

BHIKSHA GUIDELINES

Devotion to the people is devotion to the Supreme Self. We know our responsibilities give us the ability and courage to fulfill them.

What is bhiksha and what can we as sevaks do to fulfill this responsibility?

Bhiksha simply means ALMS. Our Scriptures state that Brahmacharins and Sannyasins seek Bhiksha from Devotees and Householders. They do not cook for themselves. Thus it becomes our Dharma to provide Bhiksha. Merely the presence of Brahmacharins and Sannyasins sanctifies our very Being. The attitude with which we provide Bhiksha is of utmost importance. While we provide food to sustain the body of the Sannyasins, we ask for the Jnana Bhiksha (ALMS of Spiritual Knowledge, Devotion, and Dispassion).

Offering Bhiksha is a very simple and easy task. The food offered is not an elaborate feast. It should be freshly prepared with utmost hygiene and served with humility and reverence. Care must be taken to provide Sattvic food. It is always special when the host serves the food to the Acharya. After serving the Guru, the food is distributed to the guests and partaken as Prasada. Therefore, please sign up for Bhiksha and avail the wonderful opportunity to enjoy the blessings. Please consult the Bhiksha calendar, published on our center website (www.chinmyadc.org) for availability of times.

As Pujya Swami Dheeranandaji is on a restricted diet with low carbohydrate, low fat, low sodium and high protein, please strictly observe the following guidelines in preparing the Bhiksha for him. If you have any questions, please call the Bhiksha coordinator, Nagaraj Neerchal, nagaraj@umbc.edu or 410-707-5212.

MEAL PLAN:

This meal plan is comprehensive. Every meal **MUST** contain all the 4 courses: Grain, Vegetable, Protein and Dessert.

Course	Item	Guideline for preparation
Grain (Starch) (1 serving)	One 6" roti OR 1/3 cup cooked Brown Rice OR Low carbohydrate (<17 gm) soy pita bread	For making roti, use 1:1 ratio of whole wheat flour & soy flour
Vegetable (2 + servings)	2 cups/more of at least 2 different spicy cooked dishes OR Salad made of Avocado, Bitter Gourd, Broccoli, Brussel sprouts, Spinach, Lettuce, Chilies, Peppers, Cauliflower, Greens, Tomatoes, Asparagus, Zucchini, Cucumbers, Celery, Radish, Okra, Cabbage	Use Canola Oil for cooking. Use Flax Seed Oil or Olive Oil for uncooked food like Salads and Chutneys. Absolutely NO ghee, coconut oil or butter. ***AVOID*** - Starchy Vegetables Like Yam, Sweet Potatoes, Green Peas, Corn, Potatoes And Plantain NO EGGPLANT
Protein (2-3 servings)	1 cup spicy tofu dish or 1/2 cup fat free/low fat cottage cheese or 3/4 cup spicy nutrela curry	Oil used for this curry must be within the oil guideline above.
Dessert (Fruit/ Yogurt) (1 serving)	3/4 cup, fat free or 1%, Homemade Or Gelatin free Greek Yogurt e.g., Chobani/Fage 1 cup cut watermelon, other melons, papaya & berries OR 1/2 cup of other cut up fruit OR 1/2 apple or pear or orange OR A dozen grapes or cherries.	No dried fruit, no canned fruit, A dozen peanuts or half a dozen almonds are ok.

GENERAL GUIDELINES:

1. 1/2 cup cooked dal/lentils/dried beans/peas (garbanzo, pinto, kidney, white, split, black-eyed) or 3/4 cup soybean peas (edamame) = one serving of STARCH. Therefore, do NOT count dal as vegetable serving.
2. All herbs and spices are allowed and encouraged.
3. Substitute peanut powder for coconut.
4. Use less oil for cooking.
5. Cut the vegetables into bite-sized pieces for salads.
6. Any snack given to Swamiji must have LESS than 15 g of carbohydrate and 1 serving of protein in each serving.
7. Use Splenda instead of sugar if any sweet is being made.
For example, use Splenda to make Shreekand with FAGE 0% Greek Yogurt.
8. Home made Chiwda with puffed WHOLE WHEAT or puffed BROWN RICE is a good snack. Do NOT use white rice poha.
9. To make Coffee or Tea, use WESTSOY Unsweetened Soy Milk with 1 Table Spoon of Whey Powder (BlueBonnnett Natural Whey Protein Isolate-Natural Original Flavor), 1 packet of Splenda and 1 Teaspoon of Nescafe Tasters Choice Instant Coffee Powder OR Tea Powder.
10. For breakfast, please serve Kellogg's Special Protein Plus Cereal (Fat 3g, Protein 10g, Carbohydrate 14g) with West Soy Unsweetened Soy Milk with 1-2 tablespoons of broken pecans, almonds and walnuts
11. Use Galaxy Foods Veggie Shreds or Slices instead of regular cheese for dishes that require cheese.
12. Use low carb tortilla (eg. La Tortilla factory - 3 net carbs, fat 2g, protein 5g) and low carb bread if tortilla or bread is being used
13. In case of any questions, please send an email: bhiksha@chinmayadc.org or contact Nagaraj Neerchal, nagaraj@umbc.edu, 410-707-5212, who is the Bhiksha coordinator.