

Climb Michi's Ladder

Michi's Ladder is not a diet. It's a simple substitution plan. To lose weight, try swapping the foods you eat for similar foods in tiers 1 and 2. The more you eat in tiers 1 and 2, the more you'll increase your chances of losing weight.

There are some healthy foods in lower tiers, but they're either calorie dense or nutrient deficient. To lose weight, you want to maximize the nutrients in every calorie you consume.

Note on frying: Foods should be eaten raw, steamed, grilled, poached, baked, or broiled. Frying automatically drops even the best foods into tier 5.

C Carb

F Fat

P Protein

Tier 1: The Pious Tier

Apples, with skin **C**

Artichokes (no sauce) **P C**

Amaranth **P C**

Arugula **C**

Asparagus **C**

Barley **C**

Beans **P C F**

Beets **C**

Blueberries **C**

Bok choy **C**

Boysenberries **C**

Bran **C**

Broccoli **P C**

Broccoli sprouts **P C**

Brussels sprouts **P C**

Endive **C**

Fish (broiled, steamed, grilled) **P F**

Flaxseed **F**

Garlic (fresh) **C**

Grapefruit **C**

Grapes **C**

Hempseed **F**

Herbs

Kale **P F C**

Ketchup (homemade, no sugar) **C**

Kiwifruit **C**

Lentils **P F C**

Lettuce (romaine, green or red leaf) **C**

Peppers **C**

Pineapple **C**

Plums **C**

Prunes **C**

Quinoa **P C**

Radishes **C**

Raspberries **C**

Refried beans (nonfat) **P C**

Rice (whole-grain) **C**

Salsa (natural, no sugar or oil) **C**

Spelt **P C**

Shakeology **C P**

Spinach **P C**

Squash **C**

Cabbage **G**

Carrots **G**

Cauliflower **G**

Celery **G**

Chard **P G**

Chickpeas **P G**

Cherries **G**

Citrus fruits **G**

Collard greens **P G**

Cottage cheese (nonfat) **P**

Cucumbers **G**

Egg whites **P**

Melon honeydew **G**

Milk (nonfat) **P G**

Mushrooms **G**

Mustard **G**

Natto **P F G**

Nectarines **G**

Onions **G**

Papayas **G**

Peaches **G**

Pears **G**

Peas **P G**

Strawberries **G**

String beans **P G**

Sweet potatoes **G**

Tea (green or black, no sugar)

Tomato sauce (no sugar) **G**

Tomatoes **G**

Vinegar

Water

Yams **G**

Yogurt (nonfat, no sugar) **P G**

Zucchini **G**

Tier 2: The Happy Tier

Apples, skinless **G**

Applesauce (raw) **G**

Avocados **F**

Bagels (whole-grain) **G**

Bananas **G**

Bread (whole-grain) **F G**

Broths (veggie, chicken, etc., low sodium) **F G**

Buffalo, super lean (under 10% fat) **P F**

Dates **G**

Eggs, whole **P F**

Eggplant **G**

Feta cheese (low-fat) **P F**

Fowl (skinless, white meat only) **P F**

Figs **G**

Granola (raw, no sugar) **P F G**

Hummus **P F G**

Olive oil **F**

Olives **F**

Pork tenderloin **P F**

Plantains **G**

Raisins **G**

Ricotta cheese (nonfat) **P**

Rye Crisp **G**

Seitan **P F G**

Squid **P F**

Cereal (whole-grain) **PFC**

Cheese (nonfat) **P**

Coffee (black or cappuccino w/ nonfat milk) **G**

Coconut **F**

Corn **FC**

Couscous **PFC**

Cottage cheese (low-fat) **PF**

Cream cheese (nonfat) **P**

Juice (fresh-squeezed w/ pulp, no sugar) **G**

Mangoes **G**

Meat, wild game **PF**

Milk (1%) **PFC**

Muesli (raw, no sugar) **PFC**

Nuts (raw) **PF**

Nut butters (raw, no additives) **PF**

Oatmeal **PC**

Stevia

Sunflower seeds **PF**

Tahini **PF**

Tempeh **PFC**

Tofu **PFC**

Vegetable juice **G**

Veggie burger **PFC**

Yacon syrup **G**

Yogurt (low-fat, no sugar) **PF**

Tier 3: The Swiss Tier

Applesauce (big brand) **G**

Agave nectar **G**

Almond milk **PFC**

Beef, ground, super lean (under 10% fat) **PF**

Beef (lean cuts) **PF**

Broths (veggie, chicken, etc.) **G**

Butter (unsalted) **F**

Canola oil **F**

Cheese (hard)

Cheese (low-fat) **PF**

French fries (baked) **FC**

Fruit (dried) **G**

Granola (no sugar added) **G**

Honey **G**

Jam or marmalade (no sugar added) **G**

Ketchup (store bought, no sugar added) **G**

Lamb (lean) **PF**

Lettuce (iceberg) **G**

Maple syrup (natural, no sugar added) **G**

Popcorn (plain) **FC**

Potatoes (baked or boiled) **G**

Refried beans (low-fat) **PF**

Rice cakes **G**

Rice milk **G**

Rice (white) **G**

Sauerkraut **G**

Shellfish **P**

Shrimp **P**

Soy milk **PFC**

Soy nuts **PFC**

Chicken taco (baked) **PFC**

Chili (no lard or sugar added) **PF**

Crackers (whole-grain) **FC**

Cream cheese (low-fat) **PF**

Fowl (skinless, dark meat only) **PF**

Fowl, ground, super lean (under 10% fat) **PF**

Milk (2%) **PFC**

Muesli (big brand) **PC**

Molasses **C**

Oatmeal (flavored) **PC**

Pancakes (buckwheat) **C**

Pasta (whole-grain) **C**

Pickles **C**

Sugar alcohols (Truvia, & anything ending in -tol) **C**

Sushi **PFC**

Tortillas (whole wheat) **FC**

Veal **PF**

Wine (red) **C**

Wine (white) **C**

Tier 4: The Dodgy Tier

Artificial sweeteners (sucralose, aspartame, saccharine, etc.)

Bagels (refined flour) **C**

Beef, ground, lean (under 20% fat) **PF**

Beer **C**

Bread (refined flour) **C**

Butter (salted) **F**

Caesar salad (w/ chicken) **PF**
FC

Canadian bacon **PF**

Cheese, soft (including blue and goat) **F**

Chips (low-fat, baked) **C**

Fowl, ground, lean (under 20% fat) **PF**

Graham crackers **C**

Ham **PF**

Hot dogs (turkey) **PF**

Ice cream (sugar-free or fat-free) **FC**

Jell-O **C**

Jerky (turkey) **P**

Juice (from concentrate) **C**

Lamb chops **PF**

Lasagna **PFC**

Macaroni and cheese **FC**

Mayonnaise **F**

Popcorn (w/ salt and butter) **FC**

Pork chop **PF**

Potato salad or macaroni salad **FC**

Pretzels **C**

Pudding (w/ low-fat milk) **FC**

Reuben sandwich **PFC**

Sauce (steak, etc.) **C**

Sherbet **C**

Sloppy Joe (lean beef or turkey) **PFC**

Soup (canned creamy) **PF**
C

Soy sauce

Cobb salad **PFC**

Coffee (iced mocha latte w/
nonfat milk) **PC**

Coffee (latte w/ whole milk) **PFC**

Coffee cake **FC**

Crackers **FC**

Cream cheese **F**

Fish (fried) **PF**

Fowl (with skin) **PF**

Meat loaf **PF**

Milk (whole) **PFC**

Muffins **FC**

Nuts (salted or roasted) **F**

Nut butters (processed) **FC**

Pancakes **FC**

Peanut butter (not raw) **FC**

Pizza (thin crust veggie) **PF**
G

Spaghetti (w/ meatballs) **PF**
G

Sub sandwich **PFC**

Sweet-and-sour sauce **FC**

Tortilla (refined flour or corn)
FC

Tuna salad or chicken salad
PF

Yogurt (frozen) **G**

Tier 5: The Newburg Tier

Alcohol (hard liquor)

Bacon **PF**

Baked beans **PFC**

Beef, ground, regular, (over
20% fat) **PF**

Beef taco (fried) **PFC**

"Breaded" foods **FC**

Breakfast sandwich (fast-
food) **PFC**

Cake **FC**

Candy **PFC**

Cereal (sugared) **PFC**

Chicken à la King **PFC**

Cookies (Oreo®, etc.) **FC**

Creamed veggies **FC**

Creamer (nondairy) **FC**

Doughnuts **FC**

Energy drinks **G**

Fowl, ground, regular (over
20% fat) **PF**

French fries **FC**

Gravy **PF**

Grilled cheese sandwich **PF**
G

Hamburger (fast-food) **PFC**

High fructose corn syrup **G**

Milk (cream or half-and-half)
PFC

Nachos **FC**

Onion rings **FC**

Pastries **FC**

Pies **FC**

Pizza (delivered) **PFC**

Potato skins (fried) **FC**

Refried beans (w/ lard) **PF**
G

Salad dressing (creamy) **FC**

Sausage **PF**

Soft drinks, diet (read the
studies)

Chicken (buffalo wings, nuggets, tenders) **PFC**

Chicken or fish sandwich, fried **PFC**

Chips (potato or corn) **FC**

Chocolate **PFC**

Chicken fried steak **PFC**

Cinnamon bun **FC**

Coffee (mocha, macchiato, ice blended, frappé, triple caramel vanilla buzz bomb, etc.) **FC**

Hot dogs **PFC**

"Hydrogenated" foods **F**

Ice cream **FC**

Jerky (beef, pork, venison) **PFC**

Juice (sugar added) **G**

Lobster Newburg **PFC**

Margarine **F**

Soft drinks, sugared **G**

Sports drinks & foods (unless you're playing sports)

Syrup **G**

Sugar (refined) **G**

Tater tots **FC**

Toaster pastries **FC**

Vegetable oil (cheap big brand) **F**