Nutrition Tips

Portion Sizes: Use MyPlate as a guide for what to eat each day. The amount of food you need to eat from each food group depends on age, sex, and level of physical activity.

A Variety of Vegetables: Fill half your plate with vegetables and fruits. Choose a variety from these vegetable groups: **dark green** (broccoli, spinach), **red & orange** (tomatoes, carrots), **beans & peas**, **starchy veggies** (potatoes, corn, green peas), and **other veggies** (cabbage, cauliflower, eggplant).

A Range of Fruits: Fresh, whole fruits are ideal because you get the added value of maximum vitamins and fiber in your diet. Frozen, dried fruit and 100% fruit juice count.

Healthy Whole Grains: Choose brown rice, whole-grain bread, and whole-wheat pasta over white rice, white bread, and regular pasta. Also add whole grains like oatmeal, muesli, and bulgur to your diet. Whole grains give you the entire grain, including the bran "coating" and the nutrient-rich "germ" inside the grain.

Lean Protein Foods: Fill only a quarter of your plate with protein foods. Limit processed meats like hot dogs, luncheon meats, and sausage, which have added fat and salt. Healthy protein: eggs, lean cuts of beef, pork,& other meats; fish and shellfish; beans and peas; low-fat tofu and other soy products; chicken, turkey, and other poultry; nuts and seeds (use sparingly). Because beans and peas are high-protein vegetables and a staple in vegetarian diets, they count as both "protein foods" and "vegetables" in meal planning.

Low-Fat Dairy: A "glass-of-dairy" is a reminder to add low-fat milk, cheese, yogurt, and other calcium-rich dairy products to your diet. Also calcium-fortified soy milk and lactose-free milk are available. High-fat foods made from milk, such as cream cheese and butter, don't count as "dairy."

More MyPlate Tips for Good Nutrition
- Switch to nonfat or 1% milk to reduce extra fat calories.
- Avoid oversized portions and "super-sized" meals. Savor meals rather than pile on more food.
- Choose low-salt soups, breads, frozen meals, sauces, and other processed foods.
- Avoid sugary drinks and sodas, and drink water instead.
- Oils have been dropped as a separate group because many foods already contain oils and a major goal for most Americans is to cut back on fat.

Sources: www.webmd.com and www.myplate.com