Nutrition for Older Adults: Planning Healthful Meals with the USDA MyPlate Plan

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Planning Healthy Meals

Use the USDA MyPlate Plan to find the types and amounts of food recommended each day for your calorie needs. For 2,000 calories the USDA MyPlate Plan recommends:

- Grains 6 oz
- Vegetables 2½ cups
- Fruits 2 cups
- Dairy 3 cups
- Protein foods 5½ oz
- Oils 6 tsp
- Limit calories for other uses to 270 calories
- Sodium limit to less than 2,300 milligrams per day
- Saturated fat limit to 22 grams per day
- Added sugars limit to 50 grams per day

Spread the foods recommended by the USDA MyPlate Plan across the day into meals and snacks.

On the back is an example of spreading the amounts recommended for 2,000 calories into three meals and a snack.

Build a Healthy Diet

Everything you eat and drink is important. A healthy diet can help you be healthier now and in the future. When building a health diet remember to:

✓ Focus on variety, amount and nutrition.
✓ Choose foods and beverages with less sodium, saturated fat and added sugars.
✓ Start with small changes to build healthier eating.
  - Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
    - Focus on whole fruits.
    - Vary your veggies.
  - Make half your grains whole grains.
  - Move to low-fat and fat-free dairy.
  - Vary your protein routine.
  - Eat and drink the right amount for you.

Sources


Example of Spreading the Types and Amounts of Food Recommended by the USDA Daily Food Plan across the Day into Meals and Snacks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Groups</th>
<th>Amounts for 2,000 calories</th>
<th>Breakfast</th>
<th>Lunch</th>
<th>Snack</th>
<th>Dinner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grains (oz)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables (cups)</td>
<td>2 ½</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>½</td>
<td>1 ½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits (cups)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>½</td>
<td>½</td>
<td>½</td>
<td>½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy (cups)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein foods (oz)</td>
<td>5 ½</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 ½</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oils (tsp)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>