

What's Cookin'?

Ingredients for a Healthy Recipe

With buzz words like "healthy", "all natural", "paleo", "vegan", and "gluten-free" floating around the internet, looking for a truly delicious and nutritious recipe becomes daunting. Instead of relying on influencers or businesses to provide a stamp of approval, here are a few things you should look for when trying to find a recipe that fuels your body with what it needs.



Core Components of a Healthy Recipe

- 1 Whole ingredients.** Healthy recipes prioritize whole, unprocessed- or minimally-processed ingredients over canned, pre-made, or boxed versions that often contain high levels of salt, sugar, and preservatives.
- 2 Lean protein sources.** Good options include fish, skinless poultry, beans, lentils, and tofu. When using ground meat, choose extra-lean varieties.
- 3 Healthy, unsaturated fats.** Use olive oil, avocado oil, and other plant-based oils in moderation. Try to steer clear of saturated and trans fats found in butter, margarine, shortening, and animal products.
- 4 Whole grains.** Choose whole-grains, like brown rice, oats, and quinoa over refined white flour products. If you're enjoying bread or pasta, check the ingredients for 100% whole wheat.
- 5 Natural sweetness.** Rely on recipes that get their sweet flavor from fruits, spices, and extracts (like cinnamon and vanilla) rather than on added sugars.

Methods of Cooking

The method you use to prepare a meal has a major impact on its nutritional value. To avoid adding unnecessary fat and calories, choose the following techniques:



Baking, grilling, or roasting:
Use minimal healthy oils, cooking spray, or stock to achieve a crispy texture.



Stir-frying: A wok with minimal oil allows for fast cooking that keeps nutrients & a crisp texture.

Steaming or poaching:
Low-temp, moist-heat preserves nutrients & doesn't require added fats.



Air frying:
Uses hot air to mimic the results of deep frying with far less oil.



Make Your Favorites Healthier

If your favorite recipe doesn't fit the healthy guidelines, try adapting with a few simple swaps:

- **Reduce saturated fat:** Replace animal fats with plant oils, substitute some oil with applesauce or fruit purée in baking, and opt for leaner meats.
- **Lower sodium:** Flavor your food with herbs, spices, vinegar, and citrus juice instead of salt. Choose low-sodium broths and canned ingredients.
- **Cut sugar:** Reduce the amount of sugar in a recipe by one-third to one-half. Add extracts and spices to enhance flavor naturally.
- **Boost fiber and nutrients:** Add extra vegetables or beans to increase the nutritional value.



The Make-up of MyPlate



It's not just about the recipe you make, it's also about what you put on your plate. Here are a few tips on how you can fill up on the fuel that makes your body function best, while still enjoying the foods you love!

Tips for a Better Plate

Fill your plate with color.

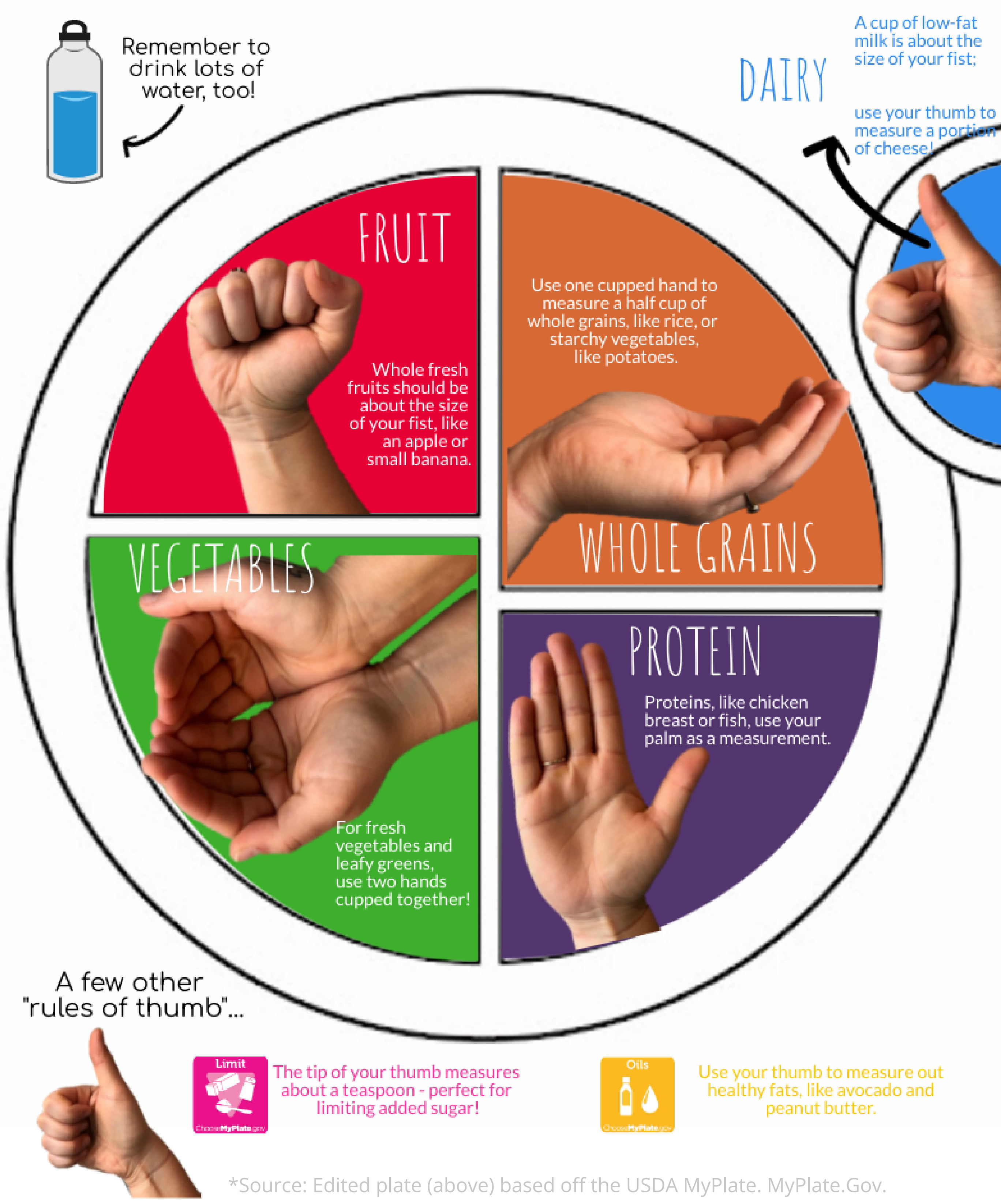
We're not talking about Red Dye #5 or Yellow #3 - think natural colors from tons of fruits and veggies. The more, the better! In fact, colors often denote a slew of antioxidants and phytonutrients!

Eat with Your Hands.

The serving size that accompanies your nutrition information isn't always the portion you give yourself. Use your hands to better measure your portions (and don't worry - your hand size generally correlates well to your body's needs!)

Start Small.

Hunger often makes our eyes feel much bigger than our stomachs, so consider offering yourself a "first serving" - a smaller portion to start, and if you're still hungry after finishing and waiting 5-10 minutes, you can always get seconds.



Look for the best ingredients!

Carbohydrates
45-65% of diet
(1g = 4cal)

Protein
10-35% of diet
(1g = 4cal)

Fats
20-35% of diet
(1g = 9cal)

Carbs are the main source of fuel, and are best when found in whole grains, vegetables, fruits, beans, and legumes.

Essential for building and tissue repair, find your protein in lean meats, poultry, fish, eggs, beans, nuts, seeds, and soy products.

Critical for energy stores, regulation, and more, use fats from plant oils (olive, avocado), nuts, seeds, & fatty fish.