A photograph of a grocery store aisle, viewed from the perspective of someone pushing a shopping cart. The cart is in the foreground, and the aisle is filled with shelves of products. A large white circle is overlaid on the center of the image, containing the title text. The background is slightly blurred, emphasizing the text.

Grocery Store Tour

.....
Educational Guide



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Welcome to the Grocery Store Tour Guide!

The landscape at the grocery store is constantly evolving to accommodate new products and food trends. There are more choices than ever, making it challenging for consumers to navigate and interpret the countless options. Grocery store tours led by qualified professionals sharing science-based nutrition information is a key component to ensure that consumers have the knowledge and confidence to make healthy choices for themselves and their families during shopping trips.

This guide is designed to give you, the health professional, tools and resources to lead a successful grocery store tour. The guide is divided into four sections: **Planning a Grocery Store Tour**, **Making Healthier Choices at the Grocery Store – Tour Guide Script**, **References** and **Handouts**.

Section 1 – Planning a Grocery Store Tour

Planning a Grocery Store Tour contains instructions on getting started, a sample tour timeline, and tips for partnering with grocery stores.

Section 2 – Making Healthier Choices at the Grocery Store – Tour Guide Script

Making Healthier Choices at the Grocery Store – Tour Guide Script is a step-by-step tutorial beginning with fundamental nutrition education on label-reading and MyPlate. The tour guide script then divides the grocery store into 10 key sections, each with discussion points, suggested activities and tailored recommendations for heart health, diabetic and gluten-free diet patterns. At the end of this section, you will find additional topics addressing meal planning, family mealtime, and budgeting. These are great themes to cover with extra time or to integrate as you visit each area of the store.

Section 3 – References

References provides information for your review, including MyPlate and tips for managing tour participants and addressing tough questions.

Section 4 – Handouts

Handouts includes eight reproducible handouts that you can easily copy and share with participants.

With your nutrition expertise, and the help of this Guide, we hope that participants leave inspired to select better-for-you options that are both tasty and affordable and that families feel empowered to create simple meals at home and share time around the table.

Cheers to Good Health!

Wholesome Dairy



Fresh Air-Stream

Yogurt products, including Stonyfield and Chobani.

NEW Look!

NEW Look!

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Section I

Planning a Grocery Store Tour

- Making Your Tour a Success
- Sample Tour Timeline
- Tips for Partnering with Grocery Stores
- Nutritional Shelf Tags Programs

Planning a Grocery Store Tour

Making Your Tour a Success

Grocery store tours provide valuable opportunities to impact public health and to partner with your local retailer. The following steps can help you execute your plan and positively impact the health of your community.

1. Coordinate closely with store employees.

To schedule your nutrition store tour, contact the corporate office and store manager at your location to coordinate the date and time. Many stores do not allow tours on the busiest shopping days. Also, ask about any in-store nutrition resources, tools, or promotions of healthful foods that can enhance your tour.

2. Familiarize yourself with the store layout.

It's a good idea to plan a pre-visit to the store where you'll be conducting your tour to become familiar with the layout of departments. This knowledge will help you organize your script and tour route, which will save you time. Pinpoint areas of the store where you will stop and discuss the key food groups, and make sure you have enough room so you don't block aisles and shoppers. The tour script was designed to ensure your attendees learn about key areas of the store and help the supermarket promote a variety of healthy, affordable options.

3. Schedule Tours to Accommodate Participants

Choose a time that will accommodate participants and limit the tour to 60 to 90 minutes. Make sure to communicate where and when the tour will begin, and end on time.

4. Increase Participation

Increase store tour participation by partnering with organizations to form groups that may be interested in learning about specific foods in the grocery store. For example, a local celiac disease organization may be interested in promoting a gluten-free shopping tour and volunteering to sign up participants. In addition, dietitians can work with local health care organizations and offer education on a specific health topic, such as menu planning to manage diabetes or shopping smarter to lower cholesterol.

Planning a Grocery Store Tour

Making Your Tour a Success *(continued)*

5. Allow for Flexibility

The most successful tours are driven by the questions and concerns of the customers, so follow their lead by honing in on their particular health conditions of concern.

6. Build Trust with Shoppers

You can begin your tour with a brief discussion on your background and credentials to increase your credibility as a health practitioner. Explain that your job is to educate and advocate for the health of customers, and that you're not there to sell products. The goal is to help shoppers learn how to evaluate products based on nutrition and health information. You can also ask shoppers to introduce themselves and share one goal or reason why they're participating in the tour.

7. Make Learning Interactive

Ask questions throughout the tour and provide real-life solutions. What is your favorite healthy breakfast? Share examples of quick and easy dinner meals using products in the store. Ask about barriers to consuming more fruits and vegetables. You can check with the store ahead of time about offering samples of new, healthful products throughout the tour. You can also make reading labels fun and interactive, such as looking at cereal boxes to identify whole-grains.

Sample Tour Timeline

Most tours work best with 10 or fewer participants and when they last from 60 to 90 minutes:

- **10 to 15 minutes** – group gathers, introductions made
- **45 to 55 minutes** – conduct store tour
- **10 to 20 minutes** – wrap up, questions and answers

One of the most important things to remember about hosting a store tour is to have fun. Food is a great way to connect with people in your community and promote a healthy lifestyle!

Planning a Grocery Store Tour

Tips for Partnering with Grocery Stores

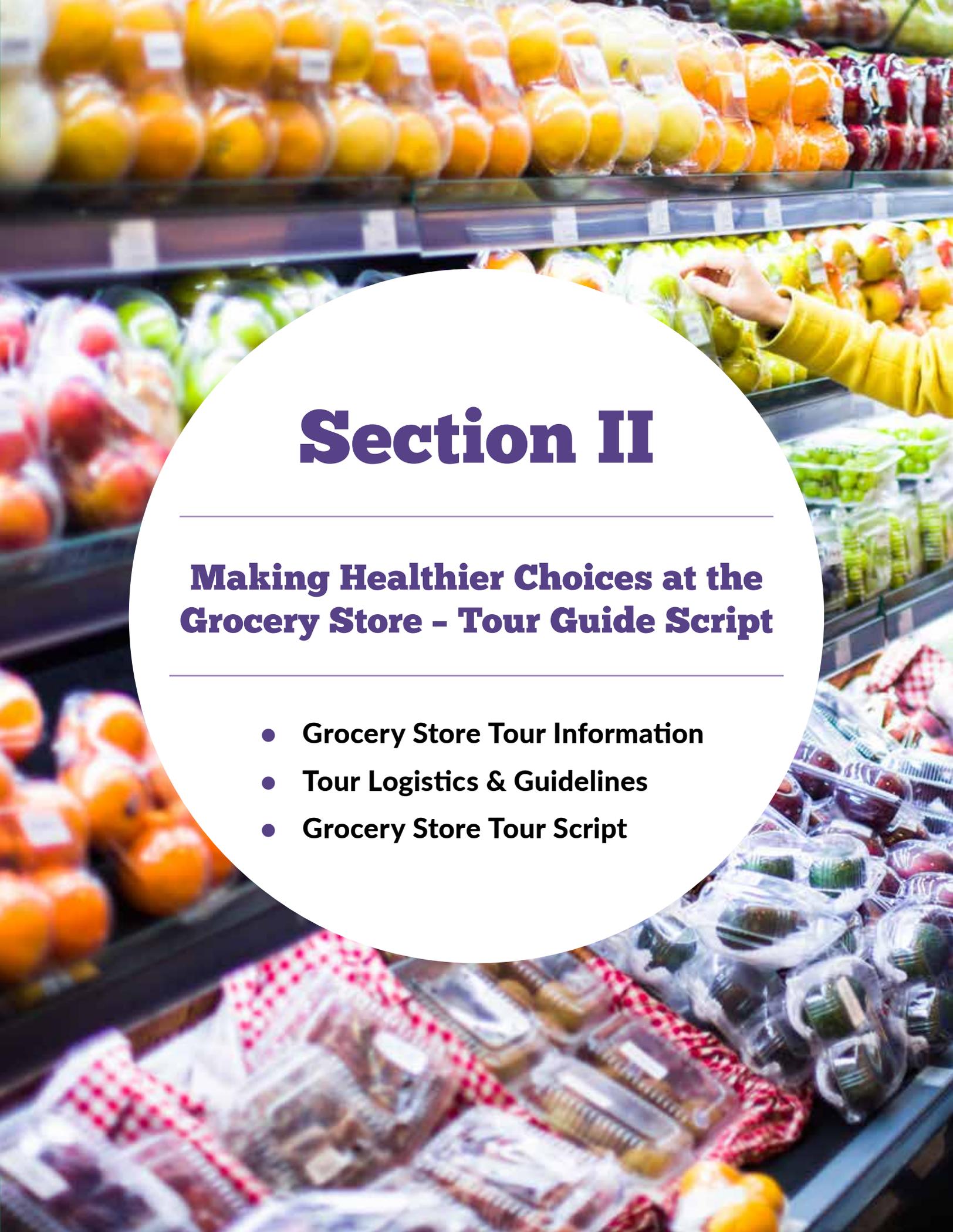
- Make sure the store director and key management staff know who you are and the expertise you have that can help them increase sales of better-for-you foods.
- Understand the seasonal selling promotions supermarkets will be implementing and how you can promote healthy options to customers (tailgating recipes, holiday appetizers, slow cooker meals, back-to-school lunches, etc.).
- Investigate how the store could help you in your educational efforts. (i.e., donate food for a healthy cooking class.)
- Ask if you can provide a seasonal demo highlighting an easy, affordable and healthier recipe. Ask the store to track sales of key items to show your return on investment.
- Talk about other potential partnership opportunities that present a win/win scenario – be creative!

Nutrition Shelf Tags Programs

In many supermarkets you can find shelf tags that provide information on a product's nutrition attributes. These tags, which may highlight information such as high fiber, low-fat, or gluten-free, can help shoppers quickly identify foods that may be appropriate for their dietary or lifestyle needs. Claims made on these tags are typically approved by the FDA and USDA. Another type of wellness shelf tag program provides a star(s) by the healthiest products. This program, called Guiding Stars, considers nutritional data and applies a mathematical algorithm to rank foods. Other shelf tag programs simply identify healthier choices by communicating certain foods that are a "dietitian approved choice."

Before conducting a tour, make sure to ask if the store you'll be visiting has a nutrition shelf tag program and a brochure or handout explaining how their tag system can be used to guide shoppers to more nutritious choices.





Section II

Making Healthier Choices at the Grocery Store - Tour Guide Script

- **Grocery Store Tour Information**
- **Tour Logistics & Guidelines**
- **Grocery Store Tour Script**

Making Healthier Choices at the Grocery Store - Tour Guide Script

Grocery Store Tour Information:

Grocery store tours provide real life education to increase consumer skills and confidence in making healthier food decisions as they plan and shop for meals. The goal of the tour is to help individuals and families build healthier grocery shopping habits. In addition, tours can be customized for specific client or patient health needs. For example, there are many consumers who are managing heart disease and a growing number of individuals who have prediabetes or Type II diabetes. Other shoppers may be trying to purchase healthy foods for celiac disease or gluten intolerance and are confused about product selections. The tour guide provides color-coded talking points to address these key health issues:

HH - Red = Heart Health, Heart Disease Management

Using science-based research and recommendations, suggestions for choosing the best food sources for managing heart disease will be shared; for example, selecting seafood high in omega-3s, or requesting lower sodium lunch meats in the deli.

DM - Blue = Diabetes Management and Prevention

Individuals with diabetes need to know how to select the best choices to help them manage both portions and carbohydrates. Specific food selection tips will provide meaningful messages to this group.

GF - Green = Celiac Disease, Gluten Intolerance

Consumers who follow a gluten free diet may have Celiac Disease or a gluten intolerance, but it's important to remind them that all gluten-free foods are not necessarily healthy choices. Tips for avoiding hidden gluten sources and selecting nutrient-rich choices are included.

Making Healthier Choices at the Grocery Store - Tour Guide Script

Tour Logistics & Guidelines:

Remember to:

- Make copies of any handouts you will be using on your tour. See **Handouts** section on page 39.
- Let store management know you've arrived for your tour.
- Point out key areas for attendees:
 - Meeting place (if using)
 - Restroom
 - Coat storage
- Have attendees keep valuables with them.
- Extend courtesy to other shoppers by not blocking aisles.

After the tour is complete, clean up any materials, etc., and let the store know you are finished. It is courteous to send a follow-up thank you to the store. This can also serve to build an ongoing relationship for future education initiatives.

Grocery Store Tour Script

Here is an example of a script to use during your tour. For each section of the store, you will find discussion points and suggested activities to encourage conversation with your participants. Feel free to adjust the verbiage to fit with your style and audience while keeping to the facts and information.

Explain the purpose of the tour:

On our Grocery Store Tour we will visit various departments of the store to discuss specific food groups and provide guidance on making healthful choices. I will give some general nutrition information about the foods available in each area and provide helpful tips as we go along. Be sure to ask any questions if you have them.

- Provide basic information on reading the new Nutrition Facts Label, and let them know that you will look at a few examples during the tour.
- Show a picture of MyPlate and briefly explain the food groups and key nutrients found in them. See **MyPlate** on page 40.

Making Healthier Choices at the Grocery Store - Tour Guide Script

The NEW Nutrition Facts Label

Let's begin our supermarket tour with a quick review of the new nutrition facts label that is starting to appear on food products. This label helps you to quickly evaluate the nutritional content of the foods you are buying. Here is some key information of interest to help you make healthy food purchasing decisions:

- The **Serving Size** is the amount of food that the nutrition facts are based on. The label also tells you how many servings are in the container and helps you manage portion sizes.
- **Calories** is now listed in a larger font and tells us how much energy you'll get from the amount of food in a serving size.
- The **% Daily Value** indicates if the food is high or low in a certain nutrient. A % Daily Value of 5% or less is considered low, and 20% or more is considered high.
 - Fiber, vitamin D, calcium, potassium and iron are all beneficial nutrients, and a higher percent is positive. The nutrients fiber, vitamin D, calcium and potassium are considered public health nutrients of concern, which means most Americans are not getting enough.
 - Trans fats, saturated fats, cholesterol, sodium and added sugars do not add nutritional benefits and should be on the lower side.
- **Added sugars** are what's added to a food product and do not include naturally occurring sugars.
 - Naturally occurring sugars include fructose and lactose, which are found in fruits and dairy products.
 - When choosing foods with added sugars, it's important to look at the whole nutrition "package" a food has to offer.
 - Chocolate milk and flavored yogurt, for example, have added sugars, but these foods also provide important nutrients, including protein, calcium, and other vitamins and minerals, therefore making these items a healthful choice. In comparison, a sugary soda would have the added sugar without beneficial nutrients.

Reference **Nutrition Facts Label - What You Need to Know**, a handout for consumers, on page 49.

Making Healthier Choices at the Grocery Store - Tour Guide Script

The NEW Nutrition Facts Label: What's Different?

Servings have a larger and bolder type.

Serving sizes are updated to reflect how much we typically eat.

Added Sugars are now reflected. **Total Sugars** includes both naturally occurring sugars and added sugars.

Vitamin D and potassium replace Vitamin A and C. Vitamin D and potassium are required on the label because Americans do not always get the recommended amounts. Vitamins A and C are no longer required since deficiencies of these vitamins are rare.

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	2/3 cup (55g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	230
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
<i>Trans</i> Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	6%
* 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.	

Calories have a larger and bolder type.

Updated % Daily Values:

- 5% or less is considered low.
- 20% or more is considered high.

Footnote has shorter and more simple information.

Making Healthier Choices at the Grocery Store - Tour Guide Script



Produce

Discussion Points:

- Fill half of your plate with a colorful variety of fruits and vegetables.
- Aim to consume 5 cups of fruits and vegetables every day.
- Remember there are 5 different colors of produce that each have specific nutrients and health benefits – red, green, blue/purple, yellow/orange and white.
- There are 5 ways to get fruits and vegetables at the supermarket – fresh, canned, dried, frozen and 100% juice (you will be talking more about these varieties during the tour.)
- Fruits and veggies contain vitamins A and C, minerals, antioxidants and fiber and are typically low in calories.
- Buying local products or those in season are usually most affordable, and supports local farmers. Check out www.SeasonalFoodGuide.org to explore what is in-season near you.
- To reduce waste, make sure you only buy the fresh produce you can use in about 1 week and store it properly.
- To save time, a store typically has some “value-added” produce that has been pre-cut or sliced. These can help you prepare a meal faster but may be more expensive.
- Organic selections are also available if desired (point out the Organic signage). Organic farmers use natural pesticides and fungicides to protect crops. It's important to note that organic foods are nutritionally equivalent to conventionally grown foods.

Suggested Activities:

1. Ask participants what fruit or vegetable they have never tried but want to. Ask why they haven't tried it – unsure how to use it or cook with it? Offer suggestions or resources.
2. Point out several items that help make easy meals or side dishes: bagged salads, baby carrots, pre-cut stir-fry veggies, etc.
3. Talk about opportunities to add one more fruit or veggie to their day: add fruit to cereal; add tomato slices and spinach on a sandwich; have an apple and cheese for a snack, etc.

Disease Management Tips:

- **HH** – Fruits and veggies are high in vitamins, minerals and fiber and low in fat and calories. Eating a variety of fruits and vegetables may help you control your weight and your blood pressure.
- **DM** – Fruit contains carbohydrate so you need to count it as part of your meal plan. Having a piece of fresh fruit or fruit salad for dessert is a great way to satisfy your sweet tooth and get the extra nutrition you're looking for. Include a variety of non-starchy vegetables in your meal as they are low in carbs – green beans, broccoli, cauliflower and carrots for example.

Making Healthier Choices at the Grocery Store - Tour Guide Script



Meat/Poultry

Discussion Points:

- First, we will focus on meat, such as beef, lamb and pork, which is a great source of protein and contains key nutrients such as iron, vitamin B6, vitamin B12, zinc, phosphorus, niacin, riboflavin, choline and selenium.
- The recommended portion size for meat is 3 to 3-1/2 oz. cooked (4 - 4-1/2 oz. raw), about the size of a deck of cards.
- When choosing meats, look for lean cuts of beef and pork that have the words “loin” or “round” in the description. For ground meats, look for 90% to 96% lean.
- If meat is on sale, buy extra, and either cook or freeze it for future meals. You can also buy larger family packs, which are less expensive per pound, and divide up the package for multiple meals.
- All meat is tested before sale and cannot contain any antibiotic residues.
- No hormones can be used in the raising of hogs, veal, chicken or turkeys.
- Chicken and turkey are both low in fat (if you avoid the skin) and are very versatile in quick and healthy meals.
- Poultry provides the human body with a range of nutrients and vitamins, including protein, riboflavin, niacin and pyridoxine, vitamin E, zinc, iron and magnesium.

Suggested Activities:

1. Have participants look for lean cuts of beef that could be used for stir-fry (sirloin, tenderloin, ribeye).
2. Have participants name their favorite healthy dish using poultry.

Disease Management Tips:

- **HH** - Limit processed or cured meats such as sausage, bacon and hot dogs, which are often higher in saturated fat and sodium. If you decide to have these, choose the leanest options. Choose poultry without the skin for less fat and cholesterol.
- **DM** - Protein is digested slowly and can help to regulate blood sugar levels. Be sure to manage portion sizes according to your diet plan. Baking, broiling and grilling are all healthy cooking methods.
- **GF** - Be aware of breading, or flavor enhancers that may be added to meat and can contain gluten.

Making Healthier Choices at the Grocery Store - Tour Guide Script



Seafood

Discussion Points:

- Try to include fish at least 2 times per week.
- Include fish high in omega-3 fatty acids like albacore tuna, herring, mackerel, rainbow trout, sardines, and salmon.
- Seafood is safe for pregnant women and provides important omega-3's for brain development. Guidelines are 12 oz. per week of seafood that is commonly low in mercury: shrimp, catfish, salmon, pollock and canned light tuna.
- Frozen seafood is often very affordable, convenient and available all year long.
- Adding flavor with lemon juice and spices may be a good strategy when trying to get children to consume more seafood.
- Mild tasting fish such as tilapia and cod can easily be enhanced with proper seasonings and make delicious seafood tacos!
- Most supermarkets partner with the Global Aquaculture Alliance (GAA). Its Best Aquaculture Practices (BAP) certification helps their farmed seafood suppliers achieve the best possible sustainable aquaculture standards. BAP is an international certification program based on achievable, science-based and continuously improved global performance standards for the entire aquaculture supply chain. They help assure the production of healthy foods through environmentally and socially responsible means.

Suggested Activity:

1. Ask participants how to cook fish and for how long (10 minutes per inch of thickness at 400°F). Thin fillets can be quickly pan-fried in a matter of minutes.

Disease Management Tips:

- **HH** - Seafood contains omega-3 fatty acids which have been shown to reduce blood pressure, protect against heart disease and help control inflammation.
- **DM** - Aim for 2 servings of seafood a week: Broil, grill, sauté, bake, poach or cook in foil packets, and experiment with a variety of herbs and spices.
- **GF** - Breaded seafood and certain seasonings may contain gluten. Make sure to check labels if following a gluten-free diet.

Making Healthier Choices at the Grocery Store - Tour Guide Script



Deli/Bakery

Discussion Points:

- Here you can find quick meal options for busy days.
- A rotisserie chicken plus a deli salad and a whole-grain bakery baguette is a quick and balanced meal. Simply add a glass of milk.
- Sliced deli meat and cheeses are a time saver as well and can be added to a whole wheat wrap with veggies and hummus for an easy lunch or to greens for a main course salad.
- Look for deli salads that provide a lot of colorful fruits and/or veggies with minimal dressing for an easy meal accompaniment.

Suggested Activities:

1. Have participants brainstorm on quick meal ideas with shredded rotisserie chicken (burritos, chili, pizza, soup, Greek salad, etc.).
2. Have participants look at the ready-to-eat foods and point out the healthier options that are available.

Disease Management Tips:

- **HH/DM** – Lower sodium meats and low-fat cheeses are often available at the deli counter. Make sure to ask for these options.
- **GF** – Rotisserie chickens are often gluten-free but may be cross contaminated during preparation. Use caution when consuming if you are on a gluten-free diet. Look for gluten-free breads and wraps in the bakery/deli department.

Making Healthier Choices at the Grocery Store - Tour Guide Script



Frozen Foods

Discussion Points:

- Frozen fruits and vegetables are a convenient, low cost way to get in your recommended servings per day. When fruits and vegetables are frozen, they are picked fresh at peak of ripeness and frozen within 24 hours to maintain nutrition content.
- Frozen fruits (without added sugars) are perfect for making smoothies.
- If you want to purchase frozen dinners, pick one with 400-500 calories and no more than 600mg of sodium.
- New, better-for-you frozen side dishes are available. Look for pastas, rice and quinoa products. They make quick meals or side dishes. For example, use a frozen brown rice and vegetable blend with leftover chicken for a stir-fry.
- Frozen portion-controlled meals can support your weight loss efforts. Add in a glass of low-fat milk or a serving of yogurt, along with a piece of fruit, to balance the meal.

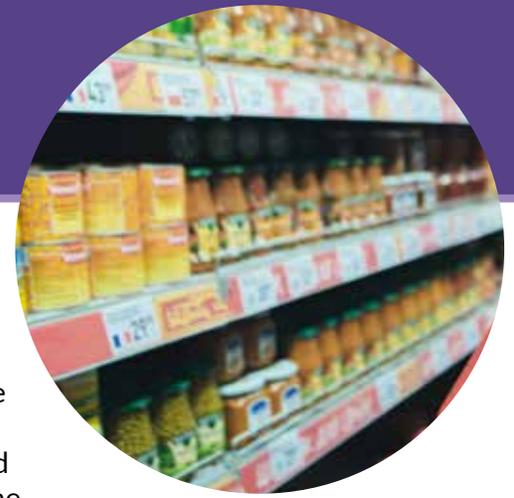
Suggested Activities:

1. Have participants create a balanced meal from the frozen foods section only.
2. Ask if anyone has a favorite, quick smoothie recipe with frozen fruit (i.e., frozen whole strawberries + milk + banana + vanilla flavoring).

Disease Management Tips:

- **HH** - Frozen unsweetened fruits and low sodium vegetables are a quick and easy side dish for those concerned with hypertension.
- **DM** - Studies show that replacing one meal a day with a single-serve frozen meal can promote weight management which can help prevent type II diabetes.
- **GF** - There are several gluten-free options in the frozen food section. Look for individual meals, breads, waffles and more.

Making Healthier Choices at the Grocery Store - Tour Guide Script



Canned Foods

Discussion Points:

- Just like frozen foods, canned fruits and vegetables are picked at peak ripeness and then canned to preserve flavor as well as nutrients. Therefore, canned fruits and vegetables have as much nutrients as fresh and, in some cases, even better nutrient profiles. Canned beans, for example, actually contain more soluble fiber, and canned tomatoes have more lycopene.
- Look for reduced sodium or no-salt-added canned vegetables. In addition, rinsing canned vegetables and beans can reduce the sodium content by as much as 40%.
- Look for canned fruits that contain no added sugars and are packaged in 100% fruit juice rather than syrup.
- Canned foods are convenient meal starters and also have a long shelf life, which can help to eliminate food waste.
- Stock your “cantry” with canned items for quick and easy meals: tomatoes, beans, corn, tuna, chicken and canned fruits.

Suggested Activities:

1. Have participants name some essential canned foods to always have on hand and a recipe they can use it in. Examples: beans for chili or burritos, tomatoes for pasta, tuna for casseroles or sandwiches.
2. Refer participants to www.CansGetYouCooking.com for canned food recipe inspiration.

Disease Management Tips:

- **HH** – Canned fruits and vegetables are a great source of fiber and potassium that may help reduce the risk of heart disease. Choose no-salt-added canned vegetables to decrease sodium intake if you are concerned about hypertension.
- **DM** – Legumes (beans, peas, chickpeas and lentils) can help to stabilize blood sugar in diabetics. Choose no-sugar-added fruits to help control carbohydrate intake.
- **GF** – Make sure to read labels of canned foods to ensure there are not added ingredients that may contain gluten.

Making Healthier Choices at the Grocery Store - Tour Guide Script



Breads, Cereals and Grains

Discussion Points:

- Whole-grains provide many nutrients, such as fiber, protein, B vitamins, antioxidants, vitamin E, iron and magnesium, along with carbohydrates for energy.
- Make at least half of grain choices you eat whole-grains.
- The first ingredient in the grain product should be “whole” to make sure that it is indeed a whole-grain. In contrast to whole-grains, processed grains have had portions of the grain extracted prior to being placed in a product. The bran and germ are removed, which also removes vitamins, minerals, healthy fats, protein, and fiber. If a food is a good source of fiber but not a whole-grain, this means bran has been added and is still a good choice.
- Look for breads, cereals and pastas with at least 3 grams of fiber.
- Try to eat a variety of grains throughout your day. Try instant brown rice, quinoa or ancient grains for something different and quick.

Suggested Activities:

1. Have participants look for some examples of cereals that contain at least 3 grams of fiber.
2. Compare fiber in a few different types of pasta.
3. Point out new grain items to try like farro, wheat berries, or bulger.

Disease Management Tips:

- **HH** - Whole-grains provide fiber, which can help reduce cholesterol.
- **DM** - Studies indicate that eating at least 3 servings of whole-grain per day can decrease your risk for type II diabetes.
- **GF** - There are many new gluten-free breads, pastas and naturally gluten-free grains available in the supermarket. Try brown rice, buckwheat, quinoa and millet.

Making Healthier Choices at the Grocery Store - Tour Guide Script



Fats, Oils and Spices

Discussion Points:

- Spices are great ways to flavor foods while cutting back on salt, fat and sugar.
- When choosing oils, choose olive oil, canola oil, avocado oil, peanut oil and sesame oil, which contain monounsaturated fats.
- Monounsaturated fats may reduce the risk of heart disease by lowering cholesterol levels when used in place of saturated and trans fats. Coconut oils and other tropical oils have no cholesterol but are high in saturated fats and should be used sparingly.
- Combine extra virgin olive oil with herbs and spices for an easy healthy marinade for meat, fish, poultry and vegetables. Extra virgin olive oil can also be used as a light dressing for salads or pastas.
- Keep a variety of vinegars on hand such as white, balsamic, cider, rice, and red wine. Adding a splash of something acidic, like vinegar, tends to brighten the flavors of almost any dish. Vinegars can be used to help tenderize meats, as part of a vinaigrette dressing, or for pickling vegetables. Try balsamic vinegar drizzled over fresh greens, strawberries, or roasted vegetables for a real flavor treat.

Suggested Activities:

1. Ask participants what their favorite herb and/or spice is and how they like to use it.
2. Remind participants about the calories in fats, such as oil, and to limit portions to help control weight.

Disease Management Tips:

- **HH** - Learn to use different herbs and spices to season foods and you can reduce the amount of fat, sodium and sugar needed.
- **DM** - Low-calorie sweeteners or spices such as cinnamon and nutmeg can be used in place of sugar to flavor foods such as hot cereal.
- **GF** - All oils are gluten-free. Be sure to read the labels of spices for any gluten containing ingredients.

Making Healthier Choices at the Grocery Store - Tour Guide Script



Dairy, Eggs and Spreads

Discussion Points:

- Dairy products, such as milk, cheese and yogurt, provide key nutrients such as calcium, and other important vitamins and minerals.
- It is important to get three servings of dairy per day for a balanced diet. Milk is a good source of nutrients and is one of the most affordable protein options as well. At about 25¢ per 8 oz. serving, milk is a nutritional bargain, providing 8 grams of high quality protein.
- Chocolate and other flavored milks can be a great way to incorporate milk into children's diets if they do not prefer the taste of regular white milk. These flavored milks have the same amounts of vitamins, minerals, and protein as white milk. Added sugar from children's diets is often from soda and fruit drinks, so simply replacing those drinks with milk can greatly increase their nutrient intake and lessen the added sugars they are consuming.
- Yogurt is also a great high-quality protein that fits into the dairy category. Certain varieties of yogurts can be higher in sugar. Greek yogurt is higher in protein as some of the liquid has been removed.
- Fermented dairy products like yogurt and kefir are a great source of probiotics for digestive health.
- Cheese is another good source of protein and calcium. Shredded and pre-sliced cheese are an easy addition to any meal and can quickly add a serving of dairy to that meal as well.
- Eggs are great sources of protein and are also very affordable. Don't limit eggs to just breakfast. Hard boiled eggs are quick and easy to make and can be added to salads, sandwiches or on their own as a snack.
- Margarines or spreads that have 0 grams of trans fats are the best option.
- If there are lactose intolerances, you can point out the lactose-free milk and the milk alternatives. Caution attendees to check the nutrition facts label to compare nutrients as some non-dairy alternatives do not provide the same calcium or protein, for example, or may have added sugar.

Suggested Activities:

1. Ask participants how they get their daily servings of dairy products. Offer suggestions if needed.
2. Discuss ways to use plain yogurt. (Top a baked potato; add to a smoothie; make a reduced-fat dip, etc.)

Disease Management Tips:

- **HH** – Look for reduced-fat dairy options to help control weight. Eating spreads with added plant sterols can help to lower LDL cholesterol.
- **DM** – Dairy consumption is associated with a reduced risk for type 2 diabetes and lower blood pressure. Choose reduced-fat options for weight management.
- **GF** – Plain dairy products are gluten-free, but check the label for flavored products or those with added ingredients.

Making Healthier Choices at the Grocery Store - Tour Guide Script



Snacks, Nuts and Popcorn

Discussion Points:

- There are many “better for you” snack options available in the grocery store if you know what to look for. More adults and children are snacking today, so make sure you choose products that are rich in nutrients.
- Nuts are a great source of protein as well as fiber that can keep you full between meals. Walnuts, almonds, peanuts, pecans and sunflower seeds are good options. Be sure to watch out for serving size, as it is easy to over-eat these snack foods. In general, a $\frac{1}{4}$ a cup of nuts is one serving. Mix nuts with dried fruits and whole-grain cereal for a tasty trail mix.
- Whole-grain chips, crackers and low-fat popcorn are also great choices for snack foods. Look for snacks with a good nutrient profile: healthier fats, high fiber and/or protein.

Suggested Activities:

1. Have participants name their favorite snack food, and try to find a healthier alternative if needed.
2. Discuss how you can make your own better-for-you trail mix and what foods would pair well for a healthy snack – whole-grain crackers + cheese, whole-grain tortilla chips + salsa, etc.

Disease Management Tips:

- **HH** – Protein-rich snacks may help with satiety and facilitate weight loss.
- **DM** – Manage snack portions and include high protein and whole-grains to provide energy and to help control blood sugar levels.
- **GF** – There are many gluten-free snack options now available such as corn and rice chips. Check nutrition labels for best choices.

Making Healthier Choices at the Grocery Store - Tour Guide Script

Other Tour Topics

Meal Planning Tips

Most people feel they save money and eat healthier when they eat at home. Unfortunately, with busy schedules and perhaps a lack of kitchen confidence, many families rely on fast food or overly processed products that may be high in calories and low in nutrition. But meal planning and prep doesn't have to be difficult! With knowledge and know-how, mealtime can be easy, affordable and healthy. Let's start with some important reasons to enjoy family mealtime:

Family Mealtime Matters!

Improving a child's eating habits starts at home, and with guidance, parents can create simple meals that provide delicious nourishment. Family meals also offer a time to connect, communicate and celebrate together. As the family un-plugs from technology, parents can enjoy time to check in with their kids and discuss work, sports, homework or plans for the next day. Turn off the TV and smartphones, and connect in real time with the people you love!

Eating meals as a family comes with a multitude of scientifically-proven benefits. Children who eat with their families:

- Are less likely to smoke, drink or use drugs
- Perform better in school
- Have improved relationships and communication skills
- Have a strong sense of belonging and security
- Confide in their parents more
- Choose healthier snack foods
- Consume less fried food, soda and saturated fat
- Learn table manners
- Are less likely to be obese
- Have an increased fruit and vegetable intake

Saving Money

Reference ***Saving Money - A Word About Waste*** handout on page 46.



Section III

References

- **Basic Nutrition Overview - MyPlate**
- **Managing Tour Participants**
- **Difficult Questions and Comments**
- **Nutrition and Meal Planning Resources for Affordable, Healthy Meals**

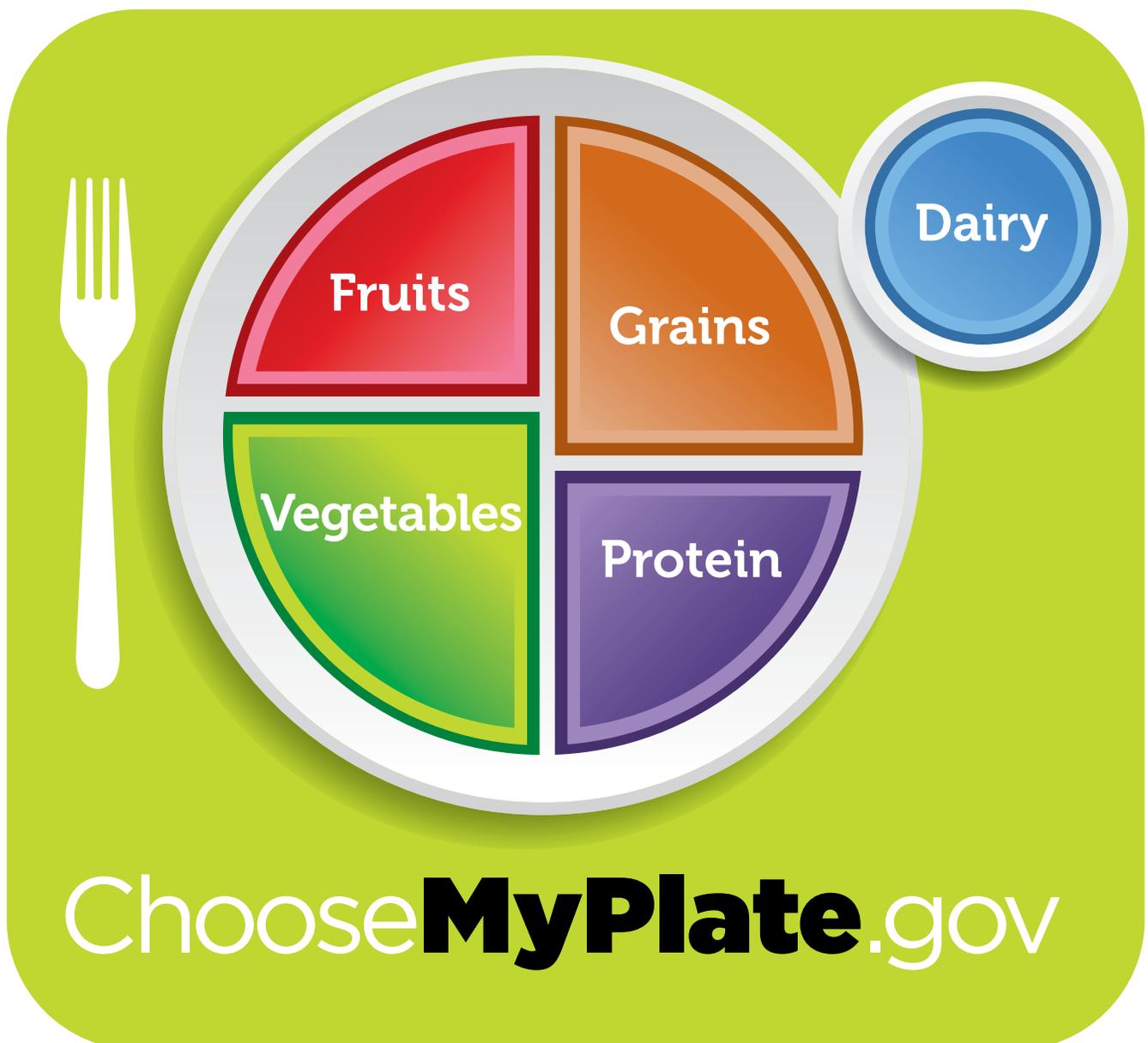
References

Basic Nutrition Overview

MyPlate as a guide is a great place for people to start as they begin to make easy, healthy ideas for family meals and snacks.

What is MyPlate?

MyPlate is a simple tool that shows you what foods are important to choose at each meal. The color-coded sections help you to visualize the amounts of those foods that offer important nutrients and, when combined in a meal, help ensure you are getting the nutrition needed to stay well and prevent illness.



References – Food Groups

Fruits and Vegetables

The current recommendation is to fill half the plate with colorful fruits and vegetables. Fresh produce is a great choice, and it's important to understand that nutritious, affordable fruits and vegetables can also be frozen, canned, dried or in the form of 100% juice. Adults should try and eat 5 or more cups of fruits and vegetables each day in a variety of forms and colors to benefit from the unique nutrients each provides. Consumers should look for green, purple/blue, yellow/orange, red and white choices. Recommendations for the amount of fruit and vegetables children should eat are based on a child's age, gender and level of physical activity. Recommendations range from 1-2 cups for fruit and 1-3 cups for vegetables.

Fruit and Veggie Tips for Consumers:

- Serve a variety of fruits and vegetables daily to children, while limiting juice intake. Each meal should contain at least 1 fruit or vegetable.
- Children may need to try new fruits and veggies up to 10 times before they accept them. Stay patient and keep offering them.
- Involve the whole family in choosing and preparing fruit and veggies.
- Keep a bowl of fresh fruit in the home. Have fresh fruit available at all times as a convenient snack – keep the fruit bowl full and have diced fruit in a container in the fridge.
- Be creative with how you prepare and serve fruits and veggies. Try them raw, sliced, grated, microwaved, mashed or baked.
- Add chopped, grated or pureed veggies to pasta sauces, meat burgers, frittatas, stir-fries and soups, and add fruit to cereal, yogurt, pancakes, waffles, etc.
- Make a fruit smoothie with fresh, frozen or canned fruit (in natural or un-sweetened juice); blend it with fat-free or low-fat milk and yogurt.
- Chop up some fruit or veggie sticks for the lunchbox.

References

Grains

Grains include foods made from wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, barley and other cereal grains, so for this portion of MyPlate, consumers should reach for bread, rice, pasta, oatmeal, tortillas, grits, cereal and other grain products. Whole-grain choices are best as they naturally have the most fiber, which is good for the digestive system. Consumers should look closely at the nutrition label when picking whole-grains – it should be the first ingredient on the Nutrition Label. Oatmeal, brown rice, whole-grain pasta and 100% wheat bread are all good choices. There are also whole-grain varieties of tortillas, crackers, frozen waffles and cereals. Switching to whole-grains can be easy and inexpensive – and children are likely to not even notice a difference.

Grain Food Tips for Consumers:

- Choose whole-grain cereals with at least 3 to 4 grams of fiber per serving.
- Substitute quick-cooking brown rice or quinoa for white rice.
- Use whole-grain breads, pitas, English muffins, rolls and buns.
- Experiment with whole-grain pastas to see which ones your family likes.

Proteins

Proteins include meat, seafood, poultry, beans, peas, nuts, seeds, eggs and soy products like tofu. It's important for consumers to eat a variety of proteins each week as the nutrients in these products are needed to boost the immune system, build and repair muscle, and help brain function.

Protein Food Tips for Consumers:

- Select a variety of lean beef, pork, poultry and turkey to add variety to meals.
- Many types of fish are rich in heart-healthy Omega-3 fatty acids (salmon, tuna, trout). Try fresh fish recipes, use canned tuna in sandwiches, or simply mix canned salmon with whole-grain bread crumbs, seasoning and an egg to make delicious salmon patties.
- Add fresh fruit to cottage cheese as a nutrient-packed snack.
- Prepare, then refrigerate, hard-cooked eggs for lunch or breakfast-to-go.
- Purchase healthy nuts, nut butters and seeds for quick, filling snacks.

References

Dairy

Including nine essential nutrients such as calcium, potassium, vitamin D and protein, milk is a powerhouse of nutrition. These essential nutrients are especially important for building bone mass during childhood and adolescence and continue to be important as people age. Consumers can look for a variety of milk, cheese and yogurt products in the supermarket.

Dairy Food Tips for Consumers:

- Those of us ages 9 and older need three servings of dairy, daily. The recommended daily servings for children ages 2-3 is two and ages 4-8 is 2.5.
- If you are trying to manage your weight, opt for low-fat varieties of milk, yogurt and cheese to help reduce calories.
- Keep string cheese and a variety of yogurts in the refrigerator for quick snacks or to add to lunch boxes.
- Flavored milk (including chocolate) has the same essential nutrients as white milk to help meet the recommended servings of dairy per day.
- Start the day with a bowl of whole-grain cereal topped with a cup of low-fat milk.
- If you drink coffee, make it a latte.
- Enjoy a bowl of fruit and yogurt for breakfast or a healthy snack.
- Add a slice of cheese to your sandwich.
- If you are lactose intolerant, try yogurt, hard cheeses like cheddar and swiss, lactose-free milk, or fortified soymilk (soy beverage) to get your calcium.

References

Fats

The body needs some fat for good health. Fats help to absorb fat-soluble vitamins – A, D, E and K – as well as carotenoids, plus they supply essential fatty acids necessary for children to grow properly. These fatty acids also keep the skin, brain and nervous system healthy. Health experts recommend including foods with more “good” monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fat, and limiting consumption of saturated and trans fats.

Fat Tips for Consumers:

- Cook with canola and olive oils which are high in monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fat.
- Consume nuts, peanut butter, seeds, olives and avocados to get healthier fats.
- Try to avoid products with trans fat or items that list hydrogenated fat or partially hydrogenated fat on the label.
- Look for reduced-fat salad dressings. Several varieties in the produce department are made with healthy ingredients such as yogurt.
- Fat is a concentrated source of calories and should be consumed in limited amounts to help manage weight.

References

Managing Tour Participants

1. Avoid derogatory, negative statements about any specific foods or departments. For example, if someone mentions that most cereals are full of sugar and should be avoided, do not agree. Instead, talk about the variety of choices in the cereal aisle and how there are options to choose from. You can also talk about the need to look at the total diet, not just one food, and balancing choices for an overall healthy eating pattern.
2. Avoid the “shop the perimeter trap.” Supermarkets have a variety of healthy, affordable foods throughout the entire store. By only promoting the perimeter, consumers will miss items like whole-grain pastas and rice, nuts/seeds, canned beans and vegetables, and more. Also, many new better-for-you products from snack foods to mixes are being developed by most food manufacturers. Encourage a variety of nourishing foods in all categories.
3. Almost every shopper will have a favorite “indulgent” food that they feel they should avoid. Talk about how food brings us pleasure and it’s not about deprivation but balancing the indulgent foods with healthier choices. This is also a good time to stress the importance of portion control.
4. Stay focused. If one or two attendees are derailing the tour with too many questions, tell them you need to move on to stick to your schedule but that you will meet with them briefly after the tour to speak with them individually.
5. Communicate sound science. Properly communicating science-based food and nutrition issues can be complex. Health professionals should use their nutrition and science background to understand consumer needs and provide honest, solution-based stories that build trust while clarifying food myths. As professional ethics dictate, dietitians and other health professionals must keep their messaging evidence-based; however, if consumer communication strategies are not done correctly, you risk polarizing your audience.
6. Stay true to the science while keeping an open mind about the topics and trends many of your attendees may value. First, you must realize why the attendees may feel a sense of frustration when it comes to science-based information. Science changes and evolves, which can often lead to confusion and mistrust. But believing pseudoscience can distract consumers from the facts, result in money spent on unnecessary products, erode critical thinking, and cause public health concerns.
7. Communicate the science in creative ways to engage consumers and gain trust. Experts suggest using storytelling when communicating to non-expert audiences as stories provide engagement and offer increased interest and understanding. Narratives are also inherently influential, which provides science communicators tactics for persuading resistant audiences and getting the facts across in a relatable way.

References

Difficult Questions or Comments

GMOs

- This is a very difficult question to answer during a store tour. You can acknowledge the report by the National Academies of Sciences (NAS) that finds current genetically engineered crops are safe for both human and animal consumption and present no health risks (nas-sites.org/ge-crops), but that may not appease shoppers who are opposed to them. Let your attendees know that a variety of choices are available in the store and that if they want to avoid GMOs they can choose organic products. You may also refer them to www.gmoanswers.com if they have additional, in-depth questions.

Organics

- Organic food is produced by farmers who emphasize the use of renewable resources and the conservation of soil and water to enhance environmental quality for future generations. Organic meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy products come from animals that are given no antibiotics or growth hormones. Organic food is produced without using most conventional pesticides, fertilizers made with synthetic ingredients or sewage sludge, bioengineering, or ionizing radiation. Before a product can be labeled “organic,” a Government-approved certifier inspects the farm where the food is grown to make sure the farmer is following all the rules necessary to meet USDA organic standards. The science does not necessarily show that organic foods are more nutritious.
- Emphasize the importance of eating lots of fruits and vegetables and grains along with a variety of healthy foods whether they are organic or conventional. If someone likes the idea of organic foods but aren't ready to go completely organic, they can always pick and choose. Again, the choices are there in the store depending on needs and budget.

Canned Foods

- Because foods' nutritional value is sealed inside, canned foods can be served anytime with confidence. Canned foods also help minimize food waste, saving time and money, and reducing our impact on the environment. According to recent studies, most Americans throw away approximately 15 - 20% of the fresh fruits and vegetables they purchase every year. Canned food portion sizes are just right for both individuals and families, and most recipes are designed around these sizes.
- Metal cans are endlessly recyclable! In fact, cans are the most recycled container in America today, keeping metal out of landfills and saving significant energy. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration states that BPA (Bisphenol A) used in the lining of some canned goods is safe as currently used. Many canned food manufacturers have switched to alternative linings simply due to consumer demand.

References

Hormones

- Hormones are proteins produced naturally by plants, animals, and humans and are required for normal healthy functioning. Therefore, they are naturally occurring in all meat and other agricultural food products, regardless of production methods. Because of this, the term “hormone free” is not approved for use on labels.
- Hormones may be used to promote efficient growth in some cattle and lamb in the United States. The amount of estrogen found in a 3-ounce serving of beef from cattle that were administered an estrogen implant is less than the amount that is naturally found in the same size serving of potatoes, cabbage, eggs, soybeans, or ice cream, and is only a small fraction (0.001 to 0.0004 percent) of the amount naturally produced daily by men, women, and children.
- No hormones are used in the raising of hogs, goats, veal, chicken or turkeys. To clarify this for consumers, pork or poultry products labeled as “raised without added hormones” must also state, “Federal regulation prohibits the use of hormones in poultry or pork.”
- Bovine somatotropin (bST) is a naturally occurring hormone produced by a cow’s pituitary gland. Present in all cows, bST regulates metabolic activities, helping young calves grow and adult cows produce milk. RbST is an FDA-approved synthetic version of the protein hormone that some dairy farmers choose to give to some or all of their cows to help increase milk production. Because of consumer preference, Michigan dairy farmers and processors stopped using rbST in 2008. However, scientific studies have concluded that there is no difference between milk from cows that are given rbST and milk from cows that are not.

Pesticides on Produce

- Most scientists and health experts agree that the simple presence of pesticide residues on foods does not mean they are harmful and that both conventionally and organically grown fruits and vegetables are safe to consume. Again, the health issue of real importance is not consuming enough fruits and vegetables. If attendees are concerned, explain the proper method of washing off fresh produce before consumption.

References

Nutrition and Meal Planning Resources for Affordable, Healthy Meals

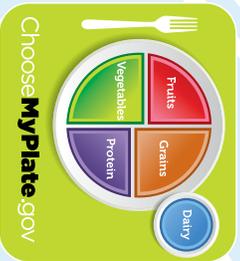
- Milk Means More - www.milkmeansmore.org
- Canned Foods Alliance - cansgetyoucooking.com
- National Cattlemen's Beef Association - www.beefitswhatsfordinner.com
- International Frozen Food Association Dietitian Toolkit - bit.ly/rdtoolkit
- The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics - www.eatright.org
- Seafood Nutrition Partnership - www.seafoodnutrition.org
- National Pork Board - www.pork.org/cooking
- National Turkey Federation - www.serveturkey.org
- Produce for Better Health - www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org
- Produce for Kids - www.produceforkids.com
- USA Pulses - www.pulses.org/recipes
- MyPlate - www.choosemyplate.gov



Section IV

Handouts

- MyPlate for Teens/Adults
- MyPlate for Kids
- 10 Tips for Shopping with Kids
- Meal Planning Tips
- Make Mealtime Easy - Pantry Stocking List
- 1-week Menu Planner - Quick Assembly Meals
- Saving Money - A Word About Waste
- Nutrition Facts Label - What You Need to Know



MyPlate

Dairy

3 cups each day

Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk

1 CUP DAIRY* =

- 1 cup low-fat yogurt
- 1 ½ ounces low-fat cheddar or string cheese
- 1 cup fat-free or low-fat milk including flavored milk

Fruits

1 ½-2 cups each day

Focus on whole fruits

1 CUP FRUIT =

- 1 cup berries (raspberries, strawberries, blueberries)
- 1 cup canned fruit
- ½ cup dried fruit

Vegetables

2-3 cups each day

Vary your veggies

1 CUP VEGETABLES =

- 1 cup broccoli
- 1 cup tomatoes
- 2 cups raw leafy greens, like spinach



Grains

5-8 ounces each day

Make at least half your grains whole grains

1 OUNCE GRAINS =

- 1 slice whole wheat bread
- ½ cup cooked pasta or brown rice
- 1 cup ready-to-eat breakfast cereal

Protein

5-6 ½ ounces each day

Go lean with protein

1 OUNCE PROTEIN =

- 1 ounce cooked lean meat, poultry or fish
- 1 large egg
- ¼ cup cooked beans

*Calcium-fortified foods and beverages may not provide the other nutrients found in dairy products. Check the labels.



MyPlate

Breakfast

Jump Start the Day Parfait

- 6 ounces low-fat yogurt
- ½ cup sliced strawberries
- ½ cup low-fat granola



Lunch

Turkey Sandwich

- 2 slices 100% whole-grain bread
- 2 ounces turkey slices (medium slices)
- 1 ounce low-fat colby cheese
- 2 slices tomato
- 1 teaspoon stone-ground mustard



Side Salad

- 2 cups spinach leaves
- ½ cup red pepper slices
- ¼ cup chopped carrots
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinaigrette

Pear Slices

- 1 small pear, sliced

Beverage

- 1 cup low-fat regular or flavored milk



Dinner

Salmon with Fruit Salsa

- 3 ounces salmon, baked or grilled
- ¼ cup diced pineapple
- ¼ cup diced mango



Sautéed Green Beans

- ¾ cup green beans
- 1 teaspoon olive oil

Rice

- 1 cup cooked brown rice



Putting it all together!

- Focus on whole fruits.
- Vary your vegetables.
- Make half your grains whole.
- Move to low-fat and fat-free dairy.
- Vary your protein routine by including lean proteins, such as chicken, fish and legumes.
- Choose healthy oils, such as olive oil.

Visit www.choosemyplate.gov for more tips and information.

Physical Activity

Make physical activity a regular part of EVERY day! Physical activity is important to lower your risk of chronic disease and build and maintain healthy bones and muscles. Choose activities that you enjoy at home, work and play!

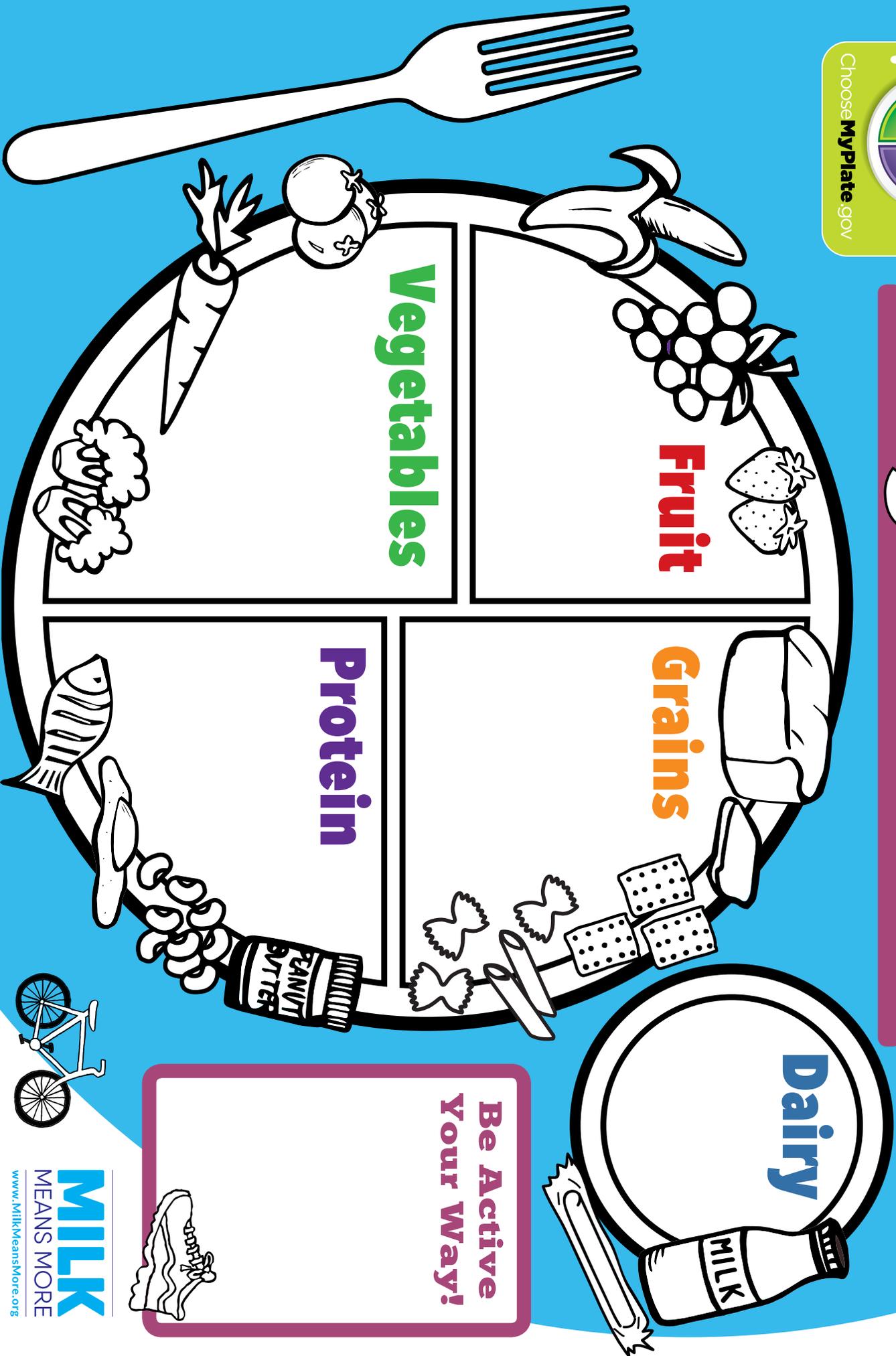
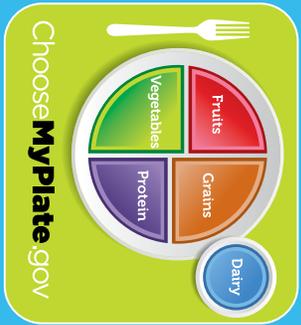
- Choose the stairs.
- Park at the back of the parking lot.
- Take short walk-breaks from your daily routine.
- Enroll in a fitness class or try a new sport.

Being physically active YOUR way, while eating a balanced diet every day, may lead to better health. Before beginning a new form of exercise, be sure to consult your doctor.

Remember:

Everything in moderation. Choose foods and beverages with less saturated fat, added sugars and sodium. Limit fast foods and processed grains.

My Plate



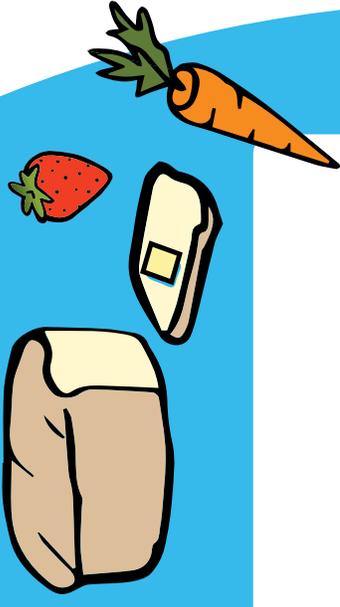
**Be Active
Your Way!**



MILK
MEANS MORE
www.MilkMeansMore.org



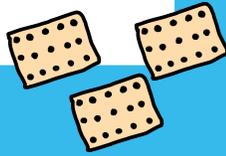
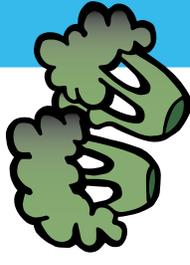
MyPlate



Adults are Role Models

You can help children have a positive attitude about food, eating, and physical activity.

- Offer a variety of foods from the five food groups for meals and snacks. Nutrient-rich snacks should include foods and beverages from at least two food groups.
- Enjoy fun physical activities as a group or family.
- Be a role model. Eat with your children. Try new foods yourself.
- Visit www.choosemyplate.gov for more tips and information.

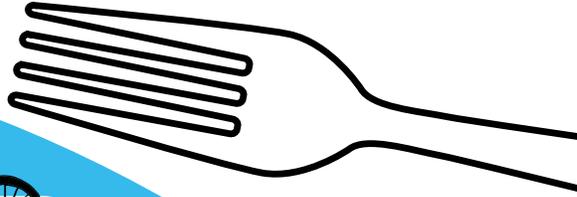
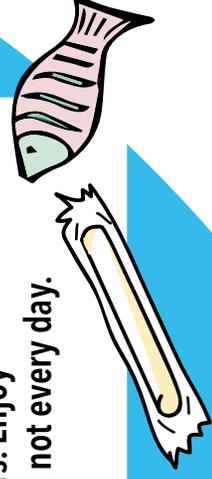


Activities

- Color the five food groups of MyPlate. Use the MyPlate logo for the color key.
- Draw or list foods they like in each food group.
- Draw or list foods in each food group that they've never tasted and may want to try.
- Draw or list the physical activities they enjoy.
- Draw or list the physical activities they may like to try.

More MyPlate

- Small amounts of added fat are part of a healthful eating pattern. Oils provide essential nutrients, which are important for children to grow well.
- Choose foods and beverages with less saturated fat, sodium and added sugars. Enjoy "sometimes" foods such as candy, cake, chips and soda every once in a while, not every day.



10 Tips for Shopping with Kids



Do you dread going to the grocery store with your children? These tips can actually make it fun as you watch your little ones learning as they go. In addition, they'll be more excited about all the nutritious foods they will be eating throughout the week!

1 Before you leave the house, make a list and stick to it.

6 If the kids are old enough to plan a simple meal, have them gather the items they need.

2 Take an inventory of your refrigerator and pantry so you avoid buying unnecessary items.

7 Never take hungry kids to the store! They will be cranky shoppers and want to add more items to your cart.

3 Ask kids what they want to add to the shopping list and then make them responsible for finding those items in the store.

8 Have new readers try to read as many words as possible on packaging, making a game out of it.

4 Keep kids focused on the task of shopping by talking about everything you're picking up.

9 Use the different food groups to devise a simple scavenger hunt game. Who can find a grain food, dairy choice, etc.?

5 Have kids pick out two or three different colors of produce to add to your cart. Talk about the different forms of fruits and veggies to try (fresh, canned, frozen, dried).

10 Before leaving the house, give kids their own reusable shopping bags so they can help pack groceries at the end of the trip. You are training future healthy shoppers!

Meal Planning Tips

Here are some ideas for helping your family plan and prepare healthy meals while saving both time and money. Let's get started!

- **Use a calendar.**
A large, inexpensive calendar can help with meal planning. Use it to keep track of family activities as well as your daily dinner meals.
- **Be organized.**
Do an inventory of your kitchen when you are planning meals for the week. Plan meals that use up needed ingredients, and use this time to quickly organize and clean out old items.
- **Get the family involved.**
Allow the whole family to be part of the meal planning process. Children will feel empowered to help with important eating decisions, and their involvement will encourage them to try new foods.
- **Make a list.**
One of the easiest ways to plan meals is to make a list of what you have. Use these items to create simple meals. Lots of pasta? How about spaghetti and a green salad? Choose one day each week to plan out meals: write down your menu and the list of the ingredients you need from the supermarket.
- **Stock up for easy morning meals.**
By having healthy ingredients on hand, you can make breakfast simple. Whole-grain cereals, bread, yogurt, milk, cheese, fruit, peanut butter, etc., can easily be combined to provide the nutrition needed to start the day (for example, peanut butter on whole-grain toast with a tangerine).
- **Prep ahead.**
Chop vegetables like peppers and onions ahead of time and store in the refrigerator. Bake muffins or quick breads and freeze for later use during the week. You can also precook ground meat and freeze it to add to tacos, spaghetti or chili.
- **Plan for leftovers.**
When cooking proteins like whole chicken or ground meat, cook extra for use the next night. For instance, leftover chicken can be mixed with chicken broth, frozen mixed vegetables and pasta for a quick soup. Leftover chili can be used to top tortilla chips or a baked potato for a quick dinner as well. You can also pack up leftovers in containers for lunches to go.
- **Keep a stocked pantry.**
A well-stocked pantry makes meal prep easy on busy nights. Pasta, instant brown rice, canned beans, diced tomatoes, canned fruits and vegetables, recipe-ready soups, etc., can all be used for simple meals.



Kids in the Kitchen

If you are looking for ways to get your children involved in the kitchen, here are a few ideas:

- Have them choose a new fruit or vegetable in the store, and include them in the washing/preparing process.
- Even young children can help toss a green salad.
- Let them measure ingredients.
- Have them crack eggs.
- Have them set the table.

Saving Money

A Word About Waste

According to the USDA, up to 40% of food is wasted every year, which adds up to an estimated \$1,500 per family. Here are some ways to avoid wasting food and money:

- Plan your meals. Having a plan with a shopping list is one of the simplest ways to avoid food waste. Include recipes and meals using leftovers.
- Proper food storage is key. Many foods and leftovers can be frozen for later use if they will not be used right away.
- Learn about ways to use “distressed” but safe produce. Vegetable soup doesn’t require flawless veggies; use overripe bananas in bread or smoothies; if you have a variety of aging vegetables, simply chop them up and roast in the oven with a little oil, salt and pepper for a healthy side dish.
- Shop the entire store for different forms of fruits and vegetables. Frozen or canned fruits and vegetables, for example, have a longer shelf-life, are affordable and create nutritious meal accompaniments.
- Use the concept of first-in, first-out. Many foods simply get “lost” in the back of the refrigerator or pantry and go bad before they can be used.

Understand that best-by codes do not mean a product should be thrown away. Look at www.StillTasty.com to look up the average shelf life of all foods.

- A “**Best if Used By/Before**” date indicates when a product will be of best flavor or quality. It is not a purchase or safety date.
- A “**Sell-By**” date tells the store how long to display the product for sale for inventory management. It is not a safety date.
- A “**Use-By**” date is the last date recommended for the use of the product while at peak quality. It is not a safety date except for when used on infant formula.

-
- Recognizing signs of true spoilage is an important skill to help prevent food waste as well as illness from spoiled foods. Spoiled foods will often develop an off odor due to spoilage bacteria. Pathogenic bacteria, bacteria that can cause illness, and mold can also grow in foods that have gone bad.
 - Keep things like apples, pears, bananas, and oranges in a bowl where they are easy to grab for quick snacks and are more likely to be consumed before they go bad.
 - If your kids insist they don’t like fruits and vegetables by themselves, offer some veggie dip, hummus, cottage cheese, or yogurt to go with them.
 - Consume the most perishable foods that you purchase first. Fresh foods should only be purchased as far as a week in advance and should be used as soon as possible. Foods with longer shelf life, such as frozen or canned foods, can be used later.

Make Mealtime Easy

Pantry Stocking List

It doesn't matter if you are eating breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack. If your kitchen is stocked with a healthy balance of convenient products, you can quickly assemble a satisfying, nutrient-rich meal. Below is our pantry stocking list with simple meal assembly ideas:

Grocery

- canned vegetables – tomatoes, corn, peas, carrots, green beans, beets (lower sodium and sodium free options are available)
- canned beans – black, cannellini, garbanzo, great northern, pinto
- canned fruit packed in water or 100% juice – pears, pineapple, peaches, mandarin oranges
- dried fruit – raisins, cherries, apricots
- nuts and seeds – peanuts, walnuts, pecan, almonds, sunflower seeds
- whole-grain crackers
- whole-grain pasta
- flavored whole-grain mixes such as couscous and quinoa
- instant brown rice
- whole-grain hot and cold cereals
- reduced sodium canned or boxed broth and recipe-ready soups
- jarred salsa and pasta sauce
- canned or pouch-packed meats like tuna, salmon or chicken
- marinades and sauces – teriyaki, lemon pepper, garlic & herb, mesquite, barbecue
- herbs and spices
- vinegars – balsamic, red or white wine, cider, rice
- reduced-fat mayonnaise
- canola and olive oil

Dairy

- milk
- yogurt
- cheese – shredded, parmesan, slices, cottage
- eggs
- butter/spreads

Fresh Produce

- apples, bananas, oranges, berries, peaches, grapes, etc.
- potatoes, onions
- peppers, carrots, broccoli
- celery, cucumbers, tomatoes
- packaged salads
- chopped garlic, fresh herbs

Fresh Meat, Poultry and Seafood

- lean beef – ground, steaks, roasts
- chicken – boneless breasts, parts and tenders
- ground turkey – lean
- pork – chops, tenderloin, roast
- fish fillets – salmon, tilapia, etc.

Freezer

- frozen vegetables and fruit
- frozen potatoes
- meatless burgers
- boneless, skinless chicken breasts or breast tenders
- fish fillets and shrimp
- better-for-you frozen entrees (simple ingredient lists, whole-grains, vegetables)
- frozen pasta (tortellini or ravioli)
- whole-grain waffles or pancakes
- vegetable or cheese pizzas – can add your own toppings

1-Week Menu Planner

Quick Assembly Meals

New to menu planning and/or grocery shopping? Not to worry! This section gives a budget-conscious, one-week menu plan along with a sample grocery list. If meal planning seems overwhelming, just remember that you are not going for gourmet recipes, you are simply organizing meals in order to save yourself time and money, while providing nutritious meals that you and your family can enjoy together!

Breakfast Ideas

- whole-grain cereal + milk + banana slices
- yogurt + granola + canned peaches
- whole-grain toast + cottage cheese + orange
- oatmeal + milk + walnuts & raisins
- whole-grain waffles + strawberries + glass of milk

Lunch Ideas

- grilled cheese sandwich + tomato soup + apple slices
- egg salad wrap in whole-grain tortilla + carrot sticks + milk
- vegetable soup + cheese & whole-grain crackers + canned pears
- macaroni & cheese + grape tomatoes + pineapple chunks
- chicken & veggie salad + pretzels + pudding cup

Dinner Ideas

- pan fried fish fillets + instant brown rice + broccoli florets
- bean & cheese burritos + corn + canned peaches
- grilled pork chops + baked sweet potato + steamed cauliflower
- frozen cheese pizza with veggies + green salad + milk
- rotisserie chicken + mashed potatoes + mixed vegetables

Snack Ideas

- frozen banana + low-fat milk + peanut butter (smoothie)
- pita bread + veggies + hummus
- cottage cheese + fruit + crackers
- oatmeal cookie + milk
- apple slices + cheese cubes

Portion Control

One effective way to manage your weight is to avoid “portion distortion.” Here are a few examples of appropriate serving sizes for different foods:



½ cup cooked rice or pasta, which is equivalent to the size of **a lightbulb**



1 cup broccoli, which is equivalent to the size of **a baseball**



1 medium apple, which is equivalent to the size of **a baseball**



3 ounces of cooked meat or poultry, which is equivalent to the size of **a deck of cards**



1 ½ ounces of cheese, which is equivalent to **3 dice**

Nutrition Facts Label

What You Need to Know

Start here!

When comparing foods be sure to look at **servicing size** to make accurate comparisons to the number of **servings per container**.

Be Aware of Added Sugars

Total Sugars includes both naturally occurring sugars, like fructose and lactose found in fruit and milk, and added sugars.

Get Enough of These Nutrients

Eat more fiber, vitamin D, calcium, iron and potassium to maintain good health. Most Americans do not get the recommended amount of these nutrients.

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	2/3 cup (55g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	230
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
<i>Trans</i> Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	6%

* 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.

Calories

The number of calories in a single serving.

% Daily Values:

- 5% or less is considered low.
- 20% or more is considered high.

Limit These Nutrients

Limit saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, sodium and added sugars.



Ingredients

The ingredients list is found below the nutrition facts label. Ingredients are listed in descending order, with the largest amount listed first.



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www.MilkMeansMore.org

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