

PART 2

Choose Your Fuel

In this section, you will learn about the food groups that make up a healthy diet. Understanding the parts of a healthy diet can help you make nutritious choices for your meals and snacks. You don't need to count calories or grams of nutrients to eat a balanced meal. In Part 2, you will learn:

- How to identify nutrient-dense foods that provide more nutrients per calorie (more bang for your buck!).
- How you can plan a snack or meal to help you feel full, satisfied, and help you get enough nutrients.
- How you can make healthy eating fun and tasty, even if vegetables or whole grains are not “your thing” yet.
- How you can make your favorite foods more nutritious.

Remember, guidelines in this book are most effective if you practice them. Do the activities to apply what you learn to your daily life.

Continue tracking. Studies have shown that people who keep a daily food log lose twice as much weight as those who keep no records.

Choose a Variety of Foods

No one food has all the nutrients needed to sustain life and promote well-being. You need to eat a variety of foods to get all of the nutrients your body needs. Some foods provide more nutrients than others. Food can be a source of pleasure, but its main purpose is to provide nutrients that your body cannot make.

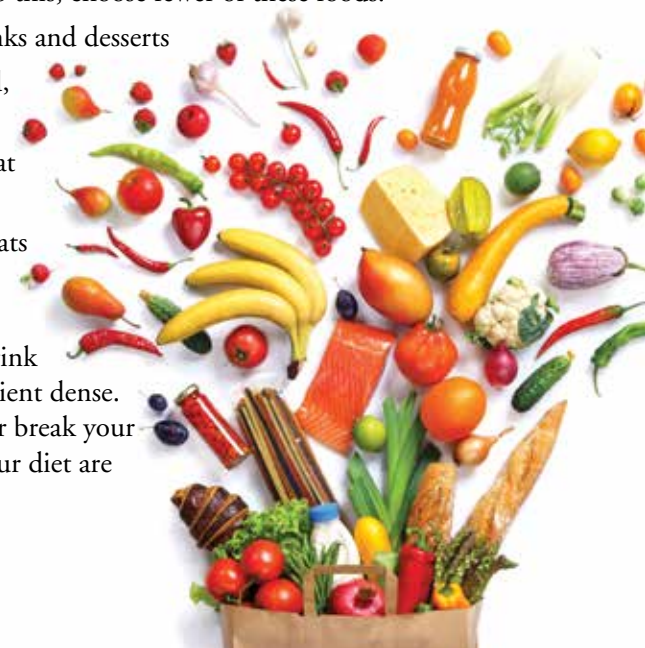
Choose foods that are nutrient dense. This means they give you a lot of nutrients per calorie. Examples are:

- Fruits and vegetables
- Whole grains
- Fat-free or low-fat dairy foods and drinks
- Seafood, lean meats, and eggs
- Beans, nuts, and seeds

Some foods contain ingredients that may harm you or are difficult for your body to digest. Limit foods and beverages high in saturated fat, added sugars, or sodium. To do this, choose fewer of these foods:

- Sugar-sweetened drinks and desserts
- Refined grains (bread, chips, and crackers)
- Red meat and high-fat dairy and cheese
- Highly processed meats and cheeses

Everything you eat or drink does not have to be nutrient dense. One meal won't make or break your health. The trends in your diet are more important.



How Much Energy Do I Need?

Calories are units of energy that fuel your body for daily functions like breathing, eating, and thinking. Calories are also burned during physical activity. The more active you are, the more energy your body needs. Use the chart below to find your estimated daily energy needs. Calories needed vary by sex, age, and activity level. To determine your activity level, consider how you spend most of your day.

- **Sedentary:** You sit most of the day and do little to no physical activity (e.g., you walk once a week or do light gardening).
- **Moderately Active:** Your work involves movement, such as cleaning or light industrial work. You do some moderate-intensity physical activity a few times a week, like brisk walking or cycling.
- **Active:** Your work involves a lot of movement, such as heavy industrial work, construction work, or farming. You do physical activity most days during the week, such as jogging, swimming laps, intense walking, weight lifting, or sports.

Calories Needed per Day by Age, Gender & Activity Level

	Age	Sedentary	Moderately Active	Active
Females	19-30	1,800-2,000	2,000-2,200	2,400
	31-50	1,800	2,000	2,200
	51+	1,600	1,800	2,000-2,200
Males	19-30	2,400-2,600	2,600-2,800	3,000
	31-50	2,200-2,400	2,400-2,600	2,800-3,000
	51+	2,000-2,000	2,200-2,400	2,400-2,800

My daily estimated energy needs are:

These are roughly the calories you need per day to stay at your current weight.

To lose 1 pound per week, you need to take in 500 fewer calories than you use/burn through daily activity. This guide encourages gradual, long-lasting weight loss.

Calories to maintain my current weight:

- 500 (Subtract 500 to lose 1 pound a week)

=

Equals approximate daily calories to lose 1 pound a week

You can get your specific daily energy needs using the USDA's SuperTracker online tool. Find this at www.supertracker.usda.gov.

You can lose weight without severely restricting calories. Eating fewer than 1,200 calories per day can make it difficult for you to get all the nutrients you need. Eating this way can also be hard to follow long-term. A diet with fewer than 1,200 calories should be supervised by a doctor or dietitian.



SPECIAL NUTRITION NEEDS

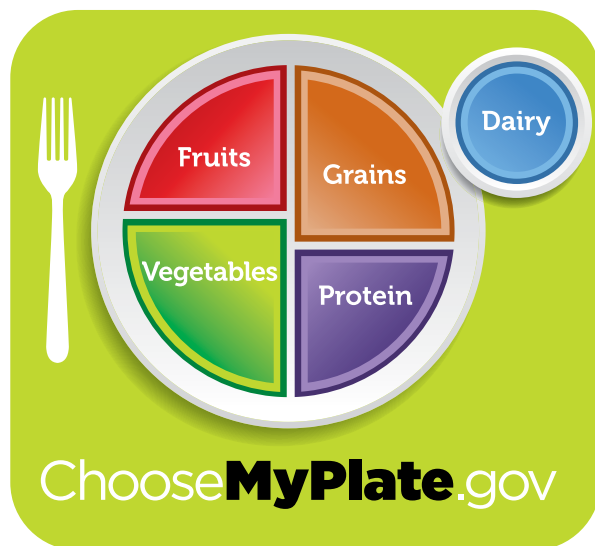
Talk to your doctor or dietitian before choosing an eating plan if you have special nutrition needs, such as:

- You are pregnant or breastfeeding
- You have a health condition or take medications

MyPlate

MyPlate, developed by the USDA, shows how different food groups should take up space on a plate. The nutrition guidelines in HealthyLife® Weigh are based on MyPlate and the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

- Make ½ of your plate fruits and vegetables.
- ¼ of your plate should be lean protein.
- ¼ of your plate should be a whole grain or high-fiber starch.
- Drink low-fat dairy or consume other calcium-rich foods and beverages.



While this graphic is far from a complete nutrition guide, the basic principle of having HALF of your plate fruits and vegetables, a QUARTER of your plate grains or starches, and a QUARTER of your plate a quality protein is a good rule of thumb.

How often does your plate look like the one above?

Which section is the fullest in your current diet?

Which section is the emptiest in your current diet?

Plan a Balanced Day

- 1) **Select a healthy eating plan** based on the calorie needs you identified. Or, follow these guidelines:
 - Plan A: best suited for women who are currently less active and want to lose more than 10-15 pounds. This calorie level is generally too low for men.
 - Plan B: best suited for women who are moderately active and for men who are less active and want to lose more than 10-15 pounds.
 - Plan C: best suited for men and for women who are very active and need to lose less than 10 pounds.
- 2) **Learn how much to eat from each food group.** Meet, but don't go over, your goals for each food group.
- 3) **Make healthier choices within each group.** Choose nutrient-dense foods that meet your body's needs.
- 4) **Make changes, as needed, to your plan.** Meet your goals while having enough energy to do your favorite activities.
- 5) **Plan activity:** Be physically active for at least 2 ½ hours (150 minutes) per week. You can do this for 10, 15, 20, or 30 minutes at a time.

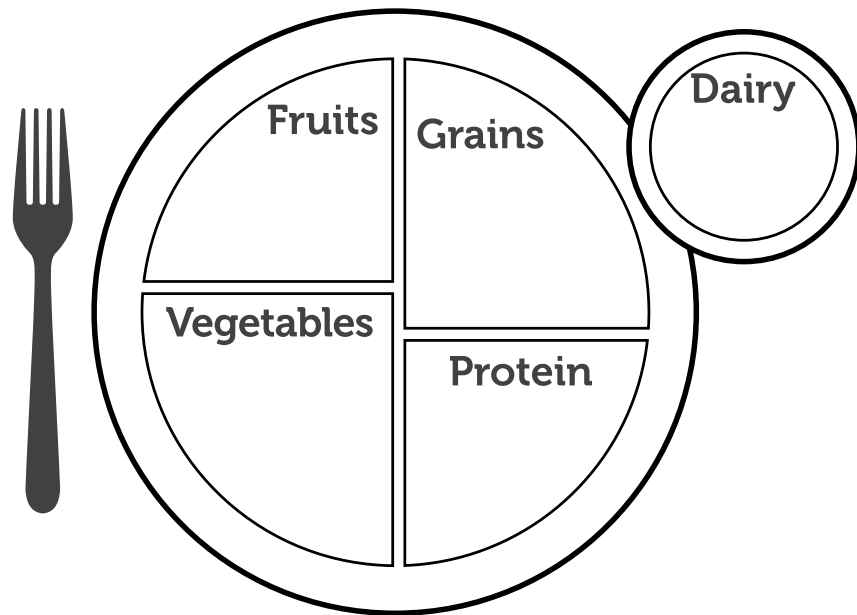
	Plan A 1,600 calories/day	Plan B 1,800-2,000 calories/day	Plan C 2,200-2,400 calories/day
Food Group	Number of servings/day		
Vegetables	2 cups	2 ½ cups	2 ½ cups
Fruits	1 ½ cups	1 ½-2 cups	2 cups
Grains & starches	5 ounces	6 ounces	7-8 ounces
Protein	5 ounces	5-5 ½ ounces	6-6 ½ ounces
Dairy	3 cups	3 cups	3 cups
Limit these in your diet			
Saturated fat	Less than 18 grams	Less than 20 grams	Less than 25 grams
Sodium	Less than 2,300 milligrams		
Added sugar	Men: Less than 9 teaspoons Women: Less than 6 teaspoons		

Tips for MyPlate

This activity will go through each part of MyPlate.

- Learn how eating certain foods can help your body, energy level, and mood. Learn new ways to prepare foods.
- Enjoy foods that taste good to you. Eat new things that you want to try. Avoid eating foods just because you think you “should” eat them. Explore different ways to prepare and eat foods. Celebrate cultural traditions and foods that are special to you.
- Allow some room in your diet for less nutritious foods. Make this a small part of your diet. If you have too many less nutritious foods, it will be more difficult to manage weight.

APPLY. The chart on the pervious page gives a whole day’s servings of different food groups. Write amounts from these groups from the plan you selected. Write them on the blank plate below. *Remember, these are totals for the day.*



Fruits & Vegetables

Fruits & vegetables make up the biggest part of MyPlate. Write your daily goals here for fruits and vegetables:

Fruits (cups):

Vegetables (cups):

Why should I eat fruits & vegetables?

1. Fruits & vegetables are packed with nutrients. They provide essential vitamins and minerals, fiber, and a variety of phytochemicals (plant chemicals) that may play a role in preventing certain diseases.
2. Fruits & vegetables contain water that helps you stay hydrated.
3. Fruits & vegetables are high in fiber, which improves digestion and helps you feel full. Fiber also helps you use the energy from your food for a longer period of time, reducing feelings of hunger.
4. Fruits & vegetables are tasty and can be prepared in many ways. They can add color, crunch, and flavor to your meals and snacks!

Aim for variety

Fruit: Choose a variety of whole fruits. The skin contains many unique nutrients and a lot of heart-healthy fiber. Choose fresh, frozen, canned (in juice to avoid added sugars), or dried fruits. ½ cup of fruit counts as:

- ½ cup raw or cooked fruit
- 1 small banana, peach, or orange
- 1 large plum or 16 seedless grapes
- ½ cup of chopped, cooked, or canned fruit
- 2 tablespoons of raisins, 3 prunes or dates
- ½ cup 100% fruit juice

Vegetables: Include a variety of choices during your day. Choices can be fresh, frozen, or canned (choose low-sodium options). 1 cup of vegetables counts as:

- 2 cups raw leafy vegetables
- 1 cup of other vegetables; cooked or chopped raw
- 1 cup 100% vegetable juice (choose juices less often)

Eat the Rainbow!

Choose a variety of colors when selecting fruits and vegetables. Different colors represent different phytonutrients. Phytonutrients are plant chemicals that have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory qualities. Every time you eat is an opportunity to strengthen your body and prevent disease. Put a check (✓) next to your favorite food of each color.

Benefits	Examples		
RED <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved memory A healthy heart Improved digestion 	<input type="checkbox"/> Tomatoes <input type="checkbox"/> Beets <input type="checkbox"/> Radishes <input type="checkbox"/> Red peppers <input type="checkbox"/> Red onions	<input type="checkbox"/> Rhubarb <input type="checkbox"/> Cherries <input type="checkbox"/> Red apples <input type="checkbox"/> Red grapes	<input type="checkbox"/> Red pears <input type="checkbox"/> Raspberries <input type="checkbox"/> Strawberries <input type="checkbox"/> Watermelon
ORANGE/YELLOW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharp vision A healthy heart Strength to fight off colds & illness Healthy skin Improved circulation 	<input type="checkbox"/> Apricots <input type="checkbox"/> Cantaloupe <input type="checkbox"/> Nectarines <input type="checkbox"/> Peaches <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow apples <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow pears <input type="checkbox"/> Carrots	<input type="checkbox"/> Sweet potatoes <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow peppers <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow potatoes <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow summer squash <input type="checkbox"/> Sweet corn <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow tomatoes <input type="checkbox"/> Butternut squash	
WHITE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A healthy heart Lower risk for stroke Lower risk for some cancers 	<input type="checkbox"/> Brown pears <input type="checkbox"/> White peaches <input type="checkbox"/> Cauliflower <input type="checkbox"/> Kohlrabi <input type="checkbox"/> Onions	<input type="checkbox"/> Garlic <input type="checkbox"/> Potatoes <input type="checkbox"/> White corn <input type="checkbox"/> White nectarines	
GREEN <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharp vision Strong bones & teeth Organ health 	<input type="checkbox"/> Green apples <input type="checkbox"/> Green grapes <input type="checkbox"/> Green pears <input type="checkbox"/> Honeydew <input type="checkbox"/> String beans <input type="checkbox"/> Spinach	<input type="checkbox"/> Broccoli <input type="checkbox"/> Sugar snap peas <input type="checkbox"/> Brussels sprouts <input type="checkbox"/> Green cabbage <input type="checkbox"/> Green onions <input type="checkbox"/> Green peppers	<input type="checkbox"/> Cucumbers <input type="checkbox"/> Leafy greens <input type="checkbox"/> Lettuce <input type="checkbox"/> Peas <input type="checkbox"/> Asparagus <input type="checkbox"/> Zucchini
BLUE/PURPLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved memory Healthy aging 	<input type="checkbox"/> Blackberries <input type="checkbox"/> Blueberries <input type="checkbox"/> Dried plums <input type="checkbox"/> Pitted prunes	<input type="checkbox"/> Purple asparagus <input type="checkbox"/> Purple cabbage <input type="checkbox"/> Eggplant <input type="checkbox"/> Plums	

Choose Fresh, Frozen, Canned, or Dried

All forms of fruits and vegetables can be healthy options. You may like the taste of one form over another. If you have only tried a vegetable in one form (for example, canned green beans), try it fresh or frozen. You may be surprised how different it tastes. Frozen and canned produce is picked at the peak of ripeness. This means the nutrients were able to fully develop before the plant was picked. This makes these choices very healthy, especially outside of the growing/harvest season.

Fresh

- Choose a variety of fresh produce. Include ready-to-eat snacks like apples and baby carrots.
- Buy produce that's in season to help the environment and provide natural variety in your diet.
- Grow your own, when possible.

Frozen

- Choose frozen veggies without added sauces or salt. Add your own seasonings that have little or no salt or sodium.
- Choose fruits without added sugar. Fruit has plenty of natural sugar.

Canned

- Choose low-sodium added varieties.
- Wipe off the top of the can before opening it.
- Rinse the vegetables in a colander to reduce the sodium content further.
- With canned fruit, look for options packed in water or 100% fruit juice. Avoid canned fruits that are packed in syrup.

Dried

- Avoid choices with added sugar.
- Drink a glass of water to replace the water that has been removed.

Add Fruits and Vegetables to Your Current Foods

Try to include a fruit or vegetable with most snacks and all meals. Here are a few ideas to get you started.

Add to Foods You Already Eat:

- Add an extra cup (or two!) of chopped veggies into your favorite omelet, soup, casserole, or whole grain pasta or brown rice dish.
- Add slices of cucumber, peppers, or onions to a sandwich.
- Add veggies as a filling in a burrito or quesadilla. Top a pizza with veggies.
- Shred carrots, zucchini, or an apple into muffins or other baked goods. Search for recipes that include crushed pineapple, avocado, and other produce as baking ingredients. Many fruits and vegetables can be used to replace some of the saturated fat and sugar in a recipe.
- Blend greens into a smoothie. Remove the stems first. If juicing, use the whole vegetable or fruit when possible. Juices are “sometimes” foods, as they don’t contain as much fiber or nutrients as the whole fruit or vegetable. The whole vegetable or fruit is more filling due to the fiber content and how much longer it takes to chew versus drink.

Identify two foods you enjoy that extra vegetables can be added to:

1.

2.

What vegetable(s) would you add?

Have Fun with Fruits and Vegetables

Color

Have color theme nights and plan a meal with foods of that color.

When I will try this:

My color choice(s):

My produce choice(s):

Combine two brightly colored vegetables together (like vibrant red peppers and deep green broccoli).

When I will try this:

My color choice(s):

My produce choice(s):

Shapes

Cut fruits and vegetables into different shapes. Use a knife, cookie cutters, or a melon baller to cut stars, hearts, and other fun shapes into fruit.

When I will try this:

My produce choice(s):

Use a knife or spiralizer to cut vegetables into strings, coins, or another shape.

When I will try this:

My produce choice(s):

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Texture & Temperature

Serve fruits and vegetables at different temperatures and at different levels of “crunch.” Have raw carrots for lunch but soften celery in a soup at dinner. A salad can be hot. A soup can be cold.



Pick a new way to prepare a vegetable this week. Place a check (✓) next to the word(s) that best describe(s) how you plan to prepare it:

- ☐ Crunchy
- ☐ Soft
- ☐ Smooth
- ☐ Rough
- ☐ Jagged
- ☐ Al dente (firm in the middle)
- ☐ Hot
- ☐ Cold



Toppings

Add toasted nuts (flaked almonds, pine nuts, hazelnuts, or cashews), roasted garlic, crispy shallots, toasted seeds, or parmesan cheese to a vegetable-based salad, soup, or stir fry. Other flavorful additions include olives, chili, capers, anchovies, low-sodium soy sauce, and crumbled turkey bacon.

Make it yours! Food can express your uniqueness.

What's in a Name?

What's for dinner? How you describe food to yourself and others matters. This helps you know what tastes to expect. This also helps you judge the quality of food and whether it will satisfy you. You often find this level of detail and flair in recipes and high-end restaurant menus!

Here are a few examples:

Green beans: Slender string beans drizzled with olive oil and parmesan

Yogurt and blueberries: Juicy, market-fresh blueberries resting on a pillow of creamy vanilla bean yogurt

Try it! Write out a menu for yourself that describes your food in a fancy or enticing way. Try this for two vegetables and one fruit. Make and eat one of these this week.

Vegetable:

Enticing, “menu” version:

When I plan to make this:

Vegetable:

Enticing, “menu” version:

When I plan to make this:

Fruit:

Enticing, “menu” version:

When I plan to make this:

Variety BINGO

This game is perfect for when you are making a salad, looking for pizza toppings, filling an omelet, or scoping out a buffet for healthy choices. Involve kids by having them identify different shapes, colors, textures, tastes, and experiences with their food.

Game Rules

- 1. Write down the options on pieces of paper and place them in a bowl.
- 2. Have someone pull the pieces of paper out one at a time. Have them read out loud what's on the paper.
- 3. Have someone cross off the spaces that are read out loud.
- 4. When someone gets an entire row, either across, down or diagonal, yell "Bingo!"
- 5. Prepare a meal using the ingredients included in the Bingo! row.

B	I	N	G	O
Something green	Something hot	A seed	A nut	Something orange
Something crunchy	Something round	Something yellow	Something soft	Something rough
Something sweet	Something with 2+ colors	Free space!	Something red	Something sour
Something white	Something you haven't tried before	Someone else's suggestion	Something you are trying a different way	Something smooth
Something long and thin	Something cold	An old favorite	Something purple	Something with a thick skin

Power of Perception

Place a check (✓) next to the words/phrases you associate with vegetables.

- ☐ Green
- ☐ Filling
- ☐ Necessary evil
- ☐ Fiber
- ☐ Broccoli
- ☐ Minerals
- ☐ Boring
- ☐ Variety
- ☐ Hydrating
- ☐ Vitamins
- ☐ Colorful
- ☐ Fresh
- ☐ Salad
- ☐ Do I have to?
- ☐ Exciting
- ☐ Nourishing
- ☐ Canned
- ☐ Soggy
- ☐ Crisp
- ☐ French fries

Having a positive attitude toward a food may help you be more willing to try it and include it in your diet.

On the scale below, what is your current attitude toward vegetables?

Very Negative

Very Positive

Look back at the words listed above. How do you think your current attitude toward vegetables influences your food choices?

After learning about vegetables in this chapter, how do you feel your attitude toward vegetables has changed?

What is one new way you want to eat a vegetable this week?

Grains and Starches

Grains & starches make up one quarter of MyPlate. This section includes foods made from grains, such as wheat, rice, quinoa, and oats. It also includes starchy vegetables like potatoes, winter squash, peas, and legumes.

Write your daily goal here for grains & starches (ounces):

1 ounce of grains & starches counts as:

- 1 slice of bread
- 1 ounce ready-to-eat cereal (about 1 cup cereal flakes)
- ½ cup cooked rice, pasta, or cereal
- 1 tortilla (6-inch diameter)
- 1 pancake (5-inch diameter)
- ¼ cup cooked beans or lentils
- 5 whole wheat crackers
- ½ English muffin
- 1 small potato (2-3 inches in diameter)
- 1 cup mashed potatoes
- 1 cup green peas
- 3 cups popped popcorn

Grains and starchy vegetables are a healthy source of carbohydrates. They provide important vitamins, minerals, dietary fiber, and phytochemicals (plant chemicals). Some are also good sources of protein.

Limiting grains to a quarter of your plate may be a change for you. Here are some tips to modify your favorite foods:

- Lose the top. Create an open-face sandwich or hamburger.
- Double the veggies. In a casserole, use a 2 to 1 or 3 to 1 ratio with vegetables to whole grain pasta or rice.
- Add extra veggies to a whole grain pizza crust. You'll feel fuller with fewer slices of pizza.

Choose Whole Grains

Whole grains are nutrient-dense carbohydrates. Whole grains contain the entire grain kernel, including the endosperm, bran, and germ. The bran and germ contain vitamins, minerals, fiber, protein, antioxidants, and healthy fats. The endosperm contains carbohydrate, protein, and trace amounts of vitamins and minerals.

When grains are processed, the bran and germ are removed. The endosperm by itself does not have as many nutrients as the whole grain.

Enriched grains have nutrients added back into the food during processing. However, the vitamins and minerals that are added back in are only some of the nutrients lost during processing. Consuming the whole grain is the best way to obtain the nutrients originally found in that food.

Make at least half of your grain choices whole grains.

Look for “whole grain” on an ingredients label. For a grain product like bread, cereal, or pasta, this should be the first ingredient. If there is a blend of whole and enriched grains, the product may not have as much nutritional value as a product made with only whole grains.

Try different whole grains. Each variety offers different nutrients and flavor. Check (✓) the grain(s) that you have never tried before. Swap out white pasta or rice for one with whole grains this week. Or, use half white and half whole grain choices. Work up to using all whole grains.

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Whole wheat, rye, or oats | <input type="checkbox"/> Millet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Whole grain barley, flour, or cornmeal | <input type="checkbox"/> Oatmeal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bulgur | <input type="checkbox"/> Quinoa |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buckwheat | <input type="checkbox"/> Brown rice |

Limit your intake of refined grains like white flour and white rice. These grains have been stripped of many nutrients and fiber. Limit foods made with refined grains like cookies, cakes, and some snack foods. These foods may be high in saturated and *trans* fats, added sugars, and sodium. For the calories those foods have, you may not be getting many nutrients. Eating these foods does not give you a “bang for your buck.”

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Eat Foods Rich in Fiber

Fiber is a carbohydrate. It does not provide 4 calories per gram that other carbohydrates do because the body does not break down fibers and absorb them. Foods with fiber do, however, have calories. Fiber is found in plant foods. Animal foods do not have fiber. Include fiber from a variety of sources. Include vegetables, fruits, seeds, nuts, legumes, and whole grains in your diet.

Two Types of Fiber		
	Insoluble Fiber	Soluble Fiber
Food Sources	Whole grains, wheat, barley, bran, bulgur, brown rice, corn, skins and seeds of fruits and vegetables	Oats, oatmeal, legumes (beans, dried peas, lentils), fleshy parts of fruits and vegetables, such as apples, pears, carrots
Benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Helps keep stools soft and prevents constipation• Reduces the risk of diverticulosis and diverticulitis• Reduces the risk for type 2 diabetes and heart disease	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delays emptying of the stomach and slows food absorption, so aids in weight control• Helps lower cholesterol• Reduces the risk for type 2 diabetes and heart disease
Both types of fiber are beneficial.		

How Much Fiber Do I Need Each Day?

Men: 38 grams daily

Women: 25 grams daily

How Can I Meet this Goal?

The average American consumes only 15 grams of fiber a day. Here are some easy meal and snack suggestions for increasing your fiber consumption.

- Make half of your plate fruits and vegetables.
- Add legumes (beans, lentils, etc.) to salads, soups, chili, etc.
- Snack on raw veggies.
- Choose whole fruits over fruit juices.
- Swap white and refined breads/cereals/pastas for whole grain breads/cereals/pastas.
- Add flaxseed meal to oatmeal, smoothies, yogurt, and baked goods.
- Add berries to salads, oatmeal, and yogurt.
- Purée cooked vegetables and add to sauces and stews.
- Slice or grate spinach and carrots to add to banana bread, shakes, eggs, or stir fry.
- Soak chia seeds in water for an hour or more. They will form a goopy gel that can be used for thickening smoothies, making pudding, or replacing eggs in baked goods.

Increase your fiber intake gradually.

Your digestive system needs time to catch up. Adding too much fiber too quickly can cause gas, bloating, cramps, and diarrhea. Add 5 grams of fiber a day at two-week intervals until you are meeting the Institute of Medicine goal (25 grams daily for women; 38 grams daily for men).

As you increase your fiber intake, be sure to increase your water consumption as well. Fiber needs water to function properly and to comfortably clear your colon.



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Legumes (Beans and Peas)

Legumes include all kinds of beans (kidney, pinto, white, black, garbanzo, lima), split peas, lentils, and edamame (green soybeans). Legumes are an excellent source of dietary fiber, protein, iron, zinc, potassium, and other important nutrients. Their nutrient profile puts them in the starchy vegetable group as well as in the protein group. They can be counted toward either of the MyPlate food groups.

Ways to include legumes in your diet:

- Add different kinds of beans to a chili or soup. Each type of bean offers something different and helpful for your body.
- Pack edamame as a grab-and-go snack.
- Toss cooked, washed beans onto a salad for a filling meal with long-lasting energy.
- Add black or pinto beans to a burrito with grilled vegetables and brown rice. Top with salsa for an extra source of vegetables.



Starchy Vegetables

Include starchy vegetables to fulfill the grain/starch requirement. Aim for at least one of your daily starch choices to be from this group.

Starchy Vegetables (1 serving = 1 cup)

- Corn
- Green peas
- White potatoes
- Parsnips
- Butternut squash
- Acorn squash
- Plantains
- Pumpkin
- Sweet potatoes

Ways to include starchy vegetables in your diet:

- Use potatoes and squash as a thickener in soups.
- Add corn to a breakfast burrito with beans, eggs, and salsa.
- Slice zucchini or other squash and roast in the oven with oil and spices. Or, use slices in a lasagna instead of noodles.
- Spiralize squash for a colorful cold salad.
- Blend pumpkin purée into muffins for a punch of vitamin A and fiber.



Protein

Protein-rich food choices make up one-quarter of MyPlate. Protein helps the body build and repair muscle tissue, fight disease, manage hunger, and perform other essential tasks. The protein group includes seafood, meats, poultry, eggs, nuts, seeds, and soy foods and beverages. Protein provides 4 calories per gram.









Write your daily goal here for protein (ounces):

Protein sources can be plant-based or animal-based. Whether you eat meat or not, make some of your choices from plant-based protein sources. Try to include at least one non-meat source of protein every day.

Plant Protein Power

Some plant foods are high in protein. These foods also contain fiber, vitamins, minerals, plant chemicals (phytochemicals), and other nutrients. Some, like nuts, contain healthy fats, and others, such as tempeh, contain healthy bacteria that promote gut health.

Plant-based proteins equivalent to 1 ounce of meat

			
1/2 cup cooked quinoa	2 oz. tofu	1 oz. tempeh	1 Tbsp. peanut butter
			
1/4 cup cooked black beans	1/4 cup chickpeas	1/4 cup cooked kidney beans	1/2 oz. almonds

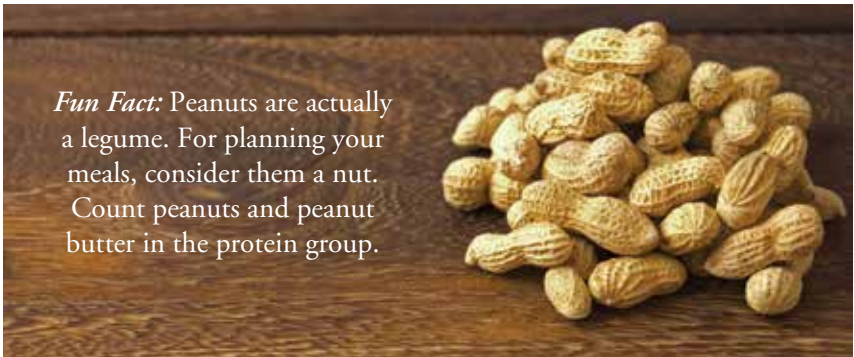
Plant Protein	1 ounce counts for:	Ideas/Uses
Quinoa*	1/2 cup cooked	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cook and top with cooked greens or other vegetables Use instead of rice in a stir-fry Add to low-fat milk and fresh fruit for a breakfast dish Mix with beans and sautéed peppers. Wrap in a whole grain tortilla to make a burrito.
Soy (tempeh, tofu, edamame)*	1/4 cup tofu, or 1/4 cup edamame, or 1 ounce cooked tempeh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Top a salad with tofu or tempeh Use as filling for tacos and burgers Add to stir-fry meals Add to spaghetti sauce
Beans & lentils	1/4 cup cooked beans, peas, and lentils, or 2 tablespoons hummus, or 1/2 cup lentil, bean, or split pea soup	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Top salads or grain bowls Combine with rice or quinoa Use to make meatballs, meat loaf, taco filling, or burgers Use in spaghetti sauce Mash to make hummus or bean dip Add to soup
Nuts & seeds**	1/2 ounce nuts or seeds (about 1/8 cup)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sprinkle on top of salads, oatmeal, and ready-to-eat cereal Add to baked goods and desserts Grind and use as “flour” for baking Use in trail mix and granola bars Top chicken or fish with sliced nuts
Nut & seed butters**	1 tablespoon nut or seed butter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blend into a smoothie Spread on whole grain toast Use in homemade granola bars

* These complete proteins contain all 9 essential amino acids. Other plant proteins contain some, but not all, of these protein building blocks. Consume a variety of sources to form a “team” of complete proteins.

** Choose unsalted nuts and no-sugar added butters to reduce sodium and added sugars.

Varieties of Seeds & Nuts

Put a check (✓) next to your favorite seeds & nuts.	How I use this already, or how I can add this to one of my favorite meals or snacks:	When I will try this:
<input type="checkbox"/> Sunflower seeds		
<input type="checkbox"/> Sesame seeds		
<input type="checkbox"/> Flax seeds		
<input type="checkbox"/> Pumpkin seeds		
<input type="checkbox"/> Peanuts		
<input type="checkbox"/> Cashews		
<input type="checkbox"/> Almonds		
<input type="checkbox"/> Walnuts		
<input type="checkbox"/> Pecans		
<input type="checkbox"/> Pine nuts		
<input type="checkbox"/> Nut or seed butter		



Lean Animal Protein

Use a food scale to weigh animal protein. For deli meat and processed meats (e.g., sausage), use the nutrition facts to determine how many slices or pieces equal one ounce. For thicker cuts of unprocessed meat, estimate by comparing to a deck of cards. A deck of cards is the same size as about 3 ounces of meat. Choose lean animal proteins. Poultry (chicken and turkey) is leaner than red meat (beef) or processed meats (e.g., sausage or bacon).

Leanest Cuts (Choose More of These)	Medium Fat (Choose Fewer of These)	Highest Fat (Limit These)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fish• Chicken breast• Turkey breast• Ground turkey or chicken breast (90% lean or higher)• Pork tenderloin• Venison (deer meat)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dark meat from chicken or turkey (meat from thighs or legs)• Ground beef, 90% lean or leaner• Ground turkey or chicken, less than 90% lean• Beef: chuck shoulder roast, top round, tenderloin, flank steak, or round steak	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ground beef (less than 90% lean)• Ribs (beef or pork)• Beef brisket• Sausage• Bacon• Bologna, pepperoni, salami• Spam• Hot dogs

Lean Cooking Tips for Animal Protein	I do this already!	When I will try this:
Remove the skin from chicken to reduce fat. Trim visible fats from meat before cooking.		
Use liquid fats in cooking (canola or olive oil) instead of solid fats (butter or shortening).		
Poach chicken or fish in water, stock, or white wine. When roasting or broiling, place meat on a rack in a pan so that the fat drips off the meat.		
Place fish or chicken on foil or parchment paper. Add fresh herbs, lemon juice, and tomatoes; fold up and bake. This will help seal in flavors and juices.		
Tenderize leaner cuts of meat by pounding, marinating, or cooking in a pressure cooker.		

Deep frying is not a lean-cooking technique. Limit deep fried foods.

PART 2: Choose Your Fuel

Eggs

One ounce counts as: 1 egg

Eggs are a complete source of protein. Eat the whole egg (including the yolk) to get many important nutrients. These include:

- Choline, which promotes normal cell activity and liver function
- Lutein and zeaxanthin, which help maintain eye health
- B vitamins that help with energy production in the body

Eating just the egg white also provides protein. However, you will miss out on many important nutrients found in the yolk.

Ideas for Adding Eggs to Your Meals and Snacks:

Eggs can be quickly prepared on the stove or in the microwave. Add a pinch of pepper for a flavorful, on-the-go meal or snack. Eggs can be added to many dishes:

- Stir-fry
- Burritos
- Chili
- Tacos
- Burgers (as a topping or in place of meat)
- Eggs provide a filling base for vegetables. Scramble, poach, or pan-fry an egg with cooking spray. Add peppers, onions, spinach, mushrooms, tomatoes, or other colorful vegetables.

Microwave Scrambled Eggs: Add 1 tablespoon milk per egg and whisk in a microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on high for 1 minute. Stir and cook for 1 more minute (or until done).

Oaty Eggs Florentine: Coat a small pan with cooking spray and fry one egg. Add the cooked egg to cooked oatmeal and stir in spinach and cheese.

Blueberry Mug Cake: Mix 1 egg with 3 teaspoons oatmeal, 10 blueberries, and a small mashed banana in a microwave safe mug. Microwave on high for 3 minutes. Top with low-fat yogurt.

Fish & Seafood

Fish and seafood are lean protein sources. Add a variety of the following choices into your weekly meal plan. If you eat animal protein, include fish at least once a week.

Types of Fish: Tuna, salmon, snapper, swordfish, cod, flounder, haddock, halibut, perch, orange roughy, pollock, trout, swordfish, tilapia

Types of Seafood: Clams, lobster, oysters, scallops, shrimp, sardines, herring

Tips for Choosing Fish:

Fresh: Keep refrigerated until ready to cook. Prepare within a few days or freeze.

Frozen: Thaw in the refrigerator overnight before cooking.

Canned: Choose canned tuna or salmon packed in water. Drain before using. Canned fish usually costs less than fresh or frozen fish.

Pouch: Choose ready-to-eat tuna that is packed in water. Get packets that don't include mayonnaise. If needed, add a teaspoon of olive oil for moisture.

Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Omega-3 fatty acids are an essential fat. This means the body needs to get that type of fat from food. Omega 3-fatty acids help:

- Keep cells healthy, including brain cells responsible for memory
- Regulate blood clotting and contraction and relaxation of arteries
- Reduce inflammation
- Regulate genetic function

Fish sources of omega-3 fatty acids: Salmon, anchovies, albacore tuna, mackerel, lake trout, halibut, sardines, oysters, and herring

Plant-based sources of omega-3 fatty acids: Walnuts, flaxseeds (and oil), canola oil, soybean oil

Dairy

The dairy group includes milk and foods made from milk. Dairy provides calcium, healthy fats, vitamins, minerals, and protein. Milk alternatives (such as those made from soy) are included if they are fortified with calcium.

Write your daily goal here for dairy (cups):

Dairy Source	1 cup counts for:	Ideas/Uses
Milk	1 cup milk or calcium-fortified milk alternative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink a glass • Blend into a smoothie • Stir into whole grain pasta with cheddar cheese for mac & cheese • Stir into coffee or tea
Yogurt	1 cup	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat it with a meal or as a snack • Blend into a smoothie • Make a yogurt-based dip • Top with cut-up fruit and nuts • Top a baked potato or chili with plain non-fat yogurt
Cheese	1½ ounces hard (cheddar, mozzarella, Swiss, parmesan) 1/3 cup shredded 2 ounces processed (example: American)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sprinkle on an omelet • Add to a whole grain tortilla with tomato sauce and veggies • Add a slice to a sandwich • Melt onto whole grain bread • Stir into whole grain pasta with diced peppers, onions, and tuna
Ricotta Cheese	½ cup	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stuff into whole grain noodles, serve with sauce • Stir into pancake batter • Whisk into eggs before making scrambled eggs or an omelet
Cottage Cheese	2 cups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mix with drained, canned fruit • Stir into red sauce for creaminess • Blend into a bean or veggie dip

Dairy Alternatives

Many people avoid lactose-containing milk due to an intolerance or preference. Lactose is the sugar in milk that causes digestive problems if you are lactose intolerant. You can obtain many of the nutrients found in milk by eating or drinking lactose-free dairy or fortified dairy alternatives.

Tips for Reducing Problems with Lactose

You may be able to consume dairy by having it a different way.

- Choose smaller servings of dairy at each meal or snack.
- Consume dairy with other foods to slow the digestive process.
- Experiment with different dairy products. You may have problems with milk, but are okay with cultured milk products like yogurt.
- Take lactase enzyme tablets or drops to help you digest the lactose.

Dairy alternatives include soy milk, almond milk, rice milk, cashew milk, and coconut milk. These milks and products made with them (like yogurt) count towards your daily needs if they are fortified with calcium.

Calcium

Calcium is needed for strong bones and teeth. It is also needed for your:

- Heart to beat
- Nerves to react
- Blood to clot
- Muscles to flex
- Body cells to stick together

If you cannot tolerate dairy, you can also obtain calcium from these foods:

- Calcium-fortified juices, cereals, and breads
- Leafy greens (collard and turnip greens, kale, bok choy)
- Small bones in canned fish (sardines, salmon with bones)
- Tofu, tempeh, and other fortified soy products

Calcium-fortified foods and beverages may not provide the other nutrients found in dairy products. Try to fulfill your dairy group needs from dairy most of the time.

Befriend Healthy Fats

Fats and oils do not have a separate section on MyPlate. Many foods that are sources of healthy fats are part of other groups. For example, nuts and seeds are part of the protein group. Avocados are part of the vegetable group.

Fat has 9 calories per gram, making it a concentrated form of energy. Fat has more than twice the calories per gram that protein and carbohydrates have. That means there is a lot of energy (calories) in just one spoonful! It is important to select fats that are giving you the most nutritional value for those calories.

Fats:

- Provide energy, especially long-term energy
- Transport fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E, and K)
- Help the body make hormones
- Help you feel satisfied and full longer
- Make up cell structures in body tissues
- Cushion vital organs
- Support healthy skin and hair



CHOOSE plant-based sources of fat. Healthy choices are nuts, seeds, nut and seed butters, canola oil, olives, olive oil, and avocado. These foods contain more unsaturated fats (monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats). Coconut and coconut oil contain a healthy form of saturated fat.



Even with healthy fats... Appropriate serving sizes for these foods are small. A small amount will help you feel full and provide many nutrients!

LIMIT animal sources of fat (red meat, processed meats, butter, whole-milk dairy). These foods contain more saturated fat. Saturated fat raises low-density lipoprotein (LDL) ("bad" cholesterol). This increases the risk for heart disease, especially when combined with a higher sugar diet.

AVOID *trans* fats in any amount. *Trans* fats are made when manufacturers add hydrogen to vegetable oil. This process gives foods a longer shelf life and adds flavor. *Trans* fats raise your LDL cholesterol and lower your high-density lipoprotein (HDL) ("good" cholesterol). Eating *trans* fats increases your risk of developing heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes. Avoid products that contain "hydrogenated oils" or "partially hydrogenated oils." These ingredients are not considered safe by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Limit Sodium

Your body needs some sodium to:

- Maintain the right balance of fluids in your body.
- Transmit nerve impulses.
- Contract and relax muscles.

Use added salt sparingly and limit foods high in sodium. Most people eat much more sodium than they need. There are important reasons to limit sodium in the diet. A low-sodium diet can help:

- Prevent high blood pressure. High blood pressure, if untreated, can lead to heart attack, stroke, poor eye health, headaches, and kidney failure.
- Lower your blood pressure if you have high blood pressure.
- Avoid swelling (edema) in legs, ankles, and internal organs.
- Reduce bloating and other side effects of premenstrual syndrome (PMS).

Limit sodium to 2,300 milligrams per day (about 1 teaspoon). If you have high blood pressure, consult your doctor about the amount of sodium you should have each day. He or she may suggest you limit your sodium intake to 1,500 milligrams per day (about ¾ teaspoon). This includes sodium from all sources— salt added during cooking and at the table, salt in processed food, and sodium that occurs naturally in foods.

Ways to Limit Sodium	I do this already!	When I will try this:
Choose low-sodium canned products.		
Read nutrition information for restaurant items, when available. Choose from the “heart healthy” menu.		
Taste your food before adding salt. If needed, add a little.		
Leave the salt shaker off the table. You may be reaching for it out of habit.		
Limit intake of processed meats like sausage and pepperoni.		

Flavor Foods Without Salt

Food Item	Suggested Flavorings, Herbs, and Spices
Beef	Bay leaf, marjoram, nutmeg, onion, pepper, sage, thyme
Lamb	Curry powder, garlic, rosemary, mint
Pork	Garlic, onion, sage, pepper, oregano
Veal	Bay leaf, curry powder, ginger, marjoram, oregano
Chicken	Ginger, marjoram, oregano, paprika, rosemary, sage, tarragon, thyme
Fish	Curry powder, dill, dry mustard, lemon juice, marjoram, paprika, pepper
Carrots	Cinnamon, cloves, marjoram, nutmeg, rosemary, sage
Corn	Cumin, curry powder, onion, paprika, parsley
Green beans	Dill, curry powder, lemon juice, marjoram, oregano, tarragon, thyme
Peas	Ginger, marjoram, onion, parsley, sage
Potatoes	Dill, garlic, onion, paprika, parsley, sage
Summer squash	Cloves, curry powder, marjoram, nutmeg, rosemary, sage
Winter squash	Cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, onion
Tomatoes	Basil, bay leaf, dill, marjoram, onion, oregano, parsley, pepper

Circle the spice(s) above that you currently have. What foods do you like to prepare with that spice?

Name one thing you will try this week to reduce sodium in your diet.

Limit Added Sugars

Sugars are naturally present in many foods, including fruit, dairy, and grains. Your body can get all the sugar you need by digesting these foods. Sometimes, sugar is added during the processing of foods and drinks. Sugar adds calories, taste, and shelf-life to a product, but zero nutrients. There is no need for added sugars in your diet.

Too much added sugars can lead to:

- Heart and blood vessel problems. This can lead to fatty liver disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, and kidney disease.
- Gut bacteria damage.
- Skin problems like irritation and acne.
- Headaches, aching limbs, and fatigue.
- Nervous tension, anxiety, and depression.
- Tooth decay and gum disease.
- Memory problems and memory loss. This can lead to Alzheimer's.

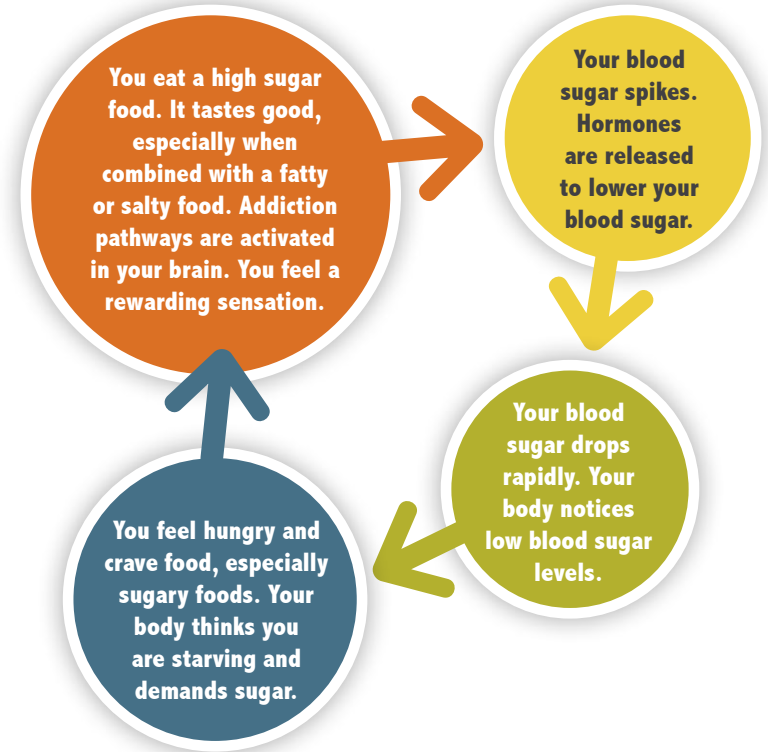
Sugar is Addicting

It is okay to have a piece of chocolate every now and then and experience a little “lift” in the brain. Your brain activates dopamine, the brain chemical that gives you a “feel good” feeling. However, eating sugar too often can have addictive effects on the brain.

Impulsive behavior, lack of control, and cravings can result. Your tolerance for sugar may also increase, especially if you are eating or drinking super-sweet artificial sweeteners with hundreds of times the sweetness of regular sugar.

Over time, it becomes harder to control how much sugar you eat. Without fiber, healthy fats, and other nutrients that help you feel full, your natural “stop eating” system is hijacked. Sugar addiction leads to overeating, a highway to obesity.

Hooked on Sugar: The pathway below shows how your body can become addicted to sugar.



Type 2 Diabetes

Type 2 diabetes is a condition that makes it difficult for the body to properly get energy from food. Insulin, a hormone made in the pancreas, works like a key to a door, allowing sugar to go from the bloodstream into the cells. Sugar is used by your cells for energy.

If you eat too much sugar, your pancreas can't keep up. When there isn't enough insulin or insulin isn't working the right way, the door into the cells can't be opened and sugar stays in the bloodstream. Over time, too much sugar in the bloodstream causes serious problems for your blood vessels, heart, and brain.

Diabetes should be managed carefully to control blood sugar levels. If you already have type 2 diabetes, losing weight, following a healthy eating plan, and doing regular exercise can help you manage diabetes and may reduce the need for medication.

PART 2: Choose Your Fuel

Be a Label Detective: Find the Added Sugar

How can you tell if a product has added sugars? Find a food package or drink bottle and follow the steps below.

Step 1: Check the Nutrition Facts

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	2/3 cup (55g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	230
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%

Note: In May 2016, the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) announced that nutrition labels will be required to list the amount of added sugars separately on a label. Labels prior to 2018 will most likely only show one line for sugars. Until added sugars are listed separately, the number you see includes both naturally occurring and added sugars.

Step 2: Check the Ingredients List

Read the ingredients list on a processed food's label to tell if the product contains added sugars. There are many names for sugar. Some words you might find in a list of ingredients that indicate a sugar include:

- Sugar
- Nectar
- Malt
- Honey
- Syrup
- Juice
- Molasses
- Words that end in "-ose"

Honey, maple syrup, molasses, brown rice syrup & stevia may be better choices among sugars. However, limit all added sugars.

If a sweetener is one of the first 3 ingredients on the label, avoid this product. It may be high in calories but not include many nutrients.

Step 3: Find out the real amount

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	2/3 cup (55g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	230
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%

First, check the number of servings.

Then, multiply the amount of added sugar per serving by the number of servings to get the total amount of added sugar.

In this example:

$$\begin{array}{r} 10 \text{ g of sugar} \\ \times 8 \text{ servings} \\ \hline \end{array}$$

= 80 grams of sugar

If you have more than the serving size listed on the label, you are getting even more sugar than the label says. If you have half of the serving size, you will get half of the sugar listed.

How much added sugar is okay?

It is almost impossible to avoid all added sugar. Sugar is added to nearly every processed food. Yogurt, salad dressing, ketchup, crackers, peanut butter, tomato sauce, and most bottled beverages contain added sugars.

The American Heart Association has set recommended limits on daily intake of added sugars:



No more than 6 teaspoons (24 grams) a day of added sugar for women.



No more than 9 teaspoons (36 grams) a day of added sugar for men.

Write how many teaspoons of sugar the AHA advises your gender to stay below per day.

PART 2: Choose Your Fuel

Reduce Sugar-Sweetened Drinks

Sugar-sweetened drinks (including pop/soda, bottled tea and coffee drinks, juices, flavored waters, etc.) are some of the top sources of added sugars in the U.S. By choosing water or unsweetened drinks, you can reduce added sugar and calories, leaving room in your diet for nutrient-dense foods.

What is one sugar-sweetened drink you consume now?

Look at the label. How many grams of sugar does it contain per serving?

If you drink sweetened beverages, you will very likely go over your daily limit for added sugar.

What about Bottled Fruit Juice?

100% fruit juice is more nutritious than soda, as it often contains vitamin C and may be fortified with calcium. However, fruit juice does not contain fiber to slow the absorption of sugar into the bloodstream. Instead, squeeze a lemon or orange slice into plain water. Or, have the whole fruit for a serving of heart-healthy fiber and a naturally sweet treat!



Scale of Beverage Consumption

Write how many of each beverage you currently consume daily. What steps can you take to have less sugar from beverages?

Regular soda	
Diet soda or sports drink	
100% fruit juice	
Fresh-squeezed juice with pulp	
Plain water or fruit-infused water	



PART 2: Choose Your Fuel

Look for Hidden Sugar Traps

Many foods you wouldn’t consider “sweets” contain a lot of added sugar. Find each of the food products below and check the Nutrition Facts. You may already have these products at home. Or, check next time you are in the store. For the product you are looking at, check how many grams of sugar are in this food. Would you typically only eat one serving?

Food	Grams of sugar per serving	The number of servings you usually have	Total grams of sugar in your usual serving
Example: Sports drink	13 grams	4 (entire bottle)	52 grams
Yogurt			
Salad dressing			
Tomato sauce			
Ketchup			
Bread			
Cereal			
Granola bars			

What changes do you need to make to get your total added sugar below the number of teaspoons advised for your gender?

CAREFUL! “Low Fat” or “Lite” foods, other than dairy foods and drinks, often make up for taste and texture with sugar and artificial ingredients. Foods that are “sugar free” may have artificial sweeteners and other chemicals to make the product still taste sweet. Choose these foods less often.

More Ways to Limit Added Sugars

Action Step	I do this already!	When I will try this:
Add a slice of lemon, lime, or cucumber to water for a flavorful twist.		
Avoid buying sweet snacks or candy. Mentally practice passing by and not stopping to pick up sweets at the store or vending machine.		
Add your own natural sweetener, if needed, such as whole, dried, or canned fruit (packed in water or 100% juice).		
Toast whole grain bread to bring out natural sweetness.		
Schedule 30 minutes of physical activity and 30 minutes more sleep each night for a natural energy lift.		
Limit foods high in added sugars as occasional treats.		
Add fresh or canned fruit (packed in water or 100% juice) to plain yogurt instead of having yogurt that contains added fruits and sugar.		
Avoid rewarding children with sweets. Ask relatives and friends not to reward your child with sweets.		
Buy bread from your local bakery. These breads may have fewer added sugars.		
Make your own cakes, pies, and cookies. Reduce the sugar in the recipe by one-third or more. Use baking swaps.		
Order a child-size dessert or split a dessert.		
Cut back on added sugar in coffee and tea. Each week, cut the amount of sugar you add to these drinks by half until you add no sugar.		

BE REALISTIC! Enjoy sweet treats, but make these foods “once in a while” foods. Savor and enjoy treats when you do have them. Eat them slowly and pay attention to the taste, texture, and pleasure from the food.

Estimate Serving Sizes

To stay within the food group guidelines for your calorie needs, you need to use correct serving sizes. To be exact, you could use measuring cups and spoons or weigh foods on a scale. Do this when you can or when you are learning, but this is not always practical. You can estimate serving sizes using familiar objects.

Serving Size	Item	About the Size of...
1 teaspoon	Oil, butter	The tip of a thumb from the first joint, or The size of a stamp, or One standard die
1 tablespoon	Peanut butter, salad dressing	The volume of one thumb, or One regular soup spoon
2 tablespoons	Peanut butter, salad dressing	One ping pong ball, or One standard ice cube, or One coffee scoop, or 2/3 of a regular shot glass
½ cup	Hot cereal, pasta, rice, beans, canned fruit, cottage cheese	One hand, cupped, or One cupcake wrapper, or One tennis ball
1 cup	Green salads, soup, cold cereal, milk	Two hands, cupped, or One baseball, or One clenched fist
1 ounce	Sliced cheese or meat, cubed cheese	One domino, or 1-inch cube
3 ounces	Meat, fish, poultry, canned fish (tuna)	The palm of a woman's hand, or One deck of cards, or One computer mouse
1 ounce	Nuts and seeds	Half the surface of a 3-inch sticky note

Review and Prepare

This section covered a lot of nutrition information. Don't worry if you aren't ready to use all of it right away. The next section will help you form a plan and put this information into action. For now, choose one or two simple steps.

1) Put a check (✓) next to the things you already do on a regular basis. Next, add a few stars to congratulate yourself. Great job!

2) Write the word "Today" next to the activity you want to start now. Return to this page to pick the next activity when you are ready.

3) If you aren't ready to start anything right now, that's okay. Return to this page for an idea in the future.

Strategy	Status
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Example: I will eat the vegetables on my plate first.	Today!
<input type="checkbox"/> I will eat the vegetables on my plate first.	
<input type="checkbox"/> I will have a glass of water before each meal or snack.	
<input type="checkbox"/> I will put 25% less food on my plate than I usually do.	
<input type="checkbox"/> If I am full, I will stop eating, even if there is more food on my plate.	
<input type="checkbox"/> I will eat something within two hours of waking up.	
<input type="checkbox"/> I will choose low-fat dairy over full-fat options.	
<input type="checkbox"/> I will drink one less sugar-sweetened beverage a day.	
<input type="checkbox"/> I will not consume any sugar-sweetened beverages.	
<input type="checkbox"/> I will choose to eat half my grains from whole grains every day.	
<input type="checkbox"/> I will choose to fill half my plate with fruits and vegetables.	
<input type="checkbox"/> My idea:	

Make a small change. Stick with it. It becomes routine. Add another small change. Stick with it. It becomes routine. You'll get there.