

Putting MyPlate Into Action

Let's see how you can use your personalized MyPlate to make healthy food choices. Here is a typical breakfast bought at a local drive through. Let's find out where each part falls on MyPlate.

A large bagel equals 4 grain servings. The egg is a serving from the protein group. The bacon is also in the protein group. And the cheese is 1 dairy serving. This breakfast may sound good to you. You are starting your day off with food from 3 food groups. But the choices made are high in fat and processed grains – not the healthiest foods you can find.

Let's try this again, keeping MyPlate in mind. Start by making half your grains whole. Trade in the large, white flour bagel for one made with whole grain, or a whole grain corn tortilla. One scrambled egg from the protein group can be topped with black beans, and salsa to add taste and help you vary your veggies. Half a grapefruit will help you focus on fruits and low-fat milk will help you get calcium-rich foods, while watching your waistline.

By making these choices, you are getting a variety of foods from more food groups. And your choices are healthier. After getting a balanced start, keep making healthy choices throughout the day. The possibilities are endless.

Here are just some examples: For lunch, try a smoked turkey sandwich with lettuce, tomato, and mustard. Add one cup of tomato juice to vary your veggies and finish it all off with apple slices. Half your plate is fruits and vegetables.

If you crave an afternoon snack, try whole wheat crackers for whole grains. Low-fat yogurt topped with berries can be a great snack or keep dried fruit at your desk to help you get your daily fruit servings.

For dinner, try grilled chicken, a baked potato topped with salsa, a small salad, and a glass of fat-free milk. Sounds like a tasty dinner! Not in the mood for chicken? Try a pasta meal instead. Whole wheat pasta with tomato sauce and veggies can make a delicious, healthy dinner for the whole family. Just make sure you eat only the correct portion for you.

After dinner, get away from the TV or computer and walk with your family or choose another activity you enjoy. Whatever you decide to eat, keep MyPlate in mind. Log onto www.ChooseMyPlate.gov when you're planning your meals.

Or download the Start Simple with MyPlate app to set daily foods goals and get tips to help you meet your goals.