

BIG Idea

MyPlate is a tool that can help you choose healthful foods for all your meals and snacks.

Study Coach

Outline Preview this lesson by scanning the pages. Then organize the headings and subheadings into an outline. As you read, fill in your outline with important details.

I.
A.
1.
2.
B.
II.

● Before You Read

Can you name the five food groups? If not, where can you find this information? Write your ideas on the lines below.

● Read to Learn

Guidelines for Healthy Eating and Active Living

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans are a set of recommendations about smart eating and physical activity. They are published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Remember these three key guidelines:

- Make smart choices from every food group.
- Find your balance between food and activity.
- Get the most nutrition out of your calories.

How can you make smart food choices?

There are five major food groups: grains, vegetables, fruits, milk, and meats and beans. Choose a variety of foods from each food group to get all of the nutrients your body needs.

MyPlate

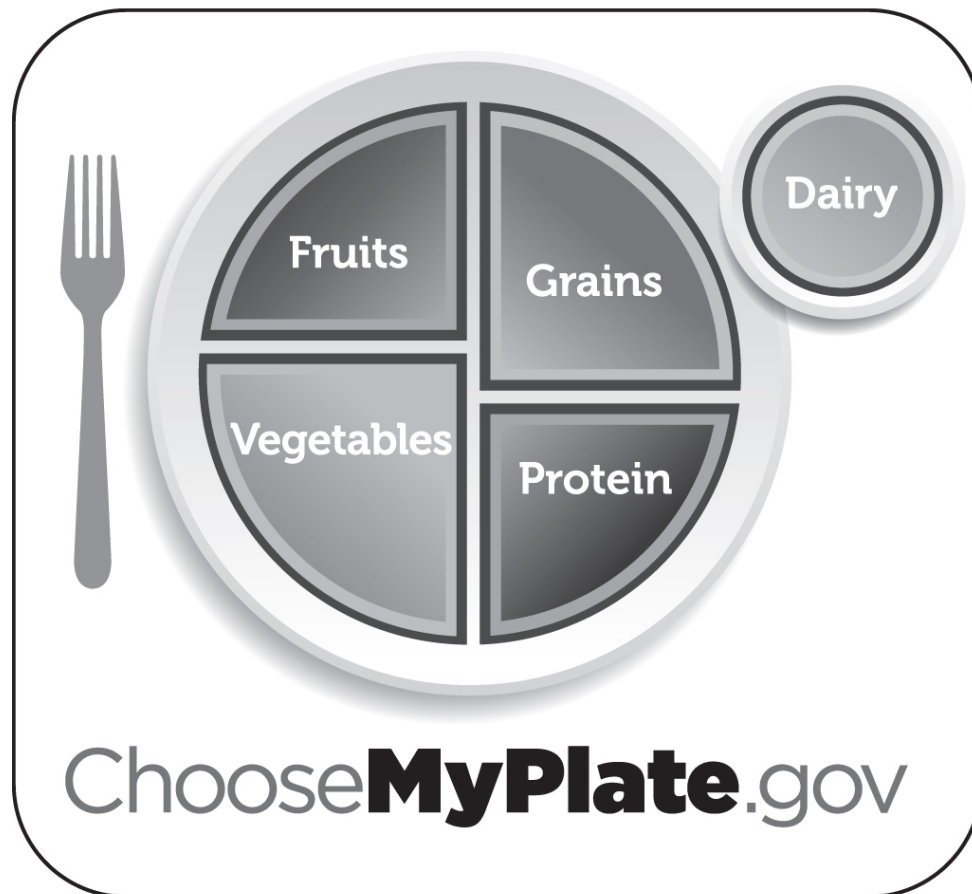
MyPlate is a guide to healthful eating and active living. **MyPlate** helps you choose foods from all five of the food groups. Each of the bands on the pyramid stands for a different type of food. The bands differ in width, meaning that you need more of some types of foods than others. The **MyPlate** Web site offers advice on how to choose healthful food sources for the fats you eat.

As well as eating nutritious foods most of the time, consider your physical activity level. Physical activity should balance out the calories in the foods you eat. Your daily calorie needs are based on your age, gender, and activity level.

Picture This

- 2. Identify** Which of the five basic food groups should make up the smallest part of your diet?

My Plate



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GRAINS Make half your grains whole	VEGETABLES Vary your veggies	FRUITS Focus on fruits	MILK Get your calcium-rich foods	PROTEINS Go lean with protein
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READING CHECK

3. Explain Why is whole, fresh fruit better for you than fruit juice?



Think it Over

4. Analyze Besides meats and fish, what other foods provide protein?

Your Best Choices

Within each food group, some choices are better than others. The Dietary Guidelines offer advice for choosing the most healthful foods from each food group:

- **Focus on fruits.** Eat a variety of fruits. Fresh whole fruits that provide fiber are better choices than fruit juice.
- **Vary your veggies.** Eat dark green vegetables such as broccoli, kale, and spinach. Also include orange vegetables such as carrots, pumpkin, and winter squash in your diet. Try to eat different types of vegetables.
- **Get your calcium-rich foods.** Low-fat and fat-free dairy products are good choices. Teens should aim to drink three cups a day of low-fat or fat-free milk. You can also get the same nutrients from three servings of low-fat yogurt or cheese. If you don't like milk, try calcium-fortified foods and beverages.
- **Make half your grains whole.** Get at least three ounces of brown rice or whole-grain cereals, breads, crackers, and pasta every day. On processed foods, check the food label carefully to see if grains are described as "whole" in the ingredient list.
- **Go lean with protein.** Choose lean meats and poultry. Prepare them by grilling, baking, or broiling. Any foods that are prepared by frying in oil will add extra fat to your diet. Also, try getting more of your protein from fish, beans, peas, nuts, and seeds.
- **Limit certain foods.** Avoid foods that are high in fat—especially saturated fats and trans fats. Also, limit foods with salt and added sugars. It's okay to occasionally enjoy foods that are high in sugar, salt, or fat. If you enjoy eating a sweet snack each day, use physical activity to burn the extra calories you take in. ✓

Why is physical activity important?

To maintain a healthy weight, you need to balance the energy in the foods you eat with regular physical activity. The more active you are, the more energy your body uses. You have to replace this energy through the foods you eat. Teens should be physically active for 60 minutes every day.

How can you get the most nutrition out of your calories?

Every day, your body needs a certain number of calories. The exact number depends on your age, your gender, and your activity level. To make sure you get enough nutrients out of the foods you eat, choose **nutrient-dense** foods. These foods have a high ratio of nutrients to calories.

The more nutrient-dense a food is, the more nutrients it packs into a given number of calories. For example, a large carrot and a half ounce of potato chips have about the same number of calories. However, the carrot has more nutrients. By eating more carrots and fewer potato chips, you can get more nutrients out of the same number of calories.

You do not have to give up all your favorite high-calorie foods. Any food that supplies calories and nutrients can be part of a healthful eating plan. You can fit them in along with healthful, nutrient-dense foods. For example, you can eat a small serving of potato chips with a lean turkey sandwich and some carrot sticks. As long as your overall diet is nutrient dense, it's okay to enjoy an occasional treat. ✓



READING CHECK

5. Analyze What are some examples of nutrient-dense foods?



READING CHECK

7. Analyze How does the plate diagram follow the MyPlate guidelines?

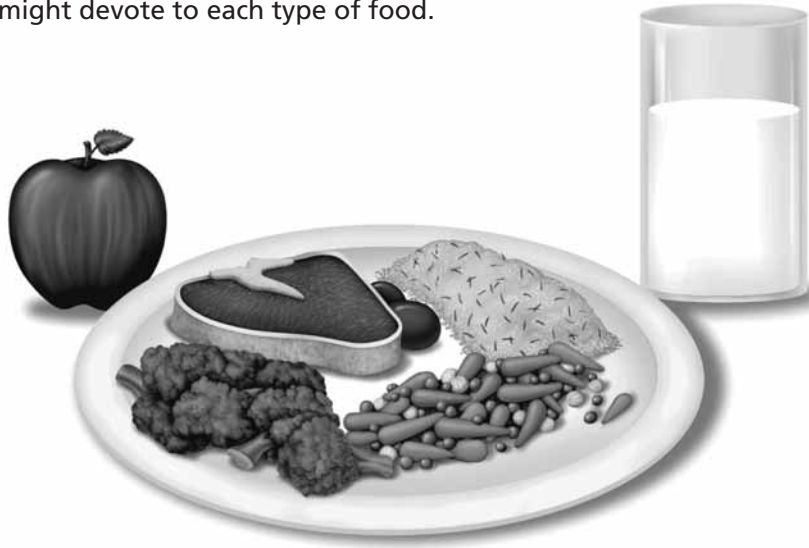
Healthful Eating Patterns

Do you like to sit down to three meals a day, or do you prefer several smaller meals? MyPlate can adapt to just about any eating style. With a little planning, you can find ways to fit nutritious foods into any lifestyle.

Some people have trouble figuring out how to apply the Dietary Guidelines and MyPlate to their daily eating plan. One tool that can help is the plate diagram. With this tool, you can visualize how a healthful meal might look. The amount of each type of foods on the plate should match the different types of food on MyPlate. ✓

What's on Your Plate?

The plate diagram can help you visualize how much space you might devote to each type of food.



Picture This

8. Explain How might you adapt this diagram to a meal that has different types of foods mixed together, such as pasta and vegetables?

How can you start the day off right?

Eating breakfast has many benefits for children and teens. For example, children who eat breakfast typically do better in school. They are also less likely to be overweight. You may find it easier to fit breakfast into your schedule if you do some work the night before. For example, you can set the table for breakfast before you go to bed. That way, all you have to do in the morning is fill your cereal bowl or put the bread in the toaster. You can also try instant oatmeal or grits, hard-cooked eggs, or whole-grain muffins for a quick and easy breakfast.

There are plenty of breakfast choices. For example, try a whole-grain bagel or toast with peanut butter or melted cheese. You can even reheat last night's leftovers.

What are some sensible snacks?

Healthful snacks can give you energy. Try these healthful foods when you need a quick bite:

- Fresh fruit or cut-up vegetables.
- String cheese.
- Unsalted nuts.
- Air-popped popcorn.
- Fat-free yogurt.
- Bread sticks.

How can you eat right when eating out?

Making healthful food choices is just as important when you eat away from home. Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

- **Watch portion sizes.** Restaurant meals have grown larger over the years. Try splitting the meal with a friend or wrapping up the leftovers to take home.
- **Pay attention to how foods are prepared.** Anything fried is likely to be high in fat. Grilled, baked, and broiled foods are healthier choices.
- **Add fresh vegetables and fruits.** Try the salad bar, order a salad, or ask for vegetables on your sandwich.
- **Go easy on toppings.** You can make your meal lighter by asking the restaurant to leave butter, mayonaise, and sour cream out or serve them on the side.
- **Don't drink your calories.** Stay hydrated by choosing water instead of soft drinks. ✓



READING CHECK

- 10. Describe** What can you do to make healthful food choices at a restaurant?
