



Mount
Sinai



Inviting You to Play

C-H-E-S-S

for a Healthier Every Day

By Sharing a Day in the
Life of Our Mount Sinai Calm & Fit Wellness Team

***CHESS =**

Cook **H**ydrate **E**xercise **S**leep **S**implify

Cook

Year round, weather permitting, the Mount Sinai Calm and Fit team loves going to farmers markets. Find us in East Harlem, the South Bronx, Union Square, Grand Army Plaza in Brooklyn, and everywhere in between. Farmers markets are the best to find locally grown cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, greens, root vegetables like multi-colored carrots (we love the purple ones), parsnips, and at least 10 different types of apples, which are all fresh and affordable. Walking to a farmers market allows us to get our steps in for the day, enjoy some fresh air, and speak with the farmers and purveyors who are full of helpful information.

What better time than now to strive for 80 percent of our meals to consist of vegetables, nuts, and fruits enhanced with olive or avocado oils, grains, herbs and spices? Many of these seasonal ingredients like cauliflower, blueberries, ginger, and turmeric also have health benefits. Remember to buy foods that you desire by “honoring” your taste buds, otherwise you might set yourself up for frustration and the feeling of deprivation. When you cook, combine your knowledge of what you know is healthy and good for your body with kindness and joy. Cooking and eating should not be a struggle that you either win at or lose. Cooking and eating can be joyous. There is nothing like the smell of a homemade meal that permeates your home to create a sense of warmth during the winter months.

For more motivation, see our Mount Sinai Health System 2022 cookbook, [Break Bread with Us](#), as well as our cookbooks from previous years featuring many delicious plant-based recipes.



And here is a day of meal options that we enjoy:

Breakfast Option:

No Fuss Smoothie is a plant-based treat we're enjoying for our first meal of the day. Pour eight ounces of dairy-free unsweetened vanilla or plain almond milk, or your preferred type of milk (water can be substituted for milk) into a mason jar. Add 1.4 ounces of pea or hemp protein powder. Add one or two tablespoons of chia seeds and your favorite nut-based butter. Cover and shake the jar; add ice if you like it cold, and drink it all up. This is an economical daily staple on the Calm and Fit team's menu because it is filled with protein, fiber, and healthy fats.



Lunch Options:

Easy Winter Salad is inexpensive to make at home, and having the ingredients prepared in advance makes us feel less tempted to eat over-priced and unhealthy takeout for lunch. Over the weekend we place washed, dried, and chopped greens (romaine, mixed greens, dark green leafy lettuces, spinach, or finely chopped kale) into several single-serving air-tight containers. Then we layer each container with cubed, roasted butternut squash, halved cherry tomatoes, pomegranate seeds, and blueberries. The morning of the day we are eating the salad, we add a quarter of sliced avocado and sprinkle salted raw pistachios or sunflower seeds on top along with crumbled goat cheese or feta. For dressing we like to blend champagne vinegar (two tablespoons), Dijon mustard (one teaspoon), honey (one teaspoon), shallots and extra virgin olive oil (four tablespoons), pepper to taste, and then refrigerate to enjoy that day.



Dinner:

Simple Mediterranean Feast is a one sheet-pan meal of protein and vegetables is very easy to make, a great leftover the next day, and a quick clean up. For protein, this dish works best with chicken, but a meaty white fish or halloumi cheese or tofu also works well. First, preheat the oven to 425 degrees. Second, toss sweet potatoes (1/2 lb. cut into half-inch wedges), multi-colored carrots (1/2 lb., cut into long wedges), Brussels sprouts (two cups, halved), and cauliflower (half a head, cut into florets) with four tablespoons oil, one teaspoon of an herb of your choice, and one teaspoon of pepper in a large bowl. Spread all of the vegetables evenly on a rimmed baking sheet. Then, sprinkle the chicken (1 1/4 lbs. of chicken thighs or breasts) with cumin (1/2 tsp), thyme (1/2 tsp), and pepper (1/4 tsp) and place on top of the vegetables. Roast for 35-45 minutes until the chicken is cooked through and the vegetables are tender. For added flavor, toss eight cherry tomatoes cut in half. When done, dinner is served.



Hydrate

Water is the magic formula as we are trying to skip sugary drinks, including coffee or tea with add-ins. By drinking more water, we help keep our bodies hydrated eliminate toxins especially when we drink our eight glasses of water a day.



We like adding cucumber slices or lemon wedges to our glasses of water, which we find helps to decrease a feeling of being bloated. We also like drinking naturally flavored seltzers (without sugar).

To increase our sustainability, we wash and reuse the Mason jar that we use to make our smoothies. It doubles as a sustainable container for our water drinking. An average mason jar can hold 16 ounces (measure yours). So if you drink two mason jars of water (32 ounces) and that's four glasses of water for "no fuss" water consumption. Discover other ideas and on our Wellness website's [Nutrition webpage](#)

Exercise

Movement/ Activity / Mindfulness are all part of the "E" for exercise. We try to get outside each day for at least a 10 to 30-minute walk. Taking the stairs up and down to the subway, or to work, exercises our core and helps us get in some extra steps. Please see our [exercise videos](#) and the [virtual yoga classes](#) on the [Mount Sinai Wellness Website](#).



Sleep

ZZZZs are great, and we're focused on getting the most from our sleep. We've been using "SAFE" as a best practice to keep us on track for restful and refreshing sleep.

S-A-F-E stands for:

- Shades down,
- Aim for eight hours,
- Fewer electronics before bed, and
- Edit caffeine to avoid unwanted wakefulness.

Sleep tight.
Z Z Z



Simplify

Create a Daily Wellness Routine like the Wellness team is doing these days. We start by setting our intention for the day. We use mindfulness or guided meditation to help incorporate self-care and a sense of calmness—you'd be surprised what a difference that can make. We also like to check in with our family and friends about how they're feeling about food, exercise, and sleep, and share our practices around these topics. We are in this together.

To appreciate the positive things that happen each day, we are keeping a gratitude journal. Try the one posted on the [Reach Your Peak webpage](#). It's nice to look back and remember the good.

Finally, imagine actually scheduling your CHES—cooking, hydrating, exercising, sleeping, and simplifying. Here's an example of what a CHES routine that one of our Calm and Fit team members has shared:

- **6:15 am** [Morning yoga, mindfulness activity](#), an [exercise video](#) for 15 minutes or take walk or jog outside and drink eight ounces of lemon water.
- **6:45 am** Shower and get ready for work. Make or drink a healthy smoothie.
- **12 noon** Eat homemade salad, take a brisk walk for 10 minutes, hydrate (H₂O).
- **3 pm** Healthy snack, such as, cut-up apple and nut butter of your choice or carrots and hummus.
- **5:30 pm** Walk home from subway (15 minutes) and do errands on the way home.
- **6 pm** Cook and eat dinner, and drink 16 ounces of water.
- **6:45 pm** Take a walk after dinner with family or friends.
- **8:30 pm** Put phone and other screens away on chargers for the night.
- **9-10 pm** Read, write in gratitude journal. Prepare for bed. Lay out clothing for early morning activity.



We Are Here to Support Your Wellness Goals

You are invited to participate in the [Diabetes Care Program](#) if you are a non-bargaining unit faculty or staff member or dependent at the Mount Sinai Health System covered by UMR health insurance you may schedule an initial consultation appointment or ask a question by emailing us at wellness@mountsinai.org. You must be:

- Enrolled in a Mount Sinai sponsored UMR health insurance and prescription benefit plan.
- Have a diagnosis of diabetes or an A1C of 6.5 percent or higher.
- Be 18 years or older and interested in learning more about our Diabetes Care Program or seeking support in managing your diabetes, or your weight management goals.

Those with or at risk of diabetes who are not covered by UMR, are invited to contact wellness@mountsinai.org to participate in the related program, the Diabetes Alliance.

All of our Mount Sinai Health System faculty and staff can also reach out to 4calm@mountsinai.org to schedule a self-care consultation and be added to the Mount Sinai Calm mailing list. Mount Sinai Calm offers more than 12 virtual classes per week, including a daily mindfulness practice, Monday to Friday at lunchtime, along with Yoga, Pilates, and Tai chi on weekdays and on weekends.

Discover more great ideas on our [Mount Sinai Wellness website](#) designed for you, our entire Mount Sinai family of faculty and staff.

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