**MyPlate and Your Healthy Lifestyle**

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This slide set focuses on USDA’s new dietary guidance symbol, MyPlate, which was introduced in June 2011. The suggested comments expand on the bulleted information in each slide and can be used to help you prepare your presentation using your own personal teaching style.

**[Bracketed comments in bold are my notes to you, the educator.]**

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| **Slide #** | **Suggested Comments** |
| 1  Title Slide | Introduce yourself and make any opening remarks appropriate for your audience.  **Who has heard about or seen the new USDA icon called MyPlate ? [Get input from the group about their impressions of this new icon.]** |
| 2  New Dietary Guidance Icon | MyPlate replaced MyPyramid as the symbol of USDA’s food guidance system in June of 2011. It is a reminder to choose foods from the **five food groups** every day in these proportions. You can see that half of the plate consists of fruits and vegetables and the other half has grain foods and protein foods. Dairy foods are included also. Before we talk about the food groups, let’s look at four lifestyle messages that are key to a healthy life. |
| 3  Key Lifestyle Messages | You can use MyPlate and especially the resources on the ChooseMyPlate.gov website to build an eating plan that is right for you --- your healthy plate! There are some foods that we should eat less of, including foods high in solid fats, added sugars and salt, to get the nutrients we need while reducing our health risks.  Staying within our calorie needs helps with weight management and reduces risk for CVD and other diseases. The other side of the energy equation is burning calories, mainly through physical activity, so be active every day in whatever way that works for your lifestyle. Let’s look at each of these a bit more closely.  **[Hand out *Let’s Eat for the Health of It* if you have the booklet available.]** |
| 4  Build a Healthy Plate | MyPlate emphasizes the relative amount of food to eat from each food groups as well as the choices within each food group.  As you build your plate, select red, orange, and dark-green vegetables and a variety of colorful fruits to **make half your plate fruits and vegetables**. **Skim (fat-free) and 1% milk** have all of the nutrients found in whole milk with less fat and calories. They are the best choice for children over two years and adults. Calcium-fortified foods and beverages are alternatives to dairy foods for some people.  When choosing grains, **make at least half your choices whole grain foods** and **vary your protein food choices** to include seafood and legumes, as well as lean meat and poultry. Whenever you prepare foods, be sure to follow recommendations to **keep your food safe to eat**. You can get information about food safety at [www.foodsafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov).  Tips for getting the most from each of the food groups are provided in the materials available on the ChooseMyPlate.gov website. |
| 5  Cut Back on Foods … | Many of us eat foods with too much of these ingredients. Solid fats and added sugars add extra calories that we don’t need and excess sodium contributes to high blood pressure in many people.  Choose both food and drinks with little or no added sugars. **Water is the best thirst quencher** and it contains no sugar or calories! Increase your fruit intake by having fruit for dessert rather than sugary desserts.  Use **food labels** to compare the sodium content of foods and choose foods with less sodium. Learn to use spices and herbs in cooking to substitute for salt in recipes. Foods that are high in solid fats provide saturated fat and extra calories, so choose them only occasionally rather than on a daily basis. Use oil instead of solid fat for cooking. |
| 6  Eat the Right Amount of Calories for You | To attain or maintain a healthy weight for you, find your calorie goal at ChooseMyPlate.gov [or use the handout, ***Using MyPlate in Your Life***] and use these tips to help you reach your calorie goal.  **Enjoy your food, but eat less.** This recommendation is appropriate for most, but not all, of us. If you want to eat less, avoid oversized portions, use smaller plates, bowls, and glasses, and learn to stop eating when you are **satisfied** rather than waiting until you are full. **Cooking at home** more often puts YOU in control of what’s in your food and how it is cooked. Learn healthy cooking methods and find appropriate recipes on-line or in cookbooks.  **When eating out**, learn to identify **healthy menu options** and don’t be shy about asking how food is prepared. You can also order a small portion or share an entrée with someone. **Writing down what you eat** can help you keep track of how much you eat and avoid overeating.  Sensible drinking is considered no more than 1 drink per day for women or 2 drinks a day for men. Alcohol provides 7 calories per gram, so it can contribute significantly to your calorie intake if you drink more than this. |
| 7  Be Physically Active Your Way | **How many of you consider yourself a physically active person? What type of exercise do you enjoy?**  This recommendation is critical to balance your calorie intake, to improve your fitness, and reduce your risk for CVD and other conditions and diseases.  You will be more likely to stay active if you **do activities that you enjoy**. If you haven’t been physically active, it’s important to **start slowly** and build from there. Remember that **every bit adds up**, so take a short walk on your coffee break, before lunch or after dinner or whenever you can spare at least 10 minutes. Jog in place, do stretches or calisthenics or just walk around while you watch television. **The more time you spend being physically active, the greater the health benefits**. |
| 8  Food Choices within … | Now let’s look at recommended food choices within each of the five food groups in some more detail! |
| 9  Vary Your Veggies | The slogan for the Vegetables group is Vary Your Veggies. **Why do you think variety is emphasized for this group?**  All vegetables provide fiber and water as well as vitamins and minerals, but **they provide them in varying amounts**. MyPlate specifies weekly recommendations for five types of vegetables to help us get all of the nutrients we need while eating a variety of vegetables that we can enjoy. Most of us do not get enough of the **nutrient-rich dark green, orange and red vegetables** which contain carotenoids [*some of which are vitamin A precursors*], vitamin C and other phytochemicals needed for good health. They also taste great!!  Legumes are high in protein and fiber and provide many micronutrients as well. They can be used as a main dish or a side dish. Starchy and other vegetables round out your vegetable choices and provide variety in taste, textures, and nutrients provided. |
| 10  Vary Your Veggies | Here are some ideas for getting a variety of nutrient-rich vegetables in your diet.  **[Review each of the recommendations or have them look them over and then discuss which of them they already are doing; share suggestions, etc*.* ]**  **[For an ACTIVITY, have a variety of unusual vegetables available for them to examine and identify. Get the group up and moving by placing the vegetables around the room. Encourage discussion about how to prepare the vegetables in healthy ways. Have healthy recipes available to share with the group.]** |
| 11  Focus on Fruits | Fruits provide many micronutrients (vitamins and minerals) as well as fiber, water and phytochemicals that may protect against some forms of cancer. Many Americans don’t eat the recommended amount of fruits!  **[Review each of the recommendations or have them look them over and then discuss which of them they already are doing; share suggestions, etc.]** |
| 12  Make Half Your Grains Whole | MyPlate emphasizes whole grain foods to increase fiber intake and intake of several nutrients not found in refined grains. At least half of the grain foods we eat should be whole grains, like whole wheat breads and cereals, bulgar (cracked wheat), oatmeal, brown rice, kasha (buckwheat groats), and quinoa.  **[Review each of the recommendations or have them look them over and then discuss which of them they already are doing; share suggestions, etc.]**  **[ACTIVITY: Have several unusual grains available around the room for them to get up and examine. Ask if they have prepared them and how their families reacted if the grains were new to them. Have recipes available to distribute.]** |
| 13  Get Your Calcium-Rich Foods | MyPlate emphasizes fat-free and low-fat (1%) forms of milk and dairy foods as well as other calcium-rich foods.    For persons who are lactose-intolerant, there are lactose-free dairy foods available, and most cheeses are very low in lactose. Fortified milk also provides vitamin D, which is a critical nutrient that many people do not get in adequate amounts.  Other rich calcium sources include some deep green vegetables, calcium-processed tofu, and fortified grain foods.  **[ACTIVITY: Have a blind taste test of fat-free, 1%, 2% and whole milk. Discuss their preferences and ideas for introducing lower fat milk to their families.]** |
| 14  Go Lean with Protein | Protein is a critical nutrient for everyone, especially growing children. To keep saturated fat low, select lean protein sources and prepare them with no added fat when possible. Legumes can be counted as a protein food when they are used in place of meats. Don’t count them as a protein food **and** a vegetable in the same meal!  Many of us do not include adequate omega-3 fatty acids in our diets and this can increase our risk for CVD. Fatty fish are good sources of this type of fat as are flax seeds and flax seed meal. Nuts are another protein food that can be incorporated into our diets in many ways. |
| 15  Oils: Tips for Healthy Choices | We all need some oil in our diets for the essential fatty acids they provide. To keep our fat intake on the healthful side, we should follow these recommendations.  **[Review each of the recommendations or have them look them over and then discuss which of them they already are doing; share suggestions, etc.]** |
| 16  Using MyPlate in Your Life | **[Give participants the HANDOUT: *Using MyPlate in Your Life – Adults*]**  This handout can help you use MyPlate to build a healthy diet. There are three steps included. First, you need to know what your **estimated daily** **calorie needs** are. After you find your calorie needs, you build your eating plan using a food group chart, which tells you the **amount of food to eat** from each food group to meet your calorie and nutrient needs. For a healthy diet you can follow recommendations for **selecting nutrient-rich foods** from each food group. |
| 17  Estimate Daily Calorie Needs | Here is part of the calorie chart from page 2 of your handout. Find your calorie needs by looking at your gender first; then find your age range; and then your usual activity level. **[If they are younger than the youngest age range on the slide, they can look at the handout.]**  **Are your calorie needs more or less than you thought you required?** If you are overweight, then this calorie level might be less than you need to maintain your body weight and might be a good place to start for a weight loss eating plan. As the handout indicates, aim for a weight loss of about one pound a week and adjust the amount of food you eat over time to reach that goal. |
| 18  Daily Amount of Food from Each Food Group | Once you know your daily calorie level, you can find the **amount of food from each food group** that is recommended. Most of you probably have calorie needs between 1600 and 2200, although the handout and the website include a wider range of calorie levels. By using these food group amounts, you can get the nutrients you need within your calorie needs, **as long as you make low-fat choices** within each food group. Use the tips we have been discussing and the information on page 4 of the handout to pick a variety of healthy foods to meet your calorie and food goals. |
| 19  ChooseMy Plate.gov | This is what the ChooseMyPlate.gov website home page looks like. You can see that there are links to many resources and lots of information for making healthy food choices. You can get your own individualized eating plan at the website, including sample menus. |
| 20  Resources | Here are some **reliable and useful** resources that you may want to look at. |
| 21  Increasing PA | Now, along with food intake recommendations, MyPlate educational materials emphasize the importance of being physically active as well. How many of you are familiar with chair dancing? Let’s give it a try. |
| 22  Slide Set Prepared by … | Please acknowledge the slide set author. |