

# building an emergency nutrition toolkit

In times of high stress, overstimulation, trauma, and grief, our body's messages may be temporarily offline. We may not receive biological or taste hunger cues, or be fatigued by other emotions, leaving it really challenging to decide when and what to eat.

During these times, we want to have a **temporary plan** for how to **keep us nourished with minimal effort and thought** so we can meet our physical needs without overextending ourselves or adding to our stress.



Let's consider:

## tolerability

We may not be able to fully enjoy and experience our food, so we want to focus on food that we can tolerate, most of the time.

Consider meals and snacks that:

- Feel familiar, comforting, and uncomplicated
- Are consistently the same, dependable, simple, and palatable
- Usually feel good or neutral in your body

Examples: Soup, noodle or pasta-based dishes, sandwiches, cereal, toast, your favorite takeout order, cheese and crackers, applesauce



## time, energy, & bandwidth

We may not have the ability to follow multi-step recipes or conceptualize building a meal, so we want to focus on foods that require one or two steps to get it on your plate.

Consider:

- Takeout or delivery
- No cook meals (ex: sandwiches/stuffed pita pockets, cereal, salads, canned tuna)
- Microwaveable and convenience foods (ex: prepped foods from grocery store, instant oatmeal, ramen cups, easy mac, canned soup, bean/lentil/rice pouches)
- Frozen foods (ex: frozen meal trays, pizza, waffles, breakfast sandwiches)



## availability & accessibility

We may not have the time or capacity to go out and grocery shop, so we want to focus on foods that we can always have available to us.

Consider:

- Takeout or delivery from nearby restaurants
- Shelf-stable or frozen convenience foods (ex: boxed mac and cheese, canned soups, instant oatmeal, frozen meals/bread, instant noodle bowls, frozen burritos)



**remember**

Although this tool is designed to be temporary, you can rely on these foods as long as you need to.

Being fed, not perfect, is always our main goal.

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## low effort-to-nourishment ratio

During these times, we may need to put our nutrition goals on the back burner in order to reallocate our energy and thoughtfulness elsewhere. Instead, we focus on getting ourselves fed in whatever way we can.

Low effort-to-nourishment ratio foods can help us choose meals and snacks that will sustain our energy and keep us feeling full, with as little effort as possible.



### Consider foods:

- **With more than one nutrient** (protein, fat, carbs, fiber)
- **That offer a variety of foods into one package** (ex: smoothies, soups, sandwiches)
- **Require easy, muscle memory prep and easy clean up.**

## Now it's your turn to build your own toolkit!

Have this list saved so you can reference it during periods of unexpected or acute stress and easily forward it to friends and family who are looking to support you.

### what foods can I tolerate most of the time?



### what foods do I have the capacity to access or prepare?

### what foods are available to me with a low effort-to-nourishment ratio?

#### References:

1. Tribole, E., Resch, E. (2012). Intuitive eating: A revolutionary program that works (3rd ed.). New York, NY: St.