

August 2011

4 Tips for Building a Healthy Plate

1. Focus on Fruits and Vegetables

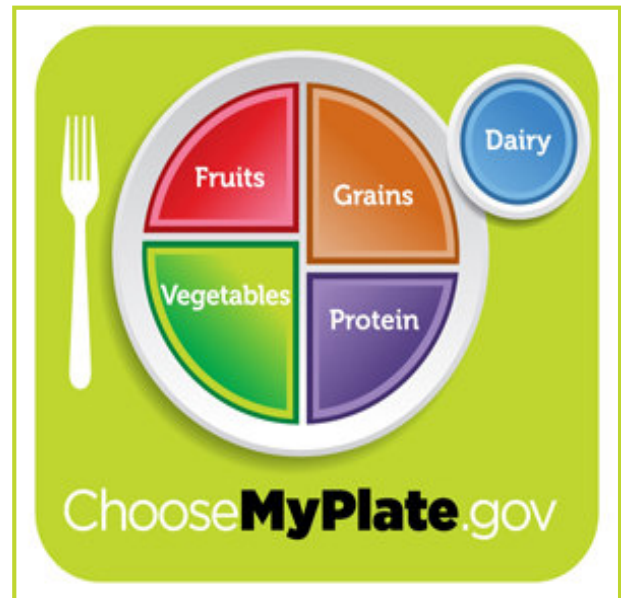
The new 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans highly recommend that we increase the amount and the varieties of fruits and vegetables we consume. Fruits and vegetables are nutrient dense foods that provide a wide variety and large amount of vitamins and minerals. New recommendations state that fruits and vegetables should take up **half of your plate** at each meal.

2. Choose Better Beverages

Rather than reaching for sugary drinks like soda and juice, reach for **water and fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk**. Sugary beverages are high in calories and low in nutrients. Water, however, is calorie free, inexpensive and great for rehydrating. Fat-free and low-fat milk contain protein, calcium and other nutrients that are important to health.

3. Choose Quality over Quantity

Take time to enjoy your meals. It's easy and convenient to eat on the run but it often leads to overeating. The cues for satiety (or feeling full) are often subtle and if you aren't paying close attention you may eat more than your body needs. Turn off the television, sit down at the table, and enjoy the simple pleasure of eating. **Choose quality, nutrient dense foods** like fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and beans/legumes at every meal.



4. Reduce or Avoid Processed Foods

Cut back on processed, pre-prepared foods like pizza, ice cream, candy, soda, snack chips, cakes, cookies, hot dogs, packaged lunchmeats and other processed items. These are high in solid fat, added sugar and sodium which can contribute to many health problems like heart disease and high blood pressure. These foods should be viewed as **occasional treats**, not every day items.



Additional Resources

- ◆ www.DietaryGuidelines.gov
- ◆ www.ChooseMyPlate.gov
- ◆ www.Health.gov/paguidelines
- ◆ www.HealthFinder.gov