



Live Healthy  
and Be Active  
with TakeCare

## Nutrition

Nutrition is the process of how your body uses the food you eat to provide energy and nutrients important for growth, maintenance and overall health.

Good nutrition is important to keep your body at optimum health. A healthy diet can help you reach and maintain proper weight, reduce your risk of chronic diseases, and promote good health.

One way to ensure that you are eating healthy is to make smart choices from every food group to get the most nutrients from your food by including:

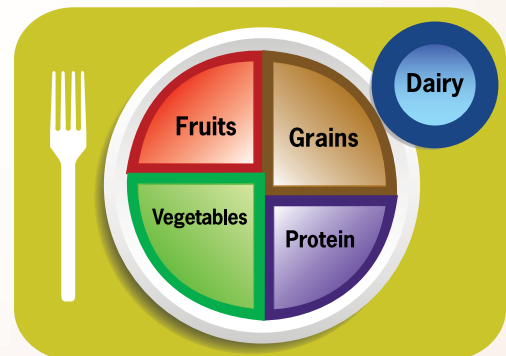
- **Fruits** – Focus on fresh, frozen or canned fruits without added sugars.
- **Vegetables** – Vary your vegetables and include different colors such as green, red, orange, purple and white.
- **Grains** – Make at least half your grains “whole grain” every day.
- **Protein** – Go lean with protein.
- **Dairy** – Get your calcium from low-fat or fat-free milk and dairy products.

A healthy diet must be adequate to supply all if not most nutrients your body needs while keeping a balance between the amount of calories and nutrients through a variety of food choices while exercising moderation.

### Make your plate taste great!

The MyPlate diagram below shows the five colored sections representing each food group. This shows the importance of making healthy food choices from each of the five food group every day as well as

- Focusing on variety, portion control and nutrients
- Choosing food and beverage low in saturated fat, sodium, and added sugars
- Making small changes to build healthier meal plans
- Encouraging a healthy eating habit for everyone.





## Steps to build a balanced meal

Choose the MyPlate method to build a healthy eating habit:

- **Step 1:** Start with a 9-inch plate to better control your portion.
- **Step 2:** Fill half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) of your plate with mostly non-starchy vegetables or some Fruits.
- **Step 3:** Limit your protein source to a quarter ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) of your plate.
- **Step 4:** Limit your starch or grains to a quarter ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) of your plate.
- **Step 5:** Add a serving of milk or dairy food to your meal.
- **Step 6:** Choose healthy fats in small amount.

Remember that eating a healthy and balanced diet is a journey shaped by many factors, including your stage of life, situation, preference, access to food, culture, tradition, and the personal decision you make over time. Be encouraged and start today!

To learn more about healthy eating, go to [ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov).

MyPlate is the current nutrition guide published by the United States Department of Agriculture, a food circle (i.e. a pie chart) depicting a place setting with a plate and glass divided into five food groups. It replaced the USDA's MyPyramid guide on June 2, 2011.

The TakeCare Wellness Team has made this pamphlet available to help you understand information about your health. This pamphlet includes general wellness and health information and is not meant to replace the advice of your doctor or healthcare provider. If you are under medical care and have concerns, always follow your doctor's recommendations.

For more information about your health, ask your health care provider.

## References

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