



## Nutrition Nibbles

### Goodbye Pyramid, Hello Plate!

The United States Department of Agriculture said goodbye to the previous 2005 Food Guide Pyramid and ushered in the 2011 Plate Model as a pictorial representation of how Americans should eat. Dietitians have been teaching the Healthy Plate Model to clients and patients for years as a practical way to improve eating habits and the nutritional quality of one's diet.

The **USDA's MyPlate** devotes half the plate to fruits and vegetables, one-quarter to grains, and one-quarter to protein. A cup of low-fat dairy, either milk or yogurt, accompanies the new plate. The USDA also reminds consumers of specific recommendations for each food group including making half your daily grain intake whole, choosing lean protein, varying vegetable intake, focusing on fruits and getting your calcium-rich foods. These key messages remain the same from 2005.

In an effort to fight obesity and aid in weight management, the new plate model provides 10 tips for balancing calories. Many of them might be familiar to you:

- **Balance calories.** Visit [www.ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov) to discover your own personal daily energy needs.

- **Enjoy your food but eat less.** When you focus on enjoying your food, you are often satisfied with smaller portions.

- **Avoid oversized portions.** Use a smaller plate when serving up your dinner, order smaller portions at restaurants or take half of your meal home with you.

- **Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.** Try incorporating different colored produce into all three of your daily meals to boost the nutrient content of your diet.

- **Switch to fat free or low-fat (1%) milk.** This switch keeps your calcium intake the same but lowers your calorie and saturated fat intake.

- **Make half your grains whole grains.** Boost your fiber, protein, B vitamins, and vitamin E intake by choosing whole grain breads and cereals, brown rice, corn tortillas, whole wheat pasta, and air-popped popcorn.

- **Foods to eat less often:** The new plate model encourages staying away from obvious sources of junk food including sweets, sodas, and fatty meats.

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### Summer To Do List? ☑Check.

Am I the only one who creates a mile-long "to do" list every summer but then barely completes three of the thirty items I hope to? Probably not! If you are like me and want to accomplish more during the next three months than you have in years, try out the following suggestions. (*Hint: They work really well when trying to improve your eating or fitness habits!*)

*Step One: Actually write down your list of to do items.* You are more likely to make progress when you visually see your goals.

*Step Two: Prioritize your goals.* Think about your reasons *why* you want to complete these tasks. Will you feel better about yourself? Will you have more energy? Will your house (or mind) be less cluttered? Will you be more organized? Identifying the "why's" of your to do's can spark you into action.

*Step Three: Be specific!* Take another look at your to do's and break them down into more specific steps if needed. "Shop once each week at the farmer's market for a new fruit" is much easier to check off the to do list than "eat

## Goodbye Pyramid continued...

- **Compare sodium in foods.** Lower your blood pressure and enjoy the natural flavors of food by skipping out on the salt.

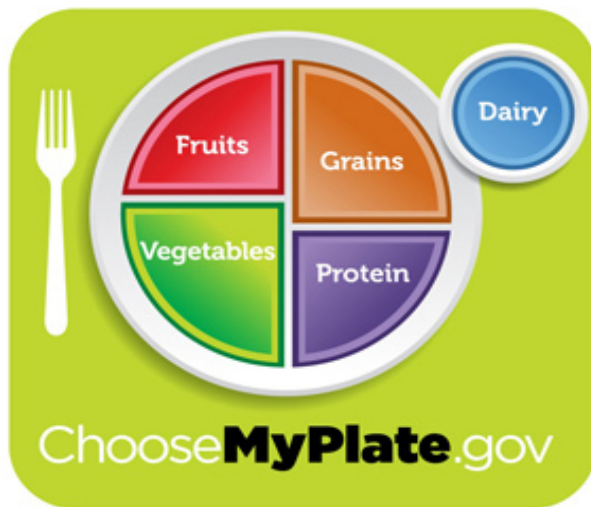
- **Drink water instead of sugary drinks.** Sodas, energy drinks, smoothies, fancy coffee drinks, and sports beverages offer plenty of calories but not many nutrients. Hydrate with water instead.

- **For more information on "10 Tips to a Great Plate," visit:** <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet1ChooseMyPlate.pdf>

Lastly, the USDA reminds us of the importance of exercise

and encourages us to squeeze in enjoyable physical activity throughout our day. Specifically, adults (ages 18-64) should be active for 2 ½ hours each week at a moderate pace or 1 hour 15 minutes at a vigorous pace. Children and teens (ages 6-17) should aim for 60 minutes of physical activity each day. Younger children (ages 2-5) should be encouraged to play actively several times each day.

I think consumers will find the new plate model easy to understand and implement in their own lives. It's easy to remember and makes common sense. What do you think? Explore [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov) to learn more.



## Summer To Do List continued...

more produce."

*Step Four: Pencil your to do's into your calendar.* Print out a blank calendar for June, July, and August. Assign one to do task to each week during the summer months. Dividing the goals over the months is more realistic and can make them seem less overwhelming.

*Step Five: Stop making excuses!* Just bite the bullet and tackle the first to do on your calendar. Chances are you will feel so proud of yourself, that you will be motivated to continue your forward progress.

*Step Six: Reward yourself for a job well done (or for a particularly unpleasant and dreaded task).* If you are more likely to clean all the baseboards of your house if you reward yourself with a pedicure after, then by all means treat yourself! *Note:* try keeping all of your rewards food-free. Treating yourself to ice cream after a week of eating more vegetables probably isn't the best idea!

## Favorite Food

Lots of people are curious about what dietitians eat when they are "off-duty." Well, summer has finally arrived (*finally!*) and a tasty variety of fruit has landed in the grocery store. I've been eating my fill of fresh strawberries and peaches. How about you? To incorporate more summer fruits into your diet, try:

- Topping your cereal with fresh berries or sliced nectarines
- Mixing chopped peaches into low-fat vanilla yogurt and freezing in popsicle trays for an icy dessert
- Blending chilled watermelon and mint together for a refreshing beverage

Enjoy!

Follow these ideas and you are sure to get more done this summer than you ever imagined! Good luck checking off your summer to do list! *I hear some baseboards calling my name...*