

Positive Pulse

Your monthly dose of advice on healthy living

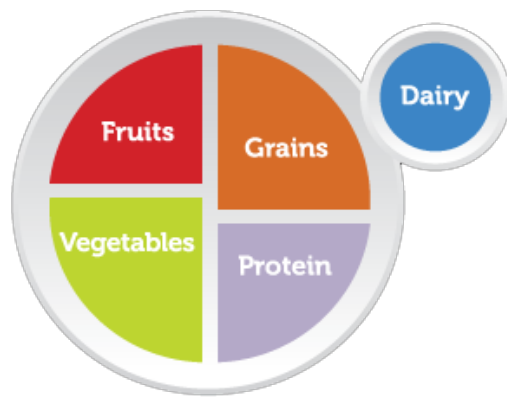
March 2018

Proper Nutrition



March is National Nutrition Month! Good nutrition is an important part of staying healthy. Here are some helpful tips for eating well.

- Proper nutrition starts with knowing the 5 food groups and your daily intake amount.
- It can be hard to stay healthy without breaking the bank, but there are some helpful ways to keep your health and finances in balance.
- Sometimes there isn't time for a full prepared meal, but there are smart ways to pack food for when you are out and about.



Food Groups

Five Food Groups

Different food groups have different nutrients and health benefits. If you regularly skip a group, over time you won't get the best nutrition.

Vegetables

The vegetable portion of MyPlate is shown in green. It's one of the largest sections on the plate because vegetables provide many of the vitamins and minerals we need for good health. Veggies are naturally low in calories and the fiber in them helps us feel full. Choosing variety is important when it comes to vegetables: Dark green vegetables (like broccoli, spinach, and kale) provide different nutrients from orange and red vegetables (like squash, carrots, and sweet potatoes).

Fruits

Like veggies, fruits have vitamins, minerals, and fiber. The red section of MyPlate is slightly smaller than the green, but together fruits and veggies should fill half your plate. Whole fruit is the best choice: Fruit juices have more sugar and calories per serving than whole fruit, and you're not getting the fiber. It's good to mix up your fruit choices: a colorful fruit cup is more than just pretty — it's a nutrition powerhouse.

Grains

The orange section of MyPlate is about one quarter of the plate. Whole grains (like whole-wheat flour) are more nutritious and have lots of dietary fiber that can help you feel fuller longer. Refined grains (white flour) are processed, removing vitamins, minerals, and fiber. Most refined grains are enriched, which means that some of the nutrients, but not fiber, are added back after processing. At least half of the grains you eat should be whole grains like whole-wheat bread, brown rice, or oatmeal.

Protein

High-protein foods help the body build and maintain its tissues. They also have important vitamins and minerals, like iron. The purple section of MyPlate is about a quarter of the plate. Foods high in protein include beef, poultry, seafood, dry beans and peas, eggs, nuts, and seeds. Tofu and veggie burgers or vegetarian meat substitutes are also good sources of protein. When eating meats, choose lean or low-fat options.

Dairy

The blue circle on the MyPlate graphic represents dairy products that are rich in calcium, like milk, yogurt, and cheese. Calcium-fortified soy milk is also included in the dairy group. Calcium builds strong bones and teeth. Choose fat-free or low-fat dairy products most of the time. The blue circle shows dairy as a "side" to your meal, like a glass of milk. But dairy can be part of your meal, like a cheese quesadilla, or served as a snack or

dessert. Yogurt with fresh fruit or a fruit smoothie made with low-fat milk make great desserts.

[Try this quiz to test your knowledge of the food groups!](#)

SOURCE: [ChooseMyPlate.gov](#), [My Plate Food Guide](#)



Being Healthy on a Low Budget

Find Out About SNAP

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provides help for those in need. Eligible families can buy fruit, vegetables, bread, cereal, meat, fish, poultry and milk with this monthly benefit. Plus, grocery, convenience and specialty stores accept the SNAP debit card. And, some stores provide special discounts if you purchase fruits and vegetables with your SNAP card. SNAP also offers resources on stretching your food dollars. For example, the “SNAP Challenge” is a 6-week guide to eating on a SNAP budget. Online information includes grocery lists, recipes and cost estimates for dozens of recipes. Even if you don’t qualify for SNAP, this resource can help you prepare healthy, easy meals on a budget.

Look into the Local Food Bank

Food banks receive surplus foods from national sources, as well as local donations from charities, church groups and individuals. Some distribute prepared boxes with a variety of foods. Others allow you to walk through the warehouse and fill a box yourself. Food banks are a good source for staples such as rice, pasta and canned goods.

Visit Your Local Farmers Market

If your neighborhood doesn't have a supermarket, check out other options for buying fresh produce. For example, farmers markets are sprouting up in many underserved neighborhoods. These markets provide fresh, locally grown produce that you often can purchase with SNAP dollars. And there's another perk: Many states will give double dollars for SNAP participants who use farmers markets. So, \$10 in SNAP benefits will get you \$20 in produce.

Plant a Simple Garden

Even if you live in an apartment, you and your kids can grow your own vegetables. Plant your family’s favorite veggies in a clean clay or plastic pot, trashcan, bucket or another container and place it on a porch, balcony, windowsill or sunny spot.

Food Sharing

Many families and friends use informal food sharing to stretch their budgets. For gardeners and farmers, it may mean exchanging crops. Or, suburbanites might split the cost of foods bought in bulk at discount grocery stores. Another option is to exchange cooked meals once or twice a week, which also saves you meal prep time a day or two a week!

SOURCE: [EatRight.org](#)



Nutrition On-the-Go

PACK A SNACK (OR SEVERAL)

Precision Nutrition coaches carry some interesting items in their bags!



*If traveling for more than an hour or two, consider a soft cooler bag and ice pack for perishables.

ALMOND PROTEIN BARS

Make these in bulk, then throw one in your bag for an on-the-go snack.

- 2 cups vanilla protein powder
- ½ cup oat flour
- 1.5 cups almond meal
- 1 cup chopped almonds
- ½ cup pumpkin seeds
- 1 cup puffed rice

- 2 tbs almond butter
- 2 tbs honey
- ¾ cup almond milk
- ½ tsp almond extract
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- 100 grams dark chocolate



Place chocolate in a bowl over a small sauce pot of water and melt over medium heat.



Combine dry ingredients in one bowl and mix well.



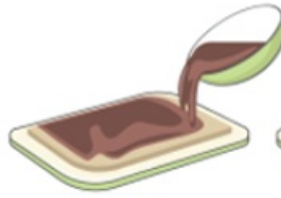
Combine wet ingredients in another bowl and mix well.



Mix the wet and dry ingredients together until incorporated (mixture will have the consistency of cookie dough).



Press out mixture onto a tray, cover with parchment paper and flatten with a rolling pin or the palms of your hands.



Remove paper and drizzle the chocolate evenly over the top.



Freeze for up to 24 hours.



Cut 20 equal portions with a warm knife.



Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 10 days or in the freezer for up to 3 months.

PER BAR:
185 CALORIES
19 G PROTEIN
9 G CARBS
9 G FAT

SOURCE: PrecisionNutrition.com

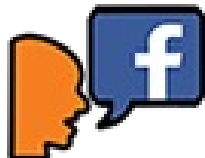
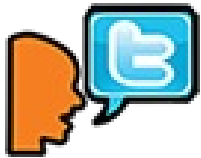
Stay Healthy and Never Neglect Nutrition!



The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey

The Healthy Lifestyles Project (HLP) is a program of The Arc of New Jersey and receives funding through a grant awarded by The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey.

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