicken is cooked through, remove from the skillet and set aside. 3. Add the remaining avocado oil to the skillet. Add in the onion and bell peppers. Season with remaining taco seasoning to taste. Cook until bell peppers are softened, and onions are translucent, about 7-10 minutes. 4. Add the chicken back to the skillet to warm through. Adjust seasonings to taste. 5. Serve hot with optional ingredients: lime slices, sour cream, avocado or guacamole, salsa or pico, and lettuce or low-carb tortilla wraps. Note: these items are not included in the macro totals above. <p><u>DIRECTIONS FOR TACO SEASONING:</u> Combine all of the spices in a jar and shake to combine. Store at room temperature for up to a year.</p> 
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TIPS AND SERVING SUGGESTIONS:

- ❖ Serve over shredded or mixed lettuce or in individual lettuce cups for the lowest carb option.
- ❖ Low-carb tortillas come in various sizes. [La Banderita](#) and [Extreme Wellness](#) have better ingredients than Mission brand.
- ❖ **Optional ingredients** can help round out the meal. For family members who aren't following a low carb plan, other ingredients like rice or regular tortillas may be used.
- ❖ If you don't have time to make your own taco seasoning, this [Mrs. Dash Southwest Chipotle](#) seasoning is really good!

MUSHROOM BURGER SCRAMBLE

Recipe taken from "Keto Clarity" by Jimmy Moore with Eric Westman, MD

Recipe created by Linda Genaw and can be found at Genaw.com/LowCarb. Link to recipe [here](#).

Julie's Tip: This is a **higher fat casserole** due to the use of heavy cream and cream cheese. You can substitute some of the heavy cream with half-n-half or lower fat milk to reduce the fat a bit. If you make this a day ahead, it will set up and be easy to portion out; reheat before eating.



Makes 6 servings

Per Serving: 618 calories, 39 g protein, 12 g carb, (2 g fiber), 47 g fat

With 1 cup cauliflower rice: 638 calories, 41 g protein, 16 g carb (4 g fiber), 47 g fat

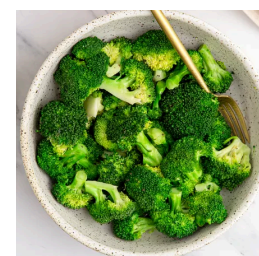
<u>Ingredients:</u>	<u>Directions:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2 pounds grass-fed ground beef ● 1 small onion, chopped ● 2 cloves garlic, minced ● 16 oz fresh mushrooms, sliced* ● 8 oz cream cheese, softened ● 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese plus additional for topping (optional)** ● 1/2 cup heavy cream ● 1/2 tsp garlic powder ● 1 1/2 tsp sea salt ● 1/2 tsp freshly ground black pepper ● Butter to grease casserole dish 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. 2. In a large pot or Dutch oven over medium heat, brown the hamburger, onion, and garlic. Drain the fat. Stir in the mushrooms. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the mushrooms are tender, about 5 minutes. 3. Add the softened cream cheese, mashing it into the meat to blend well. Stir in Parmesan cheese and cream; mix well. Add the garlic powder, salt and pepper. 4. Grease a 2-qt casserole dish and pour in the mixture. Sprinkle some extra Parmesan cheese over the top, if desired. Bake, uncovered, for 30 to 35 minutes, until bubbly and browned. 5. Wait until cool, then slice into 6 equal portions. Best to allow to completely cool before slicing for neat, equal slices.

*I use an additional 8 oz mushrooms (24 oz total)--it creates more "mass" for the dish and I think it tastes even better!

**You may use any form of Parmesan cheese you have on hand, but powdered gives the best result

STEAMED BROCCOLI - click [HERE](#) for an easy recipe

- ❖ You can cook broccoli in boiling water but it's super easy to microwave (so that's how I do it!).
- ❖ You can use frozen or fresh broccoli, depending on what you have on hand.
- ❖ Be sure to use a microwave safe dish (ceramic, glass, etc) and **NOT** a plastic container or the plastic it comes in (if frozen). We want to avoid having micro plastics leach into the food while it's cooking!
- ❖ If you don't love broccoli, pick a veggie you do love to go along with this dish. Green beans go well with it too!



CHEESY BREAD WITH MARINARA SAUCE

Julie’s Tip: This option is here to satisfy pizza cravings. [Riced broccoli](#) saves lots of carbs versus traditional pizza, and also increases the nutrient density of the meal. Consider serving with a tossed salad. Remember to use salad dressing without soybean oil, or try making your own from oil + vinegar + fresh or dried herbs. Check out the recipes in “**Condiments, Sauces & Dressings**” for more salad dressing inspiration.



Makes 2 servings

Per Serving (with 1/3 cup marinara sauce): 421 calories, 34 g protein, 13 g carb (5 g fiber), 26 g fat

<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3 c riced broccoli ● 1 large egg ● 1 1/2 cups shredded mozzarella ● 1/4 cup grated Parmesan ● 2 cloves garlic, minced ● 1/2 tsp dried oregano ● Sea salt and ground black pepper ● Pinch of crushed red pepper flakes ● 2 tsp freshly chopped parsley ● Low-carb marinara sauce (Rao’s is a good one) 	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees and line a large baking sheet with parchment paper. Microwave riced broccoli to warm it up. Heat in a microwave-safe dish rather than the plastic container it comes in. Wring out excess moisture by pressing down repeatedly with paper towels. 2. Transfer broccoli to a large bowl and add egg, 1 cup mozzarella, Parmesan and garlic. Season with oregano, salt and pepper. 3. Transfer “dough” to a baking sheet and shape into a thin, rectangular crust. Bake until golden and dried out, 20 minutes. Top with remaining 1/2 cup mozzarella and bake until the cheese is melted and the crust is crispy, 10 minutes more. Garnish with parsley and pepper flakes, if using. 4. Slice with a pizza cutter into strips and arrange on a dinner plate. 5. Serve with 1/3 cup low carb marinara sauce.
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CAJUN CHICKEN SAUSAGE WITH SHRIMP AND RICED CAULIFLOWER

Recipe by Julie Cottrell, MS, RD

Julie’s Tip: [Chicken sausage](#) comes in a variety of flavors; it’s also reasonably low in fat and high in protein. Use it to inspire a variety of dishes! This meal is here to demonstrate a super quick meal with only a few ingredients.



Makes 1 serving

Per Serving: 509 calories, 38 g protein, 9 g carb (3 g fiber), 36 g fat

Note: Nutrition information will vary depending on the chicken sausage used.






<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1 link chicken sausage, Cajun flavor ● 10-12 medium-sized shrimp, tail removed ● 1 cup riced cauliflower ● 1 Tbsp coconut oil, divided ● Cajun seasoning blend 	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare riced cauliflower. If frozen, add to a microwave-safe bowl and heat. When sufficiently warm, stir a small amount of Cajun seasoning into the rice (1/4-1/2 teaspoon). Keep warm and set aside. 2. Cut chicken sausage into bite-sized pieces. Heat a medium-sized skillet to medium high and add 1/2 tablespoon coconut oil. When oil is hot, add chicken sausage and cook 1-2 minutes per side. Remove sausage from skillet and set aside. 3. Meanwhile, remove tails from shrimp if needed. Add the other 1/2 tablespoon coconut oil to the skillet and then add shrimp. Cook 1-2 minutes per side. 4. Add sausage back to the skillet to reheat. 5. Spread rice on a dinner plate and top with sausage and shrimp mixture.
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[Riced cauliflower](#) is a smart ingredient to keep on hand. You can buy bags of it in the frozen section of the grocery store. It adds bulk to meals and is an easy ingredient to incorporate. Add to the bottom of your soup bowl too! Other ways to use it are included in many of the recipes on the website.

SNACK OPTIONS

The overall goal is to **minimize snacking**, and instead to focus your efforts on 2-3 meals/day. However, it may take time to develop the ability to go from meal to meal without nibbling on something; or you may be following a plan that has just 2 solid meals plus one snack in between. **For these reasons, a healthy snack option may be necessary.**

Please see the PDF [HEALTHY SNACKS](#) for a broader list of options. Below you will find a list of a few easy options to help you as you get started. These are super simple, transportable and easy to find at the grocery store.

Yogurt	Nuts	Fruit	Cheese	Protein Bar
				
<p>Look for one that is low in sugar and carbs but high in protein and without sucralose. Oikos Pro is thick and rich and meets all of these criteria.</p>	<p>A handful of nuts gives you crunch and healthy fats. Choose ones without all the “extras”. Easy on the portion; one ounce (about 1 handful) is about 160 calories.</p>	<p>Fruit is a higher carb option but may work, depending on your carb allowance. Berries are the best option. One cup of raspberries is 64 calories and 7 g net carbs.</p>	<p>String cheese is a transportable option that is low in fat and high in protein. Cottage cheese is another great option; “Good Culture” brand has great flavor.</p>	<p>Although it’s a processed food item, these can work in a pinch. For only 90 calories, they are pretty tasty, chewy and can satisfy the need for something sweet.</p>

MORE QUICK IDEAS:

- ★ Don’t forget about **boiled or deviled eggs!** They are rich and satisfying too! See page 1 of this PDF.
- ★ Check out [FIBER](#); there are a few more protein bars pictured there.
- ★ A [PROTEIN SHAKE](#) could also be an easy snack option.