



## General Strategies Across Communities

### Use AI or Meal Planning Apps:

Apps like **Paprika**, **Mealime**, or **Plant Jammer** can help neurodivergent patients or those with ADHD by automating meal planning, ensuring balanced nutrition, and adjusting recipes for special diets (e.g., vegan or gluten-free).



### Prep Once a Week:

Cook large batches of food **once** or **twice a week** to minimize daily cooking stress. Freeze meals in portion sizes or use **meal kits** to reduce decision fatigue.

### Simple Ingredients:

Use **5-ingredient recipes** to reduce the overwhelm of complex meals. Pre-chopped vegetables, frozen options, and pantry staples like **canned beans** can streamline meal prep. You can always **TikTok recipe hacks** or use **ChatGPT** for a meal plan menu with a corresponding grocery list of the exact items to buy in the exact quantities.



### Adapt for Sensory Issues:

Incorporate **sensory-friendly foods** (smooth textures like soups, or crunchy foods like carrots). Avoid overwhelming smells or textures that may cause aversions, and focus on foods that patients find soothing.

### Incorporate Movement Naturally:

**Low-pressure exercises** like walking while listening to music or podcasts, gentle yoga, or stretching routines can be helpful. Exercise apps like **Seven** or **C25K** can guide short, manageable routines.



# Recommendation for Specific Conditions

Healthy living should be accessible for everyone – and sometimes that doesn't look like the "typical" recommendations. This is your starting guide to finding a routine and approach that works for you.

## 1. ADHD & EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING DIFFICULTIES

### Diet:

- **Use Visual Meal Planners:** Visual meal planners can help organize meals with reminders and timers. Using tools like Google Calendar with alerts can prompt timely eating. Or just use the alarms on your phone.
- **Quick, Easy Meals:** Focus on meals that require little preparation or time. Ideas include overnight oats, ramen, smoothies, wraps, or stir-fry with pre-cut vegetables.

### Snacking:

Keep healthy snacks on hand, such as **nuts**, **protein bars**, or **hummus with crackers**, as patients with ADHD may forget to eat full meals.

Grab and go is always a win!

### Movement:

- **Short, High-Impact Workouts:** Opt for short but impactful exercises such as 10-15 minute HIIT workouts or jump rope intervals, which are ideal for those who struggle with focus.
- **Routine Workouts:** Incorporate exercise into daily routines, such as biking to work or walking while making phone calls, to minimize task-switching overload.



## 2. DEPRESSION & BIPOLAR DISORDER

### Diet:

- **Ask for Help:** In moments of depression, it can be hard to find motivation to get out of bed, nevermind make a meal. Use delivery apps for groceries and frozen meals or small snacks. Ask a friend or loved one to cook during these periods of time.
- **Mood-Boosting Foods:** Incorporate foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids (e.g., chia seeds, flax seeds, walnuts) to help in the long-term with mood stabilization.
- **Low-Effort Meals:** Depression can make meal prep difficult, so focus on easy, low-effort meals like Buddha bowls, sheet pan dinners, or smoothies. Have frozen, microwavable meals on hand.
- **Freezer-Friendly Options:** When energy is high (e.g., during the "up" phases for those with bipolar), it can be a solid time to do some batch cooking and freezing meals for lower-energy days.

### Movement:

For days with low energy, recommend walking, stretching, or low-intensity yoga. Apps like **Down Dog** allow for customizable yoga routines at different energy levels. Outdoor activities, even simple ones like sitting in a park, can enhance mood through fresh air and sunlight exposure.



### 3. EATING DISORDERS

#### Diet:

- **Pre-Portioned Meals:** Use pre-portioned containers to assist with managing portion sizes and reduce the overwhelm of preparing larger meals.
- **Structured Eating Times:** Set reminders for meal and snack times to ensure consistent eating throughout the day, a key component of recovery.
- **Sensory-Safe Foods:** For ARFID or sensory issues, encourage the use of foods that are texture-safe or familiar, such as smoothies (with options for customization), rice dishes, or foods with consistent textures.

#### Movement:

Walking, swimming, or pilates can be great options. Yoga and tai chi can also be helpful.



### 4. SENSORY SENSITIVITIES AROUND FOOD OR EXERCISE

#### Diet:

- **Texture-Managed Meals:** Offer meals that can be adjusted based on preferred textures. Smooth soups, soft stews, or crispy roasted vegetables might appeal to specific sensory needs.
- **Reduce Overwhelm:** Use familiar, comforting flavors and avoid strongly spiced or flavored dishes that might overstimulate senses. Simple meals like mashed potatoes or plain pasta may feel safe.

#### Movement:

- **Low-Sensory movement:** Suggest low-sensory environments for exercise such as yoga in a quiet room, swimming, or walking with noise-canceling headphones to minimize sensory overload. Make sure clothing is comfortable. Some people may prefer headbands to keep hair out of their face, sweat-wicking clothing or certain athletic clothing textures.
- **Adaptive Exercise:** Adapt to personal sensory preferences. Walk barefoot on soft grass if that's your vibe. Rock climbing gyms. Sensory-friendly gym equipment. So many options.



### Apps and Tools to Simplify Meal Prep and Exercise

#### MEAL PLANNING

PAPRIKA

YUMMLY

MEALIME

#### EXERCISE ROUTINES

DOWN DOG

FREELETICS

BEND

#### MINDFULNESS

INSIGHT TIMER

CALM