Question:
I’d like to understand what it means to eat 2,000 calories per day. What does 2,000 calories look like in terms of food?

Answer:
It’s a great idea to understand what eating 2,000 calories every day would look like. Most food labels and other nutrition facts are created using a 2,000 calorie daily diet as the baseline. So, for example, when you see a number for percent daily value (%DV) of fat, that number assumes you’re eating about 2,000 calories total each day. Below you can see what types of foods can make up a healthy diet of around 2,000 calories per day.

Day 1:

**Breakfast**
Black Berry Greek Yogurt Parfait
- Greek yogurt, vanilla 6 ounces
- Black berries, 1 cup
- Cinnamon, ground, 1 tbs

**Mid-morning snack**
Almonds, 1 oz

**Lunch**
Vegetarian Whole Wheat Taco
- Whole-wheat tortilla
- Olive oil, 1/2 tbs (cook onion and red pepper with garlic and cumin)
- Onion, raw, 1/4 cup
- Red pepper, raw and sliced, 1/4 cup
- Black beans, rinsed and dried, 1/4 cup
- Salsa, 1/4 cup
- Lettuce, shredded 1/4 cup (garnish)
- Cheddar cheese, shredded, 1/4 cup (garnish)
- Avocado, 1/4
Season with pepper and salt to taste

**Mid-afternoon snack**
Apple with 2 tbs peanut butter

**Dinner**
Chicken Noodle Soup, Parmesan Chicken Cutlet with Raisin Quinoa

- **Soup:**
  - Olive oil, 1/4 tbs
  - Green onion, sliced 1/4 cup
  - Carrot medium, chopped, 1/2
  - Chicken, cubed, 1/2 cup
  - Egg noodles, 1/2 cup
  - Chicken broth, canned, 1.5 cup
  - Season with pepper

- **Baked Chicken**
  - Chicken breast, 1/4 lb (s)
  - Parmesan cheese, grated, 1 tbsp
  - Italian bread crumbs, 1/2 tbsp
  - Garlic powder, 1/4 tsp
  - Ground pepper, 1/8 tsp
  - Season with other ingredients

- **Quinoa**
  - Quinoa (cooked from package), 1/4 cup
  - Tomato, chopped, 1/4 cup
  - Raisins, 1 tbsp
  - Cucumber, chopped, 1/4 cup
  - Lemon juice, 1 tbsp
  - Olive oil, 1/4 tbsp
  - Onion, minced, 1/2 tsp
  - Season with salt and pepper
  - (Can add feta cheese for additional calories)

**Nutrition Facts for Day 1:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calories 1922</th>
<th>Percent Calories From</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fat (g) 81</td>
<td>Protein: 26%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carbohydrate (g) 175</td>
<td>Fat: 38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein (g) 126</td>
<td>Carbohydrates: 36%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sodium (mg) 4,150</td>
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Day 2:

Breakfast
Strawberry Banana Yogurt Smoothie
  - Banana, 1 medium
  - Strawberries, frozen, 1 cup
  - Orange juice, 4 oz
  - Protein powder, flavored vanilla, 1 scoop
  - Flaxseed, 1 tbs
  - Greek yogurt, 1/2 cup
  - Ice

Mid-morning snack
Cheese stick

Lunch
Goat Cheese and Craisin Salad
  - Spinach, 2 cups
  - Goat cheese, 1 oz
  - Craisins, 1 tbs
  - Walnuts, 1 oz
  - Chicken breast, without skin, 4 oz
  - Balsamic vinaigrette dressing, 2 tbs

Mid-afternoon snack
Thin pretzel crisps, 1.5 oz
Sabra hummus, 2 tbs

Dinner
Teriyaki Salmon with Baked Zucchini and Sweet Potato
  - Salmon and Zucchini
    - Salmon, 5 oz
    - Teriyaki sauce, 2 tbs
    - Olive oil, 1 tbs
    - Sesame seeds, 1 tbsp
    - Zucchini, sliced, 1 medium
    - Scallions, chopped, 2 tbs
  - Sweet potato, baked, 1 medium
Nutrition Facts for Day 2:

- Calories 1914
- Fat (g) 72
- Carbohydrate (g) 201
- Protein (g) 117
- Sodium (mg) 2,763

Percent Calories From:
- Protein: 24%
- Fat: 34%
- Carbohydrates: 42%

Day 3:

**Breakfast**
Banana, 1 medium
Peanut butter, 2 tbsp
Hard boiled egg

**Mid-morning snack**
Sesame seeds, 1 oz

**Lunch**
Turkey Chili
- Black beans, 1/2 cup
- Kidney beans, 1/2 cup
- Tomato sauce, 1/2 cup
- Onions, chopped, 3 tbsp
- Celery, chopped, 3 tbsp
- Carrot, chopped, 3 tbsp
- Turkey, ground, 4 oz
- Olive oil, 1 tbsp
- Cheddar cheese, 1 oz

**Mid-afternoon snack**
Greek yogurt, flavored, 6 oz

**Dinner**
Tofu Stir Fry
- Tofu, cubed, 4 oz
- Green pepper, chopped, 1/4 cup
- Red pepper, chopped, 1/4 cup
- Bok choy, 1/2 cup
- Broccoli, 1/2 cup
- Onion, chopped, 1/4 cup
- Olive oil, 1 tbsp
- Brown rice, 3/4 cup

### Nutrition Facts for Day 3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutrient</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percent Calories From</th>
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<td>Calories</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fat (g)</td>
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<td>Carbohydrate (g)</td>
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<td>Fat: 50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Protein (g)</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>Carbohydrates: 29%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sodium (mg)</td>
<td>3,369</td>
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Submitted by Marisa Mozer, MS, RD, LDN, on behalf of ON DPG