



**10 tips**  
Nutrition  
Education Series



Based on the  
**Dietary  
Guidelines  
for Americans**

# Choose MyPlate

Use **MyPlate** to build your healthy eating style and maintain it for a lifetime. Choose foods and beverages from each MyPlate food group. Make sure your choices are limited in sodium, saturated fat, and added sugars. Start with small changes to make healthier choices you can enjoy.

**1 Find your healthy eating style**  
Creating a healthy style means regularly eating a variety of foods to get the nutrients and calories you need. MyPlate's tips help you create your own healthy eating solutions—"MyWins."

**2 Make half your plate fruits and vegetables**  
Eating colorful fruits and vegetables is important because they provide vitamins and minerals and most are low in calories.

**3 Focus on whole fruits**  
Choose whole fruits—fresh, frozen, dried, or canned in 100% juice. Enjoy fruit with meals, as snacks, or as a dessert.



**4 Vary your veggies**  
Try adding fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables to salads, sides, and main dishes. Choose a variety of colorful vegetables prepared in healthful ways: steamed, sauteed, roasted, or raw.



**5 Make half your grains whole grains**  
Look for whole grains listed first or second on the ingredients list—try oatmeal, popcorn, whole-grain bread, and brown rice. Limit grain-based desserts and snacks, such as cakes, cookies, and pastries.



**6 Move to low-fat or fat-free milk or yogurt**  
Choose low-fat or fat-free milk, yogurt, and soy beverages (soymilk) to cut back on saturated fat. Replace sour cream, cream, and regular cheese with low-fat yogurt, milk, and cheese.



**7 Vary your protein routine**  
Mix up your protein foods to include seafood, beans and peas, unsalted nuts and seeds, soy products, eggs, and lean meats and poultry. Try main dishes made with beans or seafood like tuna salad or bean chili.



**8 Drink and eat beverages and food with less sodium, saturated fat, and added sugars**  
Use the Nutrition Facts label and ingredients list to limit items high in sodium, saturated fat, and added sugars. Choose vegetable oils instead of butter, and oil-based sauces and dips instead of ones with butter, cream, or cheese.



**9 Drink water instead of sugary drinks**  
Water is calorie-free. Non-diet soda, energy or sports drinks, and other sugar-sweetened drinks contain a lot of calories from added sugars and have few nutrients.

**10 Everything you eat and drink matters**  
The right mix of foods can help you be healthier now and into the future. Turn small changes into your "MyPlate, MyWins."



# Vary your protein routine

**Protein foods include both animal (meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs) and plant (beans, peas, soy products, nuts, and seeds) sources.** We all need protein—but most Americans eat enough, and some eat more than they need. How much is enough? Most people, ages 9 and older, should eat 5 to 7 ounces\* of protein foods each day depending on overall calorie needs.

**1 Vary your protein food choices**  
Eat a variety of foods from the Protein Foods Group each week. Experiment with beans or peas, nuts, soy, and seafood as main dishes.

**2 Choose seafood twice a week**  
Eat seafood in place of meat or poultry twice a week. Select a variety of seafood, including those that are higher in oils and low in mercury, such as salmon, trout, and herring.



**3 Select lean meat and poultry**  
Choose lean cuts of meat like round or sirloin and ground beef that is at least 93% lean. Trim or drain fat from meat and remove poultry skin.

**4 Save with eggs**  
Eggs can be an inexpensive protein option and part of a healthy eating style. Make eggs part of your weekly choices.

**5 Eat plant protein foods more often**  
Try beans and peas (kidney, pinto, black, or white beans; split peas; chickpeas; hummus), soy products (tofu, tempeh, veggie burgers), nuts, and seeds. They are lower in saturated fat and some are higher in fiber.



**6 Consider nuts and seeds**  
Choose unsalted nuts or seeds as a snack, on salads, or in main dishes. Nuts and seeds are a concentrated source of calories, so eat small portions to keep calories in check.

**7 Keep it tasty and healthy**  
Try grilling, broiling, roasting, or baking—they don't add extra fat. Some lean meats need slow, moist cooking to be tender—try a slow cooker for them. Avoid breading meat or poultry, which adds calories.

**8 Make a healthy sandwich**  
Choose turkey, roast beef, canned tuna or salmon, or peanut butter for sandwiches. Many deli meats, such as regular bologna or salami, are high in fat and sodium—make them occasional treats only.



**9 Think small when it comes to meat portions**  
Get the flavor you crave but in a smaller portion. Make or order a small turkey burger or a “petite” size steak.

**10 Check the sodium**  
Check the Nutrition Facts label to limit sodium. Salt is added to many canned foods—including soups, vegetables, beans, and meats. Many processed meats—such as ham, sausage, and hot dogs—are high in sodium. Some fresh chicken, turkey, and pork are brined in a salt solution for flavor and tenderness.

\* What counts as an ounce of protein foods? 1 ounce lean meat, poultry, or seafood; 1 egg; ¼ cup cooked beans or peas; ½ ounce nuts or seeds; or 1 tablespoon peanut butter.



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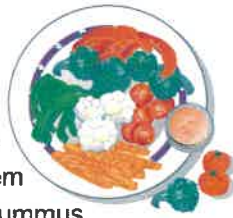
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# Add more vegetables to your day

**It's easy to eat more vegetables!** Eating vegetables is important because they provide vitamins and minerals and most are low in calories. To fit more vegetables in your day, try them as snacks and add them to your meals.

**1 Discover fast ways to cook**  
Cook fresh or frozen vegetables in the microwave for a quick-and-easy dish to add to any meal. Steam green beans, carrots, or bok choy in a bowl with a small amount of water in the microwave for a quick side dish.

**2 Be ahead of the game**  
Cut up a batch of bell peppers, cauliflower, or broccoli. Pre-package them to use when time is limited. Enjoy them in a casserole, stir-fry, or as a snack with hummus.



**3 Choose vegetables rich in color**  
Brighten your plate with vegetables that are red, orange, or dark green. They are full of vitamins and minerals. Try acorn squash, cherry tomatoes, sweet potatoes, or collard greens. They not only taste great but are good for you, too.

**4 Check the freezer aisle**  
Frozen vegetables are quick and easy to use and are just as nutritious as fresh veggies. Try adding frozen vegetables, such as corn, peas, edamame, or spinach, to your favorite dish. Look for frozen vegetables without added sauces, gravies, butter, or cream.



**5 Stock up on veggies**  
Canned vegetables are a great addition to any meal, so keep on hand canned tomatoes, kidney beans, garbanzo beans, mushrooms, and beets. Select those labeled as "reduced sodium," "low sodium," or "no salt added."

**6 Make your garden salad glow with color**  
Brighten your salad by using colorful vegetables such as black beans or avocados, sliced red bell peppers or onions, shredded radishes or carrots, and chopped red cabbage or watercress. Your salad will not only look good but taste good, too.

**7 Sip on some vegetable soup**  
Heat it and eat it. Try tomato, butternut squash, or garden vegetable soup. Look for reduced- or low-sodium soups. Make your own soups with a low-sodium broth and your favorite vegetables.

**8 While you're out**  
If dinner is away from home, no need to worry. When ordering, ask for an extra side of vegetables or a side salad instead of the typical fried side dish. Ask for toppings and dressings on the side.

**9 Savor the flavor of seasonal vegetables**  
Buy vegetables that are in season for maximum flavor at a lower cost. Check your local supermarket specials for the best in-season buys. Or visit your local farmers market.



**10 Vary your veggies**  
Choose a new vegetable that you've never tried before. Find recipes online at [WhatsCooking.fns.usda.gov](http://WhatsCooking.fns.usda.gov).





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# Focus on fruits

**Eating fruit provides health benefits.** People who eat more vegetables and fruits as part of an overall healthy eating style are likely to have a reduced risk of some chronic diseases. Fruits provide nutrients vital for health, such as potassium, dietary fiber, vitamin C, and folate. Focus on whole fruits—fresh, canned, frozen, or dried—instead of juice. The sugar naturally found in fruit does not count as added sugar.

**1** **Keep visible reminders**  
Keep a bowl of whole fruit on the table, counter, or in the refrigerator.



**2** **Experiment with flavor**  
Buy fresh fruits in season when they may be less expensive and at their peak flavor. Use fruits to sweeten a recipe instead of adding sugar.

**3** **Think about variety**  
Buy fruits that are dried, frozen, and canned (in water or 100% juice) as well as fresh, so that you always have a supply on hand.



**4** **Don't forget the fiber**  
Make most of your choices whole or cut-up fruit, rather than juice, for the benefits that dietary fiber provides.

**5** **Include fruit at breakfast**  
At breakfast, top your cereal with bananas, peaches, or strawberries; add blueberries to pancakes; drink 100% orange or grapefruit juice. Or, try a fruit mixed with fat-free or low-fat yogurt.

**6** **Try fruit at lunch**  
At lunch, pack a tangerine, banana, or grapes to eat or choose fruits from a salad bar. Individual containers of fruits like peaches or applesauce are easy to carry and convenient for lunch.



**7** **Enjoy fruit at dinner, too**  
At dinner, add crushed pineapple to coleslaw or include orange sections, dried cranberries, or grapes in a tossed salad. Try fruit salsa on top of fish.

**8** **Snack on fruits**  
Fruits make great snacks. Try dried fruits mixed with nuts or whole fruits like apples. They are easy to carry and store well.

**9** **Be a good role model**  
Set a good example for children by eating fruit every day with meals or as snacks.

**10** **Keep fruits safe**  
Rinse fruits before preparing or eating them. Under clean, running water, rub fruits briskly to remove dirt and surface microorganisms. After rinsing, dry with a clean towel.

