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Make good food your key to good health

Healthy foods, healthy you

When you eat healthier, you look healthier. You feel healthier. You *are* healthier.

In fact, a healthy diet can help you avoid serious conditions like heart disease, diabetes, stroke and cancer.

So what exactly is a healthy diet?

The new shape of nutrition

We used to follow the food pyramid. But in 2011, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) swapped this shape for something simpler — a plate. It's called *MyPlate*.

- Half the plate is filled with **vegetables** and **fruit**.
- The other half is filled with **grains** and **proteins**.
- A side portion represents **low-fat dairy**.

Tip: Eat a mixture of all foods. But it's best to eat more vegetables than fruits and more grains than protein.

Vegetables

These health boosters are full of vitamins, minerals and fiber that can lower your risk of heart disease, stroke and cancer.

For the biggest benefit, fill your plate with lots of color, like kale, red peppers and carrots.

Fruits

These natural sweeteners provide nutrients and fiber. And unlike simple carbs, they can satisfy your sweet tooth without the sugar crash.

Again, eat a variety of fruits for the most health benefits.

Protein

Proteins help repair bones, muscles, organs and more. But one-quarter of your plate is enough.

Good protein sources include lean meat, poultry or fish. Or even beans, seeds and nuts.

Fats

We need fats to build healthy cells and cushion organs. The *right* fats.

So stick with healthier fats like vegetable, olive, canola or peanut oil. And avoid saturated and trans fats, like cheese, ice cream and deep-fried foods.

More nutrition tips from the USDA

Try to:

- Avoid oversized portions
- Balance calories with physical activity
- Make at least half of your grains whole grains
- Drink water instead of sugary beverages

Sources: Content from Aetna Inc. and USDA. ChooseMyPlate.gov. Available at: www.choosemyplate.gov. Accessed June 5, 2015.

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