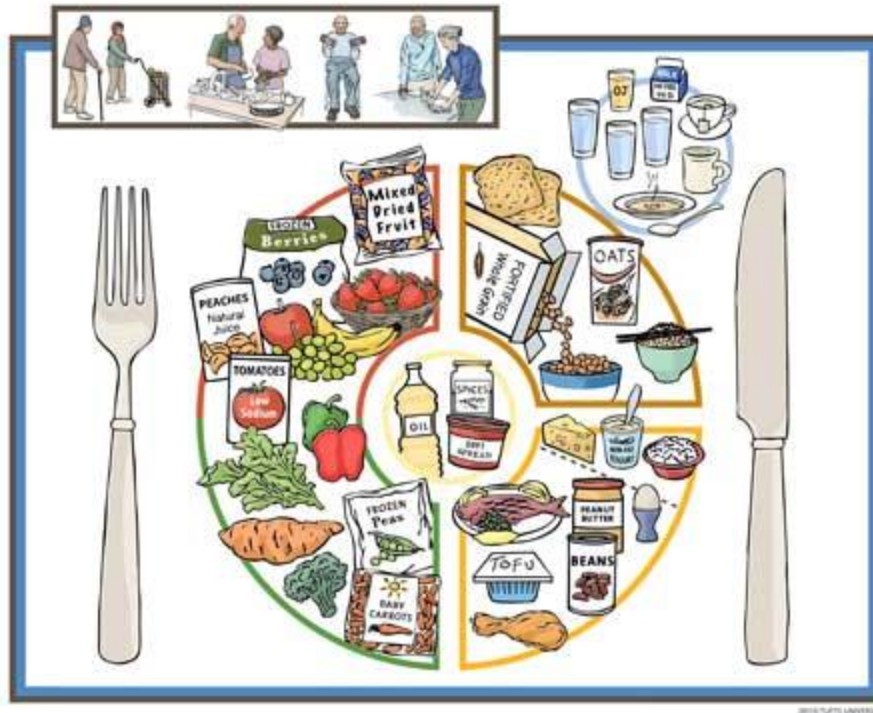


MyPlate for Older Adults



Tufts University Nutrition Scientists Unveil MyPlate for Older Adults

MyPlate for Older Adults calls attention to the unique nutritional and physical activity needs associated with advancing years.

“Although calorie needs decline with age due to a slow-down in metabolism and physical activity, nutritional requirements remain the same or in some cases increase,” explains Alice H. Lichtenstein, DSc, senior scientist and director of the Cardiovascular Nutrition Laboratory at the USDA HNRCA.

“MyPlate for Older Adults provides examples of foods that contain high levels of vitamins and minerals per serving and are consistent with the federal government’s 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, which recommend limiting foods high in *trans* and saturated fats, salt and added sugars, and emphasize whole grains. **MyPlate for Older Adults is intended to be a guide for healthy, older adults who are living independently and looking for examples of good food choices and physical activities.**”

The following foods, fluids and physical exercises are represented on My Plate for Older Adults:

- Bright-colored vegetables such as carrots and broccoli.
- Deep-colored fruit such as berries and peaches.
- Whole, enriched and fortified grains and cereals such as brown rice and 100% whole wheat bread.
- Low- and non-fat dairy products such as yogurt and low-lactose milk.
- Dry beans and nuts, fish, poultry, lean meat and eggs.
- Liquid vegetable oils, soft spreads low in saturated and *trans* fat, and spices to replace salt.
- Fluids such as water and fat-free milk.
- Physical activity such as walking, resistance training and light cleaning.

Half of the MyPlate for Older Adults includes fruit and vegetables:

- produce with deep-colored flesh, such as peaches, berries, tomatoes, kale and sweet potatoes
- frozen, pre-peeled fresh, dried and certain low-sodium, low-sugar canned options, because fruits and vegetables in those forms contain as many, or more, nutrients as fresh. They are easier to prepare, are more affordable and have a longer shelf life.

One Fourth of MyPlate for Older Adults includes whole grains

- whole, enriched and fortified grains because they are high in fiber.
- Oats, rice, multigrain

One Fourth of MyPlate for Older Adults includes protein sources

- Suggested protein sources include plant-based options such as beans and tofu, as well as fish and lean meat.
- vegetable oils and soft spreads as alternatives to foods high in animal fats because those products are higher in saturated and *trans* fat.

Blood pressure tends to increase as we age, so it is especially important for older adults to monitor dietary salt.

- limiting sodium intake to less than 1,500 milligrams per day
- alternatives to salt such as **flavoring with spices and choosing the low-sodium options of items such as canned vegetables**

The inclusion of several examples of liquids such as water, tea, coffee and soup addresses the common, age-related decline in thirst that can put older adults at risk for dehydration, particularly during periods of sustained hot weather.