

Taking charge of
your nutrition.

[UHCommunityPlan.com](https://www.uhc.com/community-plan)



Sources: [choosemyplate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov); [eatright.org](https://www.eatright.org); [eatright.org/food/nutrition/healthy-eating/how-much-water-do-you-need](https://www.eatright.org/food/nutrition/healthy-eating/how-much-water-do-you-need)
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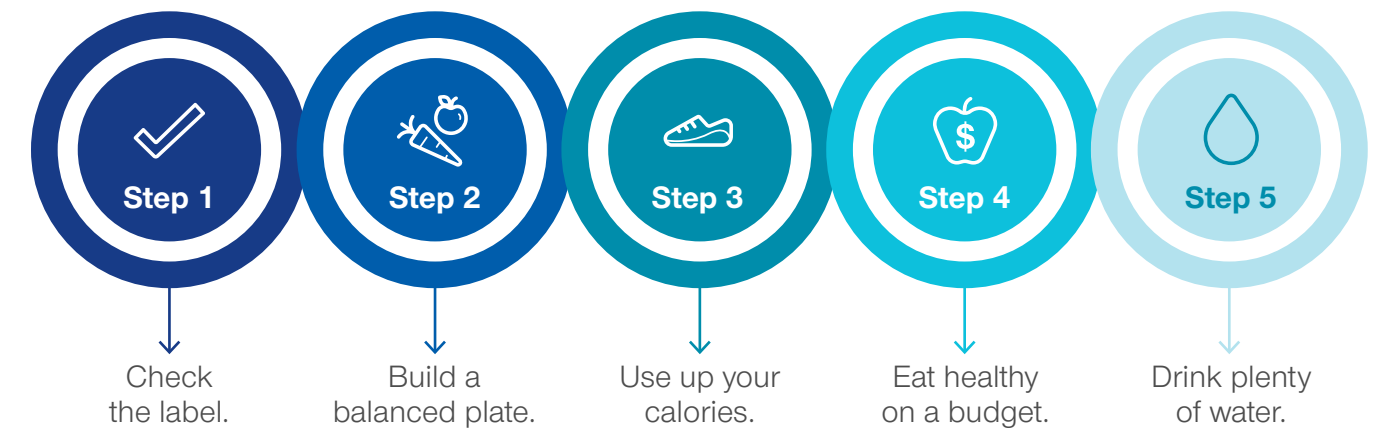
You can take charge of what you eat.

Eating healthy doesn't have to be hard. It all starts with having a more balanced diet for all your meals. That includes fruits, veggies, grains, protein and dairy. Learn more about some of the steps you can take each day to improve the way you eat.



Improving your diet starts with the food you buy. Remember to think healthy when you're at the grocery store or in a restaurant. If you're trying to lose weight, make sure to pay attention to the calories you eat. Follow these steps to help you eat better.

5 simple steps to help you take charge:



1



Check the label.

Look at the Nutrition Facts label on all the packaged goods in the grocery store that you're interested in buying.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size	3 oz. (85g)
Servings Per Container	10
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 38	Calories from Fat 0
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol ...mg	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 0g	3%
Dietary Fiber 0g	8%
Sugars 0g	
Protein 0g	
Vitamin A	270%
Vitamin C	10%
Calcium	2%
Iron	0%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

Start with the Serving Size.

Look here for both the Serving Size (the amount you usually eat at one time) and the number of servings in the package.

Compare your portion size (the amount you actually eat) to the Serving Size listed on the label. The Nutrition Facts applies to the Serving Size. That means if the Serving Size is 1 cup and you eat 2 cups, you are getting twice the calories, fat and other nutrients than what's listed on the label.

Check the calories.

Find out how many calories are in a single serving. This section of the label can help you manage your weight (gain, lose or maintain).

Pay attention to the Percent Daily Values.

Use Percent Daily Values (DV) on the lower part of the label to help figure out how a particular food fits into your daily meal plan. Percent DV are for the whole day, not just a meal or snack. Daily Values are average levels of nutrients for someone who eats 2,000 calories a day. A food item with a 5% DV of fat provides 5% of the total fat that a person eating 2,000 calories a day should eat.



You may need more or less than 2,000 calories per day. For some nutrients you may need more or less than 100% DV.

Low is 5% or less. Go low with foods that have saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol and sodium.

High is 20% or more. Go high with food that has vitamins, minerals and fiber.

Important nutrition terms.

Low calorie. 40 calories or less per serving.

Low cholesterol. 20 milligrams or less and 2 grams or less of saturated fat per serving.

Reduced. At least 25% less of the specified nutrient or calories than the usual product.

Good source of. Provides at least 10-19% of the Daily Value of a particular vitamin or nutrient per serving.

Excellent source of. Provides at least 20% or more of the Daily Value of a particular vitamin or nutrient per serving.

Calorie free. Less than 5 calories per serving.

Fat free/sugar free. Less than 1/2 gram of fat or sugar per serving.

Low sodium. 140 milligrams or less of sodium per serving.

High in. Provides 20% or more of the Daily Value of a particular nutrient per serving.



Remember: The number of servings you eat determines the number of calories you actually eat (your portion amount).

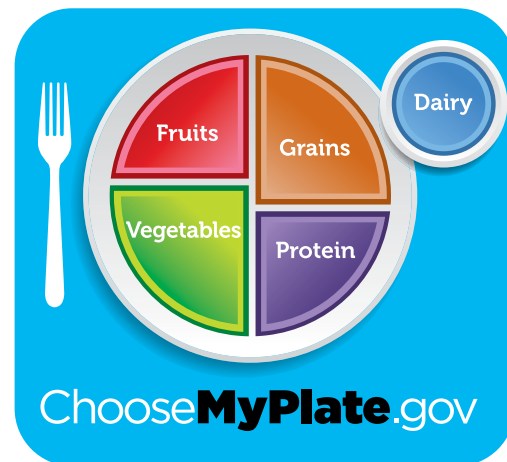
2



Build a balanced plate.



Everything you eat and drink matters. The right choices can help you be healthier now and in the future. Start by making small healthier changes you can enjoy. Figure out your healthy eating style and keep it for the rest of your life.



Half of your plate should be fruits and vegetables. A little more than a quarter should be grains. And a little less than a quarter should be protein. Dairy is shown in a glass (milk), but this group actually includes yogurt, cheese and other dairy products.

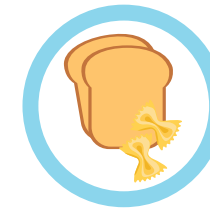
Focus on whole fruits.

- Eat seasonally. Checking what fruits are in season in your area can help you save money.
- Craving something sweet? Try dried fruits like cranberries, mango, apricots, cherries or raisins.



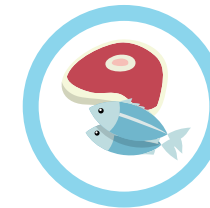
Vary your veggies.

- Add a new vegetable to a different meal each day.
- Add color to salads with baby carrots, shredded red cabbage or green beans.



Make half your grains whole grains.

- Popcorn is a whole grain. Pop a bag of low-fat or fat-free popcorn for a healthier snack.
- Whole grain pasta is great in baked dishes or pasta salad.



Vary your protein routine.

- Roast a larger cut of lean meat.
- For car trips, pack a mixture of unsalted nuts, seeds and dried fruit for a crunchy, protein-packed snack.
- Seafood (canned salmon, tuna, or crab and frozen fish) is quick and easy to prepare.



Move to low-fat or fat-free milk or yogurt.

- Make a smoothie by blending fat-free milk or yogurt with fresh or frozen fruit. Try bananas, peaches or mixed berries.
- Adding 8 oz. of low-fat or fat-free milk to your meal is one of the easiest ways to get dairy.

3



Use up your calories.

Try to use up the calories you take in. Calories are fuel for your body. If they are not used up through physical activity, they'll be stored as fat.

Healthy weight.

Being overweight or obese increases your risk for heart disease. To find out if your weight is in a healthy range, doctors often calculate your body mass index (BMI).

Physical activity.

Physical activity can help you maintain a healthy weight and lower your blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar levels. For adults, the Surgeon General recommends 2 hours and 30 minutes of physical activity, like brisk walking or bicycling, every week.

Body Mass Index (BMI).

BMI is a number created from a person's weight and height. For most people, BMI shows your body fat. It's used to show if your weight may cause problems.

Adult BMI levels and their weight groups.

BMI	Weight Group
Below 18.5	Underweight
18.5 – 24.9	Normal
25.0 – 29.9	Overweight
30.0 and above	Obese

Body weight.

Your heart has to work harder if you have too much weight. It may make your blood pressure higher. Your cholesterol goes up. And it can increase your risk of diabetes.



- You can lower your chance of getting heart disease by losing as little as 10-20 pounds.
- Eat a variety of fruits and vegetables each day. Eat whole-grain foods that have fiber.
- Eat foods with less saturated fat, cholesterol and salt.
- Limit foods that are high in calories and low in nutrients. You can lose weight by eating less calories than you burn every day.

Drink and eat less sodium, saturated fats and added sugars.

Tips for salt and sodium.

Many processed foods have high amounts of sodium. Choose fresh veggies, meats, poultry and seafood when possible. Use spices or herbs like dill, chili powder, paprika or cumin. Lemon or lime juice can also add flavor without adding salt.

Tips for saturated fats.

Keep it lean and flavorful. Try grilling, broiling, roasting or baking. They don't add extra fat. Simple substitutions can help you stay within your saturated fat limit. Try using nonfat yogurt when you make tuna or chicken salad.

Tips for added sugars.

Split the sweet treats and share with a family member or friend. Cut calories by drinking water or unsweetened beverages. Soda, energy drinks and sports drinks are a major source of added sugars.

4



Eat healthy on a budget.



Smart shoppers know that saving money is more than luck. When shopping for groceries, it's about having a game plan and making smart decisions about what to put in your cart. Here are 10 ways to save more at the store.

- 1. Ask for advice.** Grocery stores, ethnic markets, dollar stores, retail supercenters and wholesale clubs can offer good deals. Ask friends and family where they shop and find their best bargains.
- 2. Eat before you shop.** Grocery shopping hungry can lead to impulse buying and unhealthy food choices.
- 3. Read the sales flyer.** Sales flyers are usually released mid-week and can be found at the store's entrance, in the newspaper or on their website.
- 4. Use coupons.** But use them only for items that you know you'll use. If you don't need an item right away, save the coupon and see if it goes on sale.
- 5. Look up and down for savings.** Stores often stock the priciest items at eye level. You can save big by looking at the upper and lower shelves too.
- 6. Check for store brands.** Most stores offer their own brand of products that often cost less than name brands.

- 7. Grab from the back.** Stores usually stock shelves from back to front, placing the newest items behind the older ones. Reach in the back for the freshest items especially in the produce, dairy and meat aisles.
- 8. Ask for a rain check.** If a sale item has run out, ask the store for a rain check. This allows you to pay the sale price after the item is restocked.
- 9. Join your store's loyalty program.** Most stores offer a free loyalty program. Get special offers and discounts that non-members don't.
- 10. Think outside the store.** Farmers markets and farm stands can be great options for picking up fresh produce at a discount.



Most common types of food allergies.

More than 170 foods are known to cause food allergies. However, 8 foods account for 90% of all food-allergic reactions in Americans. They include:

- Milk.
- Eggs.
- Tree nuts (including almonds, walnuts and cashews).
- Peanuts.
- Wheat.
- Shellfish (including shrimp, lobster and crab).
- Soy.
- Fish (including pollock, salmon, cod, tuna, snapper, eel and tilapia).

5



Drink plenty of water.



Everyone needs water. But how much do you need? It can depend on your age, gender, physical activity level and overall health. Women require more water during pregnancy and while they are breastfeeding.

People with certain health conditions, like congestive heart failure or kidney disease, also have different fluid needs. The same is true for those with serious infections or diarrhea.

You usually get about 20% of the water you need from the food you eat. Women need about 9 cups of water per day and men need about 12.5 cups.

Color check.

A quick and easy way to check if you are getting enough water overall is to look at the color of your urine. If you drink enough, the color will be pale yellow. If it's dark yellow or amber, you may need to drink more water.



Sources of water.

You can drink a variety of beverages, plus eat foods that are high in water like fruits and vegetables. You can drink more water by:

- Listening to your body. If you are thirsty, drink water.
- Choosing water. Instead of soda or energy drinks, drink water.
- Having water with meals and between meals.
- Carrying a refillable water bottle so it's there when you want it.
- Adding some flavor. Squeeze fresh lemon or lime juice into your water. Or add a few cucumber slices or fresh basil leaves.



Eat foods that are high in water.

Options with a 90-100% water content include:

- Drinks like water, sparkling water and fat-free milk.
- Fruits like cantaloupe, strawberries and watermelon.
- Veggies like lettuce, cabbage, celery, spinach and cooked squash.

Options with a 70-89% water content include:

- Fruits like bananas, grapes, oranges, pears and pineapples.
- Veggies like carrots, cooked broccoli and avocados.
- Dairy products like yogurt, cottage cheese and ricotta cheese.



Helpful resources.



For more information, visit these websites:

ChooseMyPlate

choosemyplate.gov

Eat Right Nutrition

eatright.org

UnitedHealthcare Community Plan

myuhc.com/CommunityPlan

UHCCommunityPlan.com



Important contacts:

Doctor's name: _____ Phone: _____

Pharmacy: _____ Phone: _____

Urgent Care: _____ Phone: _____

Hospital: _____ Phone: _____

If there's an emergency, call 911.

Notes:
