

# Rocket-Powered Nutrition

## NASA Robotics-Inspired Program Makes Balanced Nutrition Easy



Weight Control	
Total Calories	C+
Carbohydrates	A
Protein	A
Fat	B+

Heart Health	
Sodium	A
Cholesterol	A
Saturated Fat	A
Fiber	B+
Omega 3	A
Omega 6	B+

In 2003, NASA Ranger Neutral Buoyancy Vehicle (NBV) lead engineer Joe Graves founded Vitabot, the technology that powers Phase II Nutrition. The Vitabot technology **uses some of the same robotics and computer science concepts** that he developed for the Ranger NBV—in this case to offer a product that **helps customers determine and maintain their ideal diet.**

“Phase II Nutrition ‘floats’ between nutrition data and the human,” he says. “It’s the exact same style of algorithms that we developed between the robot and the operator.” The result is an easy-to-use online program that **allows users to set health goals** like desired weight and then plan balanced meals using a food database featuring tens of thousands of choices. Available through Phase II Personal Training, Phase II Nutrition uses an **interactive report card** that grades how food choices measure up to users’ nutritional needs in a wide range of categories including

calories, fat, electrolytes, minerals, and vitamins. Users can **build complete menus of favorite foods** that also match their nutritional needs, allowing them to make real, individually tailored use of the previously overwhelming quantities of available nutritional data. These menus can then be shared with other users as part of Phase II Nutrition’s Ultimate Mealplan Project.

Though the **focus of Phase II Nutrition is on balanced nutrition** and not weight loss, the latter is often a result of the former, Graves says.

Graves credits Vitabot’s unusual origins for much of its success; most nutritional planning systems do not come out of a space program, he says. “It’s a different paradigm that has created a different solution.”

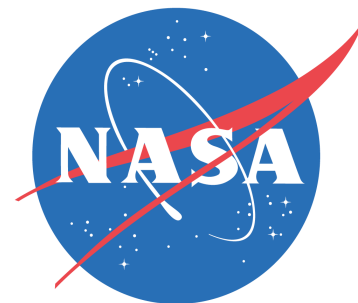
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**NASA Ranger Neutral Buoyancy Vehicle @ Space Systems Lab**



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