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# HEALTHY CHOICES FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES

 Cooperative  
Extension Service



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## How MyPlate can help you

**H**ave you ever eaten dinner and then gotten hungry shortly after? Have you ever wanted to take a nap after lunch? You may not have had a balance of the MyPlate food groups at your meal. We all need to consume energy in the form of food each day to function well. Calories are a measure of energy found in carbohydrates, proteins, and fats in foods. The MyPlate food groups have a balance of carbohydrates, proteins, and fats. Eating balanced MyPlate meals helps us feel fuller longer, gives us more steady energy levels, helps us get the nutrients we need, and more.

Do your best to eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner and to use MyPlate when eating each meal. Take note of how you feel after eating a MyPlate meal compared to a meal that isn't balanced. Maybe you feel fine either way. But maybe you notice you are fuller for a longer period of time, get less



sleepy, or are more alert after eating a balanced MyPlate meal. It is a simple concept that can impact your life!

The benefits of MyPlate are even better with time. Not only will you feel better day-to-day, but you will also start to see other benefits. MyPlate can impact

your body inside and out, including how you feel. Next time you decide what to eat, keep MyPlate in mind. Visit [MyPlate.gov](https://www.MyPlate.gov) for more information. Visit [PlanEatMove.com](https://www.PlanEatMove.com) for tasty recipes using the MyPlate food groups.

Source: Jeannie Najor, MS, RD

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## BASIC BUDGET BITES

### Finding the best buy on food

**F**inding the best deal on food is a skill you can learn with a bit of practice.

The first step starts with the price tag. Each price tag on the front edge of the grocery shelf shows helpful tips. It shows the size of the item, the retail price, and the unit price.

- **Retail Price** is the price you pay for each item.
- **Unit Price** is used to compare the price of the same unit (pound, ounce, quart, etc.) between two items. Look for the lowest price per unit. You can use the unit price to compare brands and sizes to figure out which one costs less.



- **Buy in bulk.** It is almost always cheaper to buy food in bulk. Smart choices are family packs of chicken, steak, or fish and larger bags of potatoes and frozen vegetables. You can also buy

grains, such as brown rice, millet, barley, and oats, in bulk. Beans, lentils, some nuts, and dried fruit come in bulk. Buy fresh, low-fat milk, yogurt, and cheese in the largest size you can use before it spoils. Larger sizes often cost less per unit than smaller ones.

Before you shop, check to make sure you have enough freezer space. You can buy canned or frozen fruits or vegetables in large amounts when they are on sale.

- **Buy in season.** Fruits and vegetables that are in season are often cheaper and fresher. If you buy too much, you can freeze the rest or add it into future meal plans. Farmers' markets always carry what is in season. When you can't buy in season, buy frozen. Frozen produce is just as healthy, and you can buy it at any time during the year.
- **Stay away from convenience foods.** Convenience foods like frozen dinners, frozen veggies with added sauces or butter, pre-cut vegetables, pre-bagged salad mixes, flavored rice, oatmeal, or grits will cost you more. The better buy is to prepare your own. Pre-cut, pre-washed, ready-to-eat, and processed foods are handy, but often cost much more.
- **Stock up during sales.** When products you use are on sale, stock up to save money. Make sure the products won't go out of date before you have time to use them. It won't save you money if you end up throwing it out later.

Source: Adapted from Finding the Best Deal on Food | Kentucky Nutrition Education Program (planeatmove.com)



## FOOD FACTS

### Greens

- **Season:** May through June and September through November
- **Nutrition facts:** Greens are a source of vitamins A and C. A half-cup serving has 20% of calcium needed each day. Greens are low in calories with 20 to 30 calories per half-cup serving.
- **Selection:** Look for bright green leaves that are fresh, young, moist, and tender.
- **Storage:** Store greens in the coldest part of the refrigerator for no more than 2 to 3 days.
- **Preparation:** Wash greens well in warm water. Remove roots, rough ribs, and center stalks if they are large or fibrous.
- **To cook:** Add washed greens to a medium-size saucepan with a quarter inch of water. Bring water to a boil. Cover and cook until tender. Leafy greens cook in 1 to 3 minutes. Crisp and tender greens may require 5 to 10 minutes. Spices and herbs will add to the flavor without adding salt. Try allspice, lemon, onion, nutmeg, or vinegar.
- **To freeze:** Wash young, tender green leaves fully and cut off woody stems. Blanch greens for 2 to 3 minutes, cool, drain, and package. Leave a half inch of headspace, seal, label, and freeze. Store greens for up to 1 year in the freezer.

Source: Adapted from University of Kentucky, FCS Extension Plate It Up KY Proud



**PARENT CORNER**

## Tips for picky eaters

### How to cope with picky eating

- Let your kids be “produce pickers.” Let them pick out fruits and veggies at the store.
- Have your child help you make meals.
- Offer choices. Instead of, “Do you want broccoli for dinner?” ask, “Which would you like for dinner, broccoli or cauliflower?”
- Enjoy each other while eating family meals together.
- Offer the same food for the whole family.

### Try new foods

- Start with small portions. Give a small taste first and be patient with them.
- Offer one new food at a time along with something that you know your child likes.
- Be a good role model. Try new foods yourself.
- Offer new foods many times. Sometimes, new foods take time.

### Make food fun

- Cut foods into fun and easy shapes with cookie cutters.
- Name a food your child helps make. Make a big deal of serving “John’s Salad” or “Jane’s Sweet Potatoes” for dinner.

Source: Adapted from Healthy Tips for Picky Eaters (usda.gov)

**COOKING WITH KIDS**

## Green Smoothie

- 1 cup greens, such as spinach or kale
- 1/2 banana, peeled and sliced
- 1/2 cup apple, chopped, or 1 cup fresh or frozen berries
- 1 cup nonfat or low-fat milk

1. Wash hands with warm water and soap, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds.
2. Place all ingredients in a blender in the order listed.
3. Blend until smooth and creamy. Add a little water if you want a thinner smoothie.
4. Store leftovers in the refrigerator within 2 hours.

*Notes: If using greens in a drink sounds weird to you, try spinach. You will barely taste it once mixed with fruits. Use frozen fruit for a thicker, colder smoothie.*

Makes 2 servings  
Serving Size: 1 cup

Nutrition facts per serving: 90 calories; 0 g total fat; 0 g saturated fat; 0 g trans fat; 5 mg cholesterol; 85 mg sodium; 19 g total carbohydrate; 2 g dietary fiber; 13 g total sugars; 0 g added sugars; 5 g protein; 6% Daily Value of vitamin D; 15% Daily Value of calcium; 6% Daily Value of iron; 2% Daily Value of potassium

Source: Green Smoothie | EatFresh.org



**RECIPE**

## Spring Vegetable Sauté

- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1/2 cup sweet onion, sliced
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- 3 new potatoes, quartered
- 1 medium carrot, sliced
- 3 asparagus spears, chopped
- 3/4 cup sugar snap peas or green beans
- 1/2 cup radishes, quartered
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon dried dill or thyme, or spice of your choice

1. Wash hands with warm water and soap, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds.
2. Heat the oil in a large skillet. Cook the onion for 2 minutes. Add garlic and cook another minute.
3. Stir in the potatoes and carrots. Cover, turn the heat to low, and cook until almost tender, about 4 minutes.

4. If the vegetables start to brown, add a tablespoon or two of water.
5. Add the asparagus, peas, radishes, salt, pepper, and dill. Cook, stirring often, until just tender — about 4 minutes more.
6. Serve right away.
7. Store leftovers in the refrigerator within 2 hours.

*Note: Use any variety of vegetables you have on hand for this recipe.*

Makes 4 servings  
Serving Size: quarter of recipe

Nutrition facts per serving: 140 calories; 1.5 g total fat; 0 g saturated fat; 0 g trans fat; 0 mg cholesterol; 220 mg sodium; 28 g total carbohydrate; 7 g dietary fiber; 12 g total sugars; 0 g added sugars; 4 g protein; 0% Daily Value of vitamin D; 8% Daily Value of calcium; 15% Daily Value of iron; 15% Daily Value of potassium

Source: Spring Vegetable Sauté | MyPlate



### SMART TIPS

## Smart summer snacking

**S**ummer brings longer days and warmer weather. It also brings vacations and family outings with kids being out of school. It's easy to grab soda and candy at a gas station. But with some planning you can snack smart on outings this summer.

Pack wise snacks that will fuel your body with protein, fiber, and healthy carbohydrates. This will help you to feel full longer. Some good grab-and-go choices are peanut butter, pre-washed fruit (apples, bananas, grapes), whole-grain crackers, and pretzels. Unsalted nuts, plain popcorn, dried fruit, cherry tomatoes, hummus, or yogurt are also good choices. Divide snacks before you go into single-serve packs. For food items that you need to refrigerate, be sure to store them in a cooler. Keep the cooler temperature less than 40 degrees F using ice packs. Stay hydrated by drinking water. Try drinking fizzy seltzer water or add a slice or two of lemon or lime to regular water to jazz it up.

Source: Adapted from Smart Snacks for Your Trip (eatright.org)

### LOCAL EVENTS

**If you are interested in nutrition classes, contact your Extension office.**

VISIT US ONLINE AT  
[EXTENSION.CA.UKY.EDU/COUNTY](https://extension.ca.uky.edu/county)