

MARCH 2022

## Celebrate National Nutrition Month®



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Each year during March, we celebrate National Nutrition Month®, which is a nutrition education and information campaign sponsored by the Academy. It invites everyone to learn about making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits.

This year's theme for National Nutrition Month® is *Celebrate a World of Flavors*, which embraces global cultures and cuisines.

Enjoying the different flavors of the world is a chance to learn more about your own food culture as well as those that may be new to you. Familiar ingredients can be presented in new ways. New foods may remind you of things you already know and love. Or you may also come across ingredients and flavors you've never experienced before.

Trying foods and recipes from various cultures is a great way to taste different flavors and healthful ingredients. Many cuisines offer dishes which include foods from each food group, so it's possible to plan meals that are nutritious, well-balanced, and bursting with flavor.



## Objectives

- List habits that promote healthful eating.
- Explain ways to eat a variety of nutritious foods.
- Describe how to ***Celebrate a World of Flavors*** when planning meals and snacks.

This lesson will focus on healthful eating and explore ways to enjoy foods and flavors that are native to other cultures.

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- List habits that promote healthful eating.
- Explain ways to eat a variety of nutritious foods.
- Describe how to “Celebrate a World of Flavors” when planning meals and snacks.

## What does healthful eating mean to you?



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What does healthful eating mean to you?"

The foundation of a healthful lifestyle is a pattern of eating nutrient-rich foods in appropriate portion sizes, combined with regular physical activity.

A healthful pattern of eating is especially important, since no single food or food group provides all the nutrients we need for good health.

Now let's review foods that contribute to healthful eating.

## Foods that contribute to healthful eating.



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A healthful eating pattern, also known as a healthy eating routine, includes a variety of foods and in the recommended amounts from each food group.

The Food Groups include Dairy, Grains, Protein Foods, Vegetables, and Fruits.

The foods and beverages you choose from each food group may depend on what's available where you live, what's in season, your food budget, or just based on what types of foods you or your family like or know how to prepare. There may also be traditions based on your culture that influence what you eat and drink.

Healthful eating isn't limited to one way of eating. Instead, we can "Celebrate a World of Flavors" throughout the year.

Now, let's discuss a few habits which help to promote healthful eating...

## Eat a variety of nutritious foods.

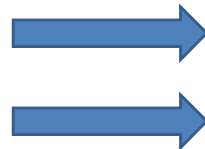
- ✓ Include healthful foods from all food groups.
- ✓ Incorporate your favorite cultural foods and traditions.
- ✓ Learn how to read Nutrition Facts Labels.



Eating a variety of nutritious foods and including healthful foods from all food groups will ensure you get the nutrients your body needs, such as vitamins, minerals, protein, fats, carbohydrates, and water.

Eating your favorite cultural foods can also be an important part of a healthy eating routine. It allows you to include foods that reflect your personal preferences and culture.

And learning how to read Nutrition Facts Labels is beneficial when shopping for foods and beverages.



<b>Nutrition Facts</b>			
2 servings per container			
<b>Serving size</b>		<b>1 cup (255g)</b>	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>Per serving</b>	<b>Per container</b>	
	<b>220</b>	<b>440</b>	
	<b>% DV*</b>	<b>% DV*</b>	
<b>Total Fat</b>	5g <b>6%</b>	10g	<b>13%</b>
Saturated Fat	2g <b>10%</b>	4g	<b>20%</b>
Trans Fat	0g	0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b>	15mg <b>5%</b>	30mg	<b>10%</b>
<b>Sodium</b>	240mg <b>10%</b>	480mg	<b>21%</b>
<b>Total Carb.</b>	35g <b>13%</b>	70g	<b>25%</b>
Dietary Fiber	6g <b>21%</b>	12g	<b>43%</b>
Total Sugars	7g	14g	
Incl. Added Sugars	4g <b>8%</b>	8g	<b>16%</b>
<b>Protein</b>	9g	18g	
Vitamin D	5mcg 25%	10mcg	50%
Calcium	200mg 15%	400mg	30%
Iron	1mg 8%	2mg	10%
Potassium	470mg 10%	940mg	20%

\* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Source: <https://www.fda.gov/food/new-nutrition-facts-label/calories-new-nutrition-facts-label>

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The information on a Nutrition Facts Label tells you the amount of calories and some nutrients you would eat or drink based on the serving size (or in the whole container depending on the packaging).

Getting in the habit of comparing food labels on different products can help you choose healthier options.

For example, most Americans consume more than the recommended amount of sodium also known as salt and added sugars. Finding ways to limit sodium and added sugars is important, because research has shown that consuming higher amounts of either of these on a regular basis can negatively affect our health.

Salt and added sugars are often used as ingredients, but the amounts can vary. They can also be added after a food or drink is prepared, of course.

Making shifts in your food and beverage choices will help you eat healthier over time.

## Plan your meals and snacks.

- ✓ Choose healthful recipes to make during the week.
- ✓ Use a grocery list to shop for nutritious foods.
- ✓ Make healthful food and drink choices when away from home.



Planning your meals and snacks is another habit that will help you to eat healthfully. It can also save you money and reduce food waste. Start by choosing healthful recipes to make during the week, then create and use a grocery list to shop for nutritious foods.

You can “Celebrate a World of Flavors” by planning meals based on recipes from other cultures, while expanding your healthy eating routine to include a variety of nutritious foods.

Nutritious foods can also be eaten as snacks. Snacking on foods from the different food groups can help you get nutrients that may be lacking at other times of day.

For example, if your lunch didn’t include fruit then having a banana as an afternoon snack would be a way to include this food group. Snacking can become a healthy habit when it’s planned right.

If your week involves dining out or ordering take out, plan where you will eat in advance. Make healthful food and drink choices when away from home by reviewing the menu and nutrition information before placing your order.



## Create tasty foods at home.

- ✓ Learn cooking and meal preparation skills.
- ✓ Try new flavors and foods from around the world.
- ✓ Enjoy your meals with friends or family, when possible.



Healthy eating doesn't have to be bland or boring. Create tasty foods at home by learning cooking and meal preparation skills. This will allow you to control the ingredients, as well as the amounts, that are used when preparing recipes.

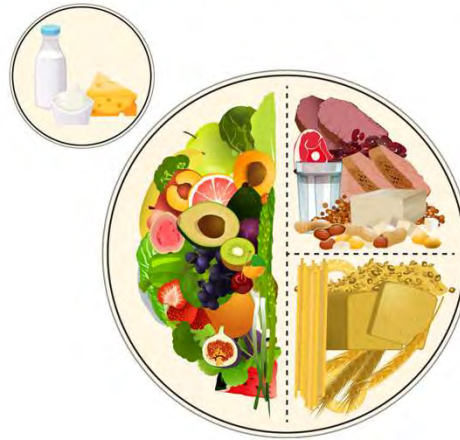
For example, you can use healthier ingredients to flavor foods and beverages, such as fresh or dried herbs and spices instead of salt. And fruits offer a natural sweetness.

Try new flavors and foods from around the world.

Then enjoy your meals with friends or family, when possible. This can even be done virtually.



# What does healthful eating look like?



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A healthy eating routine also takes into account the recommended amounts of foods and beverages so that individuals can stay within their calorie limits.

As you can see in the picture, most of the meal consists of fruits and vegetables which take up half of the plate. On the other side, smaller amounts of protein foods and grains occupy the plate. And to complete the meal, a serving of dairy is included.

This approach will help you plan a balanced meal and get a variety of nutrients that are needed for good health. It's possible that a dish may include a mixture of foods from different food groups, such as a casserole or stew. In that case, the foods would not be portioned out as the picture shows.

The important thing is to choose a variety of nutritious foods from each food group and in the amounts that are recommended for you when planning meals and snacks.

## Ways to *Celebrate a World of Flavors*:

- Plan meals based on recipes from other cultures.
- Try different fruits and vegetables, depending on what is in season.
- Choose ingredients with different textures and colors for variety.



The good news is there are opportunities to improve your eating habits and even small changes can be beneficial and add up over time.

Try different fruits and vegetables, depending on what's in season or available at your food store or market. Frozen and canned fruits and vegetables can work, too. Just look for ones with lower amounts of sodium and added sugars.

Choosing ingredients based on their taste, texture, and color will offer some variety, too. For example, arugula, which is a type of lettuce provides a slight peppery taste and can be served with tuna, beans, and a vinaigrette. For a crunchier salad, vegetables like jicama can be sliced thin and combined with other veggies and fruits to be served as a slaw, using a yogurt-based dressing.

During colder months, lower-sodium soups can be made using a variety of different vegetables and beans.

And sandwiches offer foods from four of the five food groups when they include a type of bread, protein food, cheese, and veggies. Look for healthier options, such as breads or wraps made with whole grain flours, lean meats and low-fat or fat-free cheeses.

## Ways to *Celebrate a World of Flavors*:

- Vary your breakfast (or first meal of the day) to include favorites from around the world.



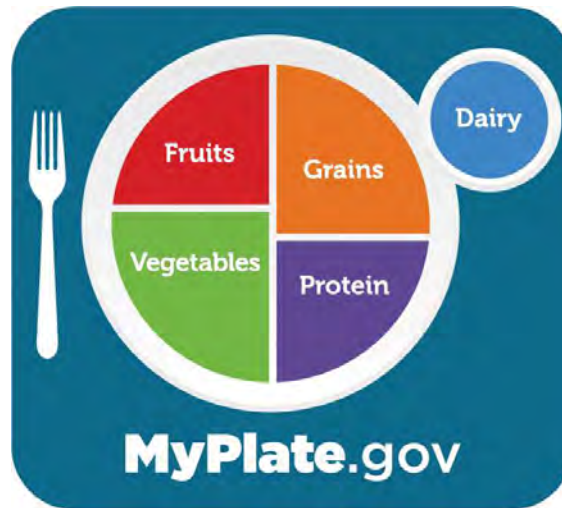
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You can also “Celebrate a World of Flavors” by varying your breakfast (or first meal of the day) to include favorites from around the world.

- One option is to try other types of cooked grains. For example, congee is a Chinese porridge made from rice. It can be served plain or with vegetables and a protein food, such as cooked chicken, meat or fish. Vegetable upma, an Asian Indian dish, is another type of hot cereal that can be made with semolina or rice, spiced with ginger and other seasonings.
- If you prefer eggs, try a Spanish omelet with potatoes and other veggies, topped with a sprinkle of cheese or a fried rice omelet, known as omurice in Japan. Eggs can also be prepared with ham and beans and served in a tortilla with salsa.
- For breakfast on-the-go, try making a smoothie with low-fat yogurt or buttermilk and tropical fruits, like papaya or mango. Or for a breakfast sandwich, arepas, which are a type of corn bread can be stuffed with beans, vegetables, avocado and cheese.
- The options are endless...



As you can see, there are many ways to “Celebrate a World of Flavors”.

And since many cuisines offer dishes which feature foods from the different food groups, meals can be planned to include a variety of healthful ingredients.

MyPlate can also help, since it serves as a reminder to include the right mix of foods with your meals. This approach to eating is important at every stage of life and can have a positive effect on our health over time.

To find out your personal food group targets, visit the MyPlate website at MyPlate.gov and “Get Your MyPlate Plan”: <https://www.myplate.gov/myplate-plan>.



# Thank You!