

# 10 Tips to Having a Great Plate

## 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](http://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 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, fruit, 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 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

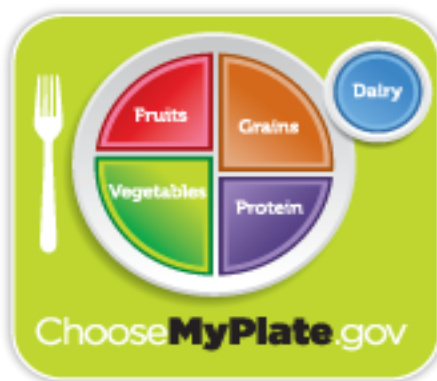
Cut back on foods high in solid fats, added sugars, and salt. They include cakes, cookies, ice cream, candies, sweetened drinks, pizza, and fatty meats like ribs, sausage, bacon, and hot dogs. Use these foods as occasional treats, not everyday foods.

## 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.



VEGETABLES	FRUITS	GRAINS	DAIRY	PROTEIN FOODS
<p>Eat more red, orange, and dark-green veggies like tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and broccoli in main dishes.</p> <p>Add beans or peas to salads (kidney or chickpeas), soups (split peas or lentils), and side dishes (pinto or baked beans), or serve as main dish.</p> <p>Fresh, frozen, and canned vegetables all count. Choose “reduced sodium” or “no-salt-added” canned veggies.</p>	<p>Use fruits as snacks, salads, and desserts. At breakfast, top your cereal with bananas or strawberries; add blueberries to pancakes.</p> <p>Buy fruits that are dried, frozen, and canned (in water or 100% juice), as well as fresh fruits.</p> <p>Select 100% fruit juice when choosing juices.</p>	<p>Substitute wholegrain choices for refined-grain breads, bagels, rolls, breakfast cereals, crackers, rice, and pasta.</p> <p>Check the ingredients list on product labels for the words “whole” or “whole grain” before the grain ingredient name.</p> <p>Choose products that name a whole grain first on the ingredients list.</p>	<p>Choose skim (fat-free) or 1% (low-fat) milk. They have the same amount of calcium and other essential nutrients as whole milk, but less fat and calories.</p> <p>Top fruit salads and baked potatoes with low-fat yogurt.</p> <p>If you are lactose intolerant, try lactose-free milk or fortified soymilk (soy beverage).</p>	<p>Eat a variety of foods from the protein food group each week, such as seafood, beans and peas, and nuts as well as lean meats, poultry, and eggs.</p> <p>Twice a week, make seafood the protein on your plate.</p> <p>Choose lean meats and ground beef that are at least 90% lean.</p> <p>Trim or drain fat from meat and remove skin from poultry to cut fat and calories.</p>

Eat 2½ cups every day	Eat 2 cups every day	Eat 6 ounces every day	Get 3 cups every day	Eat 5½ ounces every day
<p>What counts as a cup?</p> <p>1 cup of raw or cooked vegetables or vegetable juice; 2 cups of leafy salad greens</p>	<p>What counts as a cup?</p> <p>1 cup of raw or cooked fruit or 100% fruit juice; ½ cup dried fruit</p>	<p>What counts as an ounce?</p> <p>1 slice of bread; ½ cup of cooked rice, cereal, or pasta; 1 ounce of ready-to-eat cereal</p>	<p>What counts as a cup?</p> <p>1 cup of milk, yogurt, or fortified soymilk; 1½ ounces natural or 2 ounces processed cheese</p>	<p>What counts as an ounce?</p> <p>1 ounce of lean meat, poultry, or fish; 1 egg; 1 Tbsp peanut butter; ½ ounce nuts or seeds; ¼ cup beans or peas</p>

## Cut back on sodium and empty calories from solid fats and added sugars



Look out for salt (sodium) in foods you buy. Compare sodium in foods and choose those with a lower number.

Drink water instead of sugary drinks. Eat sugary desserts less often.

Make foods that are high in solid fats—such as cakes, cookies, ice cream, pizza, cheese, sausages, and hot dogs—occasional choices, not every day foods.

Limit empty calories to less than 260 per day, based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

## Be physically active your way

Pick activities you like and do each for at least 10 minutes at a time. Every bit adds up, and health benefits increase as you spend more time being active.

**Children and adolescents:** get 60 minutes or more a day.

**Adults:** get 2 hours and 30 minutes or more a week of activity that requires moderate effort, such as brisk walking.

Go to [www.ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov) for more information.