



My Plate

Lesson

Goals

Students will further their understanding of how to be healthy by working with the USDA's MyPlate.

Objectives

Students will show an example of an unhealthy and healthy meal using USDA's MyPlate as a guide.

Colorado Academic Standards

Science: Life Science

GR.5-S.2-GLE.2

Comprehensive Health: Physical & Personal Wellness in Health

GR.K-S.2-GLE.1

GR.1-S.2-GLE.1

GR.2-S.2-GLE.1

GR.3-S.2-GLE.1

GR.4-S.2-GLE.1

GR.5-S.2-GLE.1

GR.6-S.2-GLE.1 & GLE.4

Did you know?

Colorado has the lowest adult obesity rates in the nation; however, Colorado is ranked as the 22nd most obese state for children.

Total Time – Day One: 60 minutes, Day Two: 60 minutes

Materials

- Blank plate worksheets
- Two enlarged MyPlate worksheets
- MyPlate worksheets (two sets for each student or group)
- <http://dug.org/school-garden-curriculum/resource-sheets/myplate-information.html>
- Journals

Vocabulary

dairy	fruits	MyPlate	protein
fats/oils	grains (whole)	physical activity	unhealthy
fiber	healthy	portion control	vegetables
food groups			

Mentor Text

- *Rookie: Grains.* Carol Alexander, 2005.
- *Rookie: Fruits and Vegetables.* Susan DerKazarian, 2005.
- *Rookie: Dairy.* Susan DerKazarian, 2005.
- *Rookie: Proteins.* Justine and Ron Fontes, 2005.
- *Rookie: Fats, Oils and Sweets.* Carol Parenzan Smalley, 2005.

Background for Teachers

The USDA replaced MyPyramid with MyPlate in June 2011, which was done in an attempt to make nutritional advice more simple and easy to understand. With this simplification, some information was lost, which should be reinforced when teaching MyPlate. *Physical activity* is a necessary part of a healthy lifestyle and should include at least 60 minutes of rigorous activity a day for children and adolescents. All grains are not equal (this can be said for vegetables, fruits, dairy and proteins as well). *Whole grains* should comprise at least half of all grains in your diet. Although *dairy* is off of the plate, this does not mean it always needs to be a glass of milk. Low-fat cottage cheese and yogurt are also healthy dairy options. *Fats and oils* do not receive their own category and should be limited. The size of the plate is not specified and so portion control should be emphasized. More information can be found at: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>.

Method

Day One (45 minutes)

1. Explain to the class that today we are going to learn about MyPlate, but first we want to talk about what you each had for dinner last night.
2. Hand out the blank plate worksheet and have students draw what they had for dinner, including what they had to drink.
3. Introduce MyPlate and its components to the class. Have an enlarged template for display. Make a Tree Map on anchor paper for categorization of the six discussion topics. Have the students copy the information into their journals.
 - a. Grains: *What are grains?* Rice, corn, wheat, oats, etc. *Where do we find grains?* Pasta, bread, corn, cereal, rice, etc. *Half of your grains should be whole grains. What are whole grains?* Grains where the outer skin is not removed. *Why do we need to eat them?* Whole grains are higher in fiber, which helps clean out your digestive tract and makes you feel full. *What are some examples of whole grains?* Whole-wheat flour, oatmeal, brown rice, etc.
 - b. Vegetables: *Vary your veggies. Focus on eating dark green and orange vegetables. Name some dark green and orange vegetables.* Sweet potatoes, carrots, broccoli, kale, butternut squash, pumpkin and spinach. *Vegetables have vitamins and minerals that are important for a healthy body.*
 - c. Fruits: *Try to eat fruit of various colors. Juice should be 100% fruit juice. Juice has less fiber and because it is a concentrated form of fruit, contains more sugar than whole fruit. Fruits that are not in season can be purchased frozen or canned in unsweetened fruit juice. Avoid fruits canned in heavy or light syrup.*
 - d. Dairy: *Try to drink 1% (low-fat) and skim (fat-free) milk. They have the same amount of calcium, but less saturated fat than whole milk does. What other dairy products can you eat to get your calcium?* Yogurt, cheese, cottage cheese, etc. *Eating dark leafy greens are also a great way to get your calcium.*
 - e. Protein: *What is protein?* All food made from meat, poultry, seafood, beans, eggs, soy products, nuts and seeds. *Protein is needed for growth and muscle development, but many Americans eat too much protein. The extra calories from protein turn into fat.*
 - f. Physical Activity: *Physical activity is necessary for healthy bodies. Youth (ages 6-17) need 60 minutes of physical activity each day. Did you know that gardening is considered physical activity?*

g. Drinks: *Try to drink more water and less sugary drinks. Soda, energy drinks and sports drinks have high amounts of added sugar.*

4. After showing MyPlate and discussing the different components, have the class look at their meal from last night. Take a few minutes for the class to try to draw the sections of MyPlate on their meal. Have a few students share their meals and how they compare to MyPlate.

Conclusion (10 minutes)

Have students write in their journals comparing MyPlate and their dinner from last night. Does it look like MyPlate? Why or why not? What parts are missing? How could it be improved?

Snack (5 minutes)

Hand out the almond butter and banana wraps and discuss how they fit into MyPlate.

Day Two (45 minutes)

1. Display an image of MyPlate. Remind the class that this is a graphic representation of a healthy meal. Ask the class what conclusions they can make from looking at the image. Make sure the students understand that half of your plate should be fruits and vegetables.
2. Have students come up with a list of healthy and unhealthy options for each section of MyPlate (fruit, vegetable, protein, grain and dairy). Write all of the ideas on the board.
3. Hand out a copy of MyPlate to each student. Have them draw an unhealthy meal on the plate, keeping within the bounds of each of the sections. Have some students share what they came up with.
4. Discuss with the class ways you could make the plate healthier (baked fish vs. fried fish, low-fat milk vs. ice cream, baked sweet potatoes vs. french fries, etc).
5. Hand out another copy of MyPlate and have the students draw in a healthy meal.

Conclusion (10 minutes)

Have students write in their journals five steps they can do to make their dinner plate healthier.

Snack (5 minutes)

Hand out a healthy snack such Almond Butter and Banana Wraps or Fruit Pizza and discuss how it fits into MyPlate.

Assessment Tools

- Participation
- Blank plate worksheet
- MyPlate worksheets (two per student/group)
- Journals

Modifications

- Have students work in groups on their MyPlate handouts.

- Shorten to a one day lesson by removing either the blank plate activity or creating unhealthy and healthy versions of MyPlate.

Extensions

- Have students make a Double Bubble Map in their journals comparing and contrasting sections of a healthy MyPlate and an unhealthy MyPlate.
- Have students use a laptop and create their own individual meal plan:
<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/myplate/index.aspx>

Almond Butter and Banana Wraps

You can also do this with peanut butter, but make sure none of the students have allergies.

- Almond butter
- Bananas
- Whole wheat tortillas

Preparation (5 minutes): Spread almond butter on a tortilla. Peel the banana, but keep it whole. Wrap the tortilla around the whole banana. Cut the wrap into four pieces.

Fruit Pizza

For kids only!

- Whole wheat pita bread or English muffins
- 8 oz. light cream cheese (or Neufchatel cheese)
- 1 banana, peeled and sliced
- 4 cups of assorted fruit (pineapples, blueberries, strawberries, honeydew, cantaloupe, pitted cherries, peaches, etc)

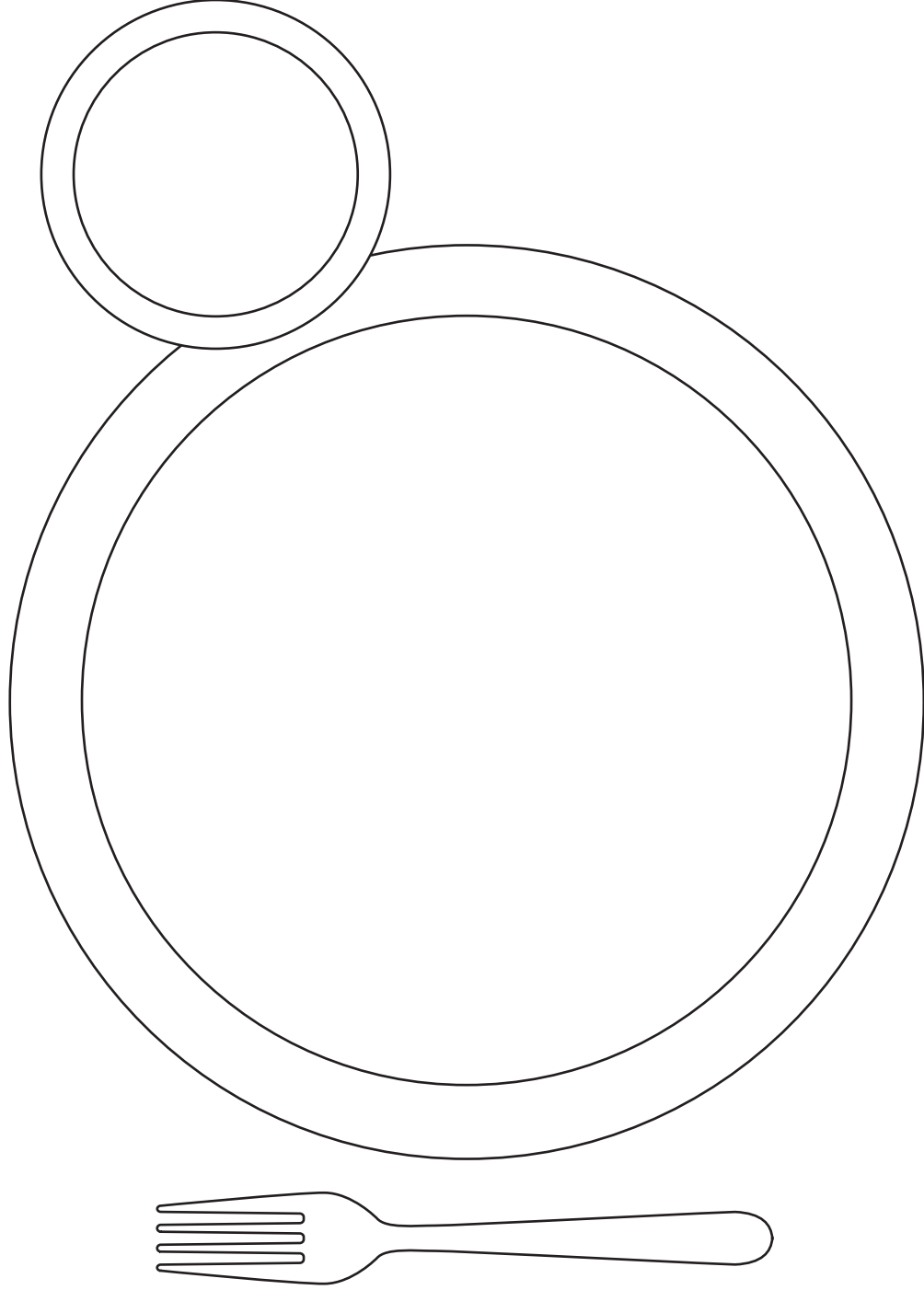
Preparation (15 minutes): Spread cream cheese over pita or a half of English muffin. Arrange the fruit on the pizza in a design you desire. Be creative! If using pita bread, cut into wedges.

Sources

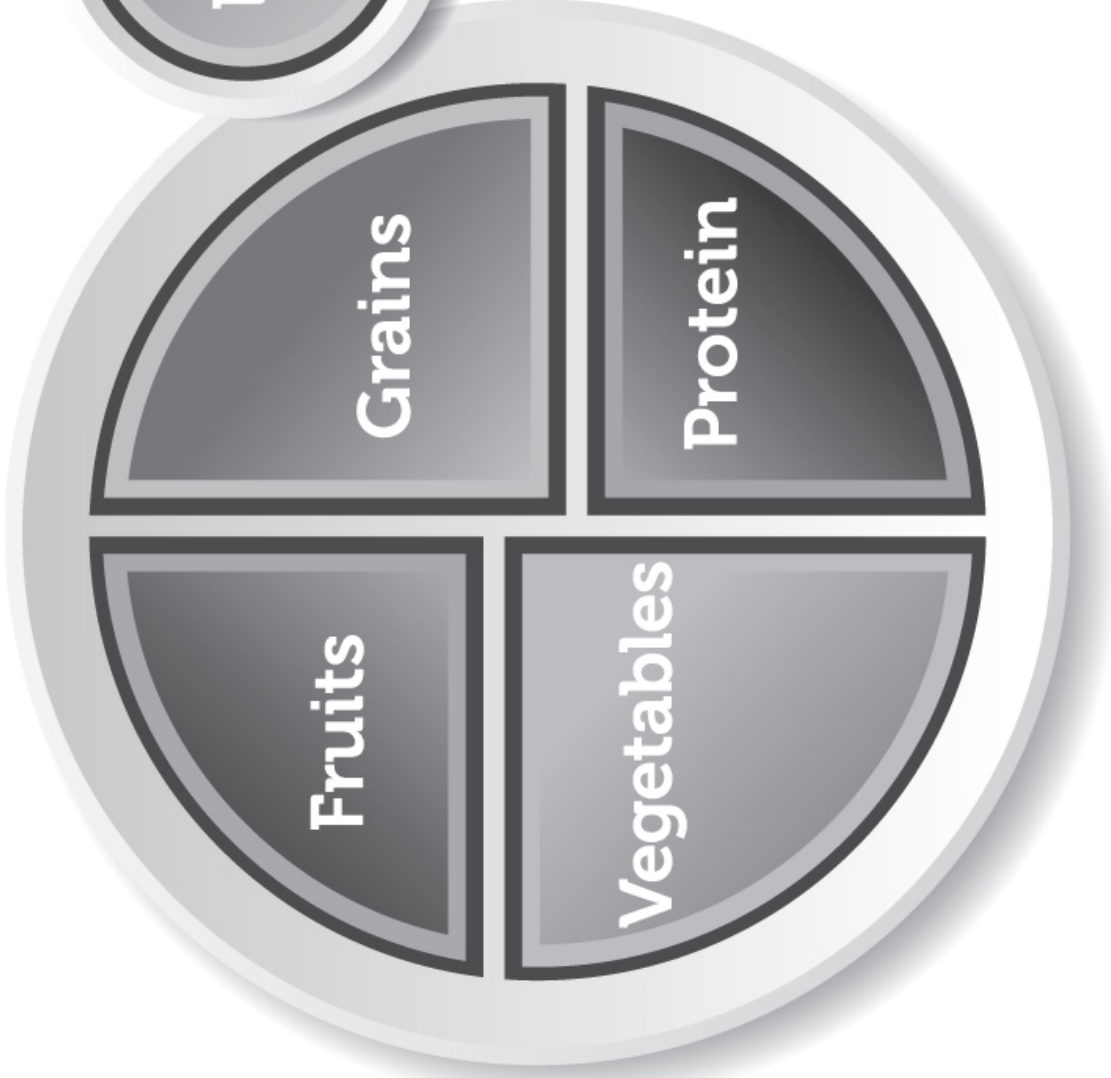
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<http://healthyamericans.org/reports/obesity2010/>.

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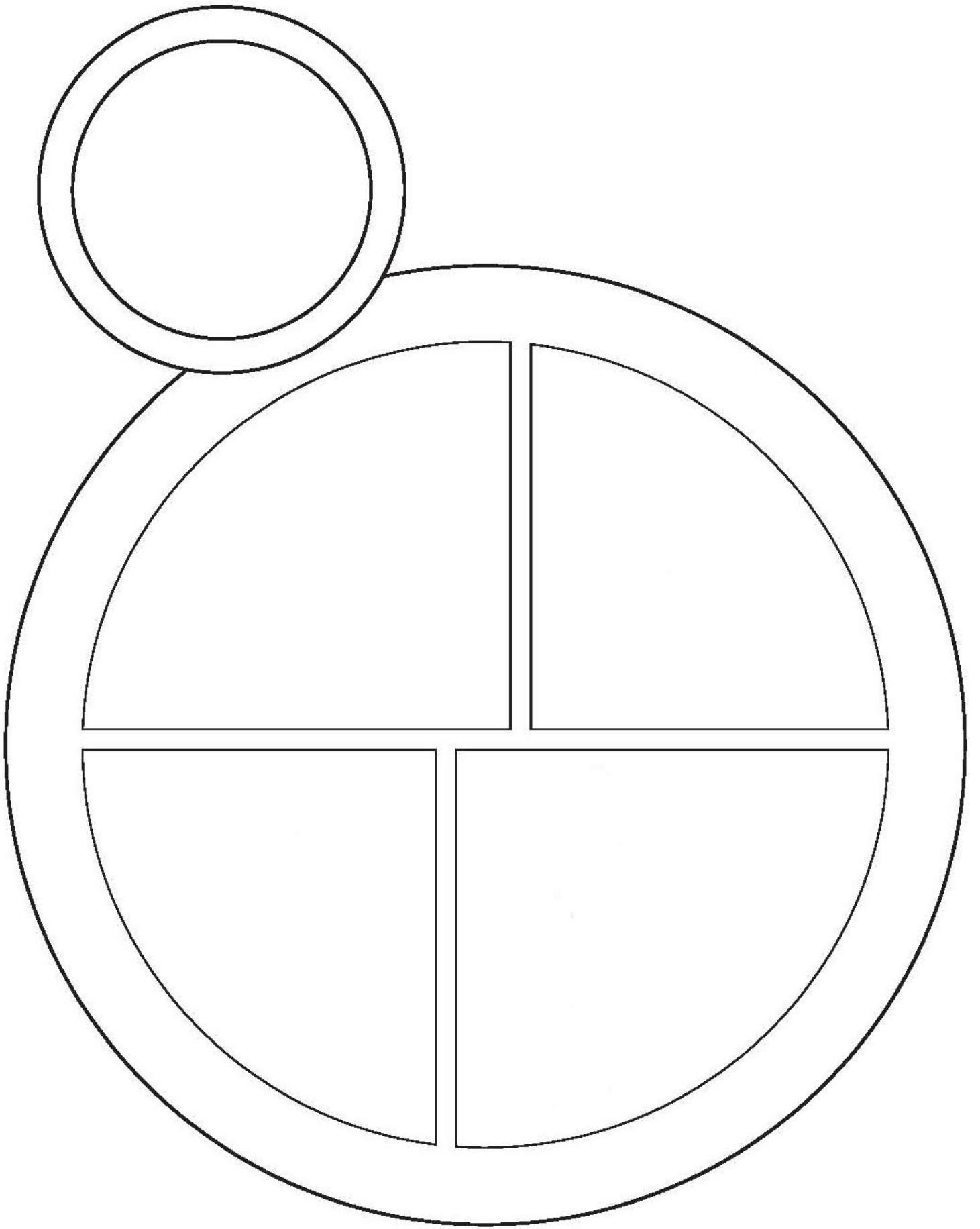
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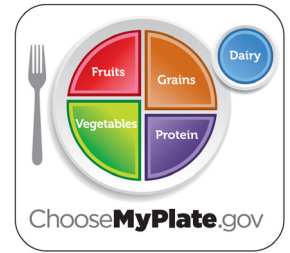


10 tips

Nutrition
Education Series

choose MyPlate

10 tips to a great plate



Making food choices for a healthy lifestyle can be as simple as using these 10 Tips.

Use the ideas in this list to *balance your calories*, to choose foods to *eat more often*, and to cut back on foods to *eat less often*.

1 balance calories

Find out how many calories YOU need for a day as a first step in managing your weight. Go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov to find your calorie level. Being physically active also helps you balance calories.

2 enjoy your food, but eat less

Take the time to fully enjoy your food as you eat it. Eating too fast or when your attention is elsewhere may lead to eating too many calories. Pay attention to hunger and fullness cues before, during, and after meals. Use them to recognize when to eat and when you've had enough.



3 avoid oversized portions

Use a smaller plate, bowl, and glass. Portion out foods before you eat. When eating out, choose a smaller size option, share a dish, or take home part of your meal.

4 foods to eat more often

Eat more vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and fat-free or 1% milk and dairy products. These foods have the nutrients you need for health—including potassium, calcium, vitamin D, and fiber. Make them the basis for meals and snacks.



5 make half your plate fruits and vegetables

Choose red, orange, and dark-green vegetables like tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and broccoli, along with other vegetables for your meals. Add fruit to meals as part of main or side dishes or as dessert.

6 switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk

They have the same amount of calcium and other essential nutrients as whole milk, but fewer calories and less saturated fat.



7 make half your grains whole grains

To eat more whole grains, substitute a whole-grain product for a refined product—such as eating whole-wheat bread instead of white bread or brown rice instead of white rice.

8 foods to eat less often

Cut back on foods high in solid fats, added sugars, and salt. They include cakes, cookies, ice cream, candies, sweetened drinks, pizza, and fatty meats like ribs, sausages, bacon, and hot dogs. Use these foods as occasional treats, not everyday foods.

9 compare sodium in foods

Use the Nutrition Facts label to choose lower sodium versions of foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals. Select canned foods labeled “low sodium,” “reduced sodium,” or “no salt added.”



10 drink water instead of sugary drinks

Cut calories by drinking water or unsweetened beverages. Soda, energy drinks, and sports drinks are a major source of added sugar, and calories, in American diets.