MyPlate Food Groups

MyPlate is a symbol to help us follow the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. The MyPlate symbol is a guide to a well-balanced, healthy meal. Before you eat, think about what goes on your plate or in your cup or bowl! For more information, visit www.choosemyplate.gov. MyPlate includes five different food groups: grains, vegetables, fruits, dairy, and protein. Each food group includes foods with important nutrients. Eat foods from all five food groups every day for good health.

Grain Group
Make at least half your grains whole.
Examples from the grain group include 100% whole wheat bread, oatmeal, bulgur, and brown rice. A 1 ounce serving is equal to 1 slice of bread, 1 cup dry cereal, or ½ cup cooked cereal or pasta. Young women who consume all of their grains as whole grains should include a whole-grain ready-to-eat breakfast cereal or similar item that has been fortified with folic acid.

Fruit Group
Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
Eat a variety of fruit, and choose whole fruit more often than juice. Examples from the fruit group include apples, oranges, bananas, kiwi, and strawberries. Eating fruit as part of a healthy diet may reduce the risk of some diseases such as heart disease, cancer, and type 2 diabetes.

Oils
Oils are not a food group, but they are an important part of a balanced diet. Oils are a healthy type of fat, and they provide essential nutrients. They are found in a variety of foods, so there are many different ways to fit oils into your diet. The following is a list of some common foods that contain healthy oils:

- Fish
- Nuts
- Seeds
- Avocados
- Olives

Limit fats that are solid at room temperature such as butter, shortening, and stick margarine. These fats tend to raise “bad” cholesterol levels in the blood, which increases risk for heart disease.
**Protein Group**
*Go lean with protein.*
Examples from the protein group include meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, nuts, and seeds. A 3 ounce serving is equal to the size of a deck of cards. Foods from the protein group provide nutrients that are important for growth, strong muscles and organs, fighting infection, and preventing anemia. Cook meats, poultry, and fish by broiling, baking, or grilling.

**Vegetable Group**
*Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.*
Eat a variety of different colored vegetables every day. Examples from the vegetable group include carrots, tomatoes, cucumbers, peas, and broccoli. Eating vegetables as part of a healthy diet may help reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer, and type 2 diabetes.

**Dairy Group**
*Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk.*
Examples from the dairy group include low-fat or fat-free milk, cheese, and yogurt. Lactose-free dairy foods are available for those who cannot eat or drink regular dairy products. Eating foods from the dairy group helps build strong bones and teeth.

**How much should I eat from each food group?**
Find out how much you need to eat from all food groups each day by visiting [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov).
Recommendations are based on your age, gender, height, weight, and physical activity level.

A healthy eating pattern starts with small changes over time. Remember to eat a variety of foods from each food group to get the most nutrition.