Healthy Eating My Plate


Healthy eating is determined both by what we eat and the way we eat. To eat healthier, try to eat at regular times. Eat slowly to digest food better. Eating slowly also makes us more aware of what we are eating. And, don’t worry about cleaning your plate. These are just a few of the many tricks for changing how we eat. Find out more!

MyPlate

MyPlate is a general guide to healthy eating. It is based on the latest research about nutrition and health. It was developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and has suggestions for how much people should eat, depending on their sex, age, and level of physical activity. The plate image on shows us the amount we need of each food group. Go to [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov) to learn more about this useful tool. The suggestions offered in MyPlate can help us make better food choices. They give us ideas for changing the way we eat. During the week, use the information found on [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov) and this handout to practice changing how you eat.

Quick Facts

To prevent type 2 diabetes, should you avoid eating starchy foods such as bread, potatoes, and pasta?

- **No.** Starchy foods are part of a healthy meal plan for people with or without diabetes. What is important is the amount we eat. Whole grain breads, cereals, pasta, rice, and starchy vegetables like potatoes, yams, peas, and corn can be part of your meals and snacks.

- The key is the amount. For most people with diabetes, having 3 or 4 servings of bread, fruit, or starchy foods is about right. Whole grain starchy foods are also a good source of fiber. They help keep your gut healthy.

Ways to Eat Healthy

Eating less fat and fewer calories is an important part of losing weight. But that is only one important part of healthy eating. Another part of healthy eating is changing the way we eat and what we eat. Here are a few tips to help.
Set up a regular pattern of eating.
- Spread your calories out through the day. Doing so helps keep you from getting too hungry and losing control. Eat 3 meals each day and 1 or 2 healthy snacks.
- Do not skip meals.
- Try to eat at the same time each day. Regular meals will also keep you from getting too hungry and losing control.

Eat slowly
Try pausing between bites. Put down your fork and take a break between bites. Drink water with meals and enjoy the taste of your food. Eating slowly will help you
- Digest your food better.
- Be more aware of what you are eating.
- Be more aware of when you are full.

Don’t worry about cleaning your plate.
- Serve yourself smaller portions to begin with.
- The greatest waste of food is eating more than you want or need.

Change your eating environment.
- Eat with others.
- Do not eat while watching television or doing anything else that can take your attention away from your meal.
- Use tools like MyPlate to help you choose healthier foods in amounts that you need.
- Grains—Make at least half of the grains you eat whole grains.
- Vegetables—Vary your veggies.
- Fruits—Focus on fruits.
- Dairy—Get your calcium-rich foods.
- Proteins—Go lean with protein.

MyPlate: Food Choices
Examples of low-fat, high-fat/high-calorie foods for each group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRAINS</th>
<th>Serving Size</th>
<th>For Example use these low fat, low calorie options:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 slice whole wheat bread or 6” tortilla</td>
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<td>½ bagel, English muffin, pita bread</td>
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<td>4 to 6 low-fat crackers</td>
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<td>½ cup cooked cereal whole wheat pasta, bulgur, or brown rice</td>
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<td>1 cup dry, whole wheat cereal</td>
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Avoid High fat, high calorie, or high sugar foods
Croissants, sweet rolls, doughnuts, muffins, Danish pastries, , biscuits, high fat crackers, regular tortilla, chips, fried tortillas, Granola type cereals or sugar coated cereals
VEGETABLES

**Serving Size**

For Example use these low fat, low calorie options:

- 1 cup raw leafy vegetables
- ½ cup cooked vegetables
- ½ cup vegetable juice

It's okay to have more than one serving so go ahead and have two handfuls of these vegetables.

**Avoid High fat, high calorie, or high sugar foods**

Vegetables with butter or margarine, cream, or cheese sauces
Fried vegetables

FRUIT

**Serving Size**

For Example use these low fat, low calorie options:

- 1 small fresh fruit (2.5” diameter)
- ½ cup canned fruit or 100% fruit juice
- ¼ cup dried fruit

**Avoid High fat, high calorie, or high sugar foods**

Fruits in pastry (example: fruit pies), Coconuts, more than ¼ cup of Dried fruit, Juices or drinks sweetened with sugar, Fruit canned in syrup, Large amounts of any fruit juice

Dairy

**Serving Size**

For Example use these low fat, low calorie options:

- 1 cup skim or 1% milk
- 1 cup low fat soy milk or lactose-free milk
- 8 fluid ounce low fat or nonfat yogurt
- 1½ ounce low fat or nonfat cheese (less than 2 grams fat per ounce)

**Avoid High fat, high calorie, or high sugar foods**

2% or whole milk Regular cheese (more than 2 grams fat per ounce), Yogurt with sugar
For Example use these low fat, low calorie options:
1 ounce cooked lean meat, poultry (without skin), or fish
½ cup tuna canned in water
¼ cup cooked dry beans, lentils, or peas
1 egg or ¼ cup egg substitute
1 Tablespoon peanut butter
½ ounce nuts or seeds

Avoid High fat, high calorie, or high sugar foods
Bacon, sausage, hot dogs, hamburgers, luncheon meats, most red meats (except lean, trimmed cuts), Chicken or turkey with skin, Tuna canned in oil, Beans cooked in lard or salt pork

Write down your ideas for low-fat food choices in each of these food groups.

Grains

Vegetables

Fruits

Dairy

Protein
Rate Your Plate
In the table below, each row lists a different food group and each column represents 1 ounce or 1 cup (the number at the top is used to show how many servings those ounces or cups are adding up to).

- Pick one day from last week’s Food and Activity Tracker. Fill in that day’s date in the chart below.
- Check one box for every ½ ounce or ½ cup of each food group that you ate. The shaded boxes indicate the lowest number of ounces or cups suggested per day.
- Record what you ate for the selected day. Start with breakfast and move through the day. Don’t worry about being exact. We are just trying to get the general idea about healthy eating.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date.</th>
<th>1 oz./cup</th>
<th>2 oz./cups</th>
<th>3 oz./cups</th>
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Eating As MyPlate Suggests
Write in the foods you would eat in one day for each of the food groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Breakfast</th>
<th>Lunch</th>
<th>Dinner</th>
<th>Snacks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grains</td>
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My Food Substitutions
Here are some choices we could make instead of high-fat or high-calorie foods:

- Instead of high-fat foods
- Pick low-fat foods
- Serve vegetarian dinners several times a week.
- Eat fruit for dessert.
- Use low-fat versions of foods
- Use low-fat or fat-free margarine, mayonnaise, cheese, cream cheese, salad dressing
- Choose fresh fruit and vegetables for snacks. Use skim or 1% milk

Use low-fat flavorings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To flavor these foods</th>
<th>Use these low-fat flavorings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables, potatoes</td>
<td>Low-fat margarine (small amount), nonfat sour cream, nonfat broth, low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt, salsa, herbs, mustard, lemon juice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bread</td>
<td>Nonfat cream cheese, low-fat margarine (small amount), all-fruit jams</td>
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<td>Pancakes</td>
<td>Fruit, low-calorie syrup, unsweetened applesauce, crushed berries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salads</td>
<td>Nonfat or low-fat salad dressing, lemon juice, vinegar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pasta, rice</td>
<td>Spaghetti sauce with low-fat protein, chopped vegetables, white sauce made with skim or 1% milk</td>
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Instead of high-fat foods

- Find ways to lower the fat in the meats you eat
- Buy lean cuts (round, loin, sirloin, leg).
- Trim all the fat you can see.
- Remove the skin from chicken and turkey. This can be done before or after cooking.
- Choose white meat poultry.
- Drain-off fat after cooking meat, and blot the meat with a paper towel. Put ground beef in a colander after cooking and rinse it with hot water.
- Flavor meats with low-fat flavorings, such as BBQ sauce, hot sauce, catsup, lemon juice, or Worcestershire sauce.
Avoid frying foods. Cook in healthier ways:
- Poach or boil eggs or egg whites, or scramble them with vegetable cooking spray.
- Use two egg whites instead of a whole egg.
- Microwave, steam, or boil vegetables in a small amount of water.
- Cook meats without adding fat (see ideas above).
- Bake, roast, broil, barbecue, or grill instead of frying.
- Stir-fry: Heat pan to high heat. Add no more than 1 teaspoon oil or use vegetable cooking spray or fat-free broth. Add thinly sliced meat. Stir until cooked well.

To-Do Next Week
During the next week, I will —
- Keep track of my weight and what I eat using my Food and Activity Tracker.
- Fill out the Rate Your Plate form on 3 days.
- Answer these questions before the next session.

Did you make any changes during the week to match the MyPlate guidelines with what you ate? If yes, what were they?

What problems did you have? How did you solve them?

Practice Rating Your Plate

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