

Plant-Based Eating

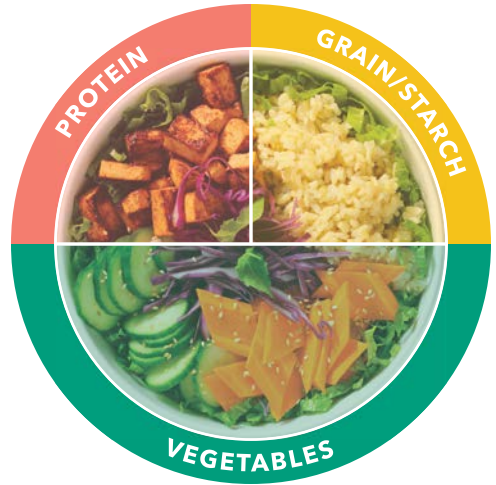
Using the Healthy Plate to Eat Well



What is plant-based eating?

Plant-based eating is eating plant foods in their whole, unprocessed forms. This includes vegetables, fruits, beans, lentils, nuts, seeds, whole grains, and small amounts of healthy fats. It can help you limit animal products (meat, poultry, fish, dairy, eggs), processed foods, and sweets.

You can eat healthier without having to give up the foods you love! Small changes to the foods you eat can have a huge impact on your health. A good way to start is by eating more plant foods and fewer animal products, processed foods, and sweets. This plan will help you increase the amount of plant foods you eat by using the healthy plate.



What are the benefits of eating more plants?

- Lowers cholesterol, blood pressure, and blood sugar
- Reduces the risk of heart disease, certain cancers, weight gain, high blood pressure, and diabetes
- Less inflammation in the body
- Reducing meat and dairy products is better for the environment

Best of all, plant-based eating can be a tasty and enjoyable way to eat!

Starchy Vegetables

Corn, cassava (yuca), green peas, plantains, potatoes, winter squash, yams

| Daily Servings | Serving Size | Protein |
|----------------|--------------|---------|
| 2-4 servings | ½ cup | 2 grams |

Fruits

Apples, apricots, bananas, berries, grapes, kiwi, mango, melon, oranges, papaya, pineapple

| Daily Servings | Serving Size | Protein |
|----------------|---|----------|
| 3-4 servings | 1 small piece 1 cup berries or melon | ½-1 gram |

Beans, Peas, Lentils, or Meat Alternatives

Beans (kidney, black, garbanzo, pinto, great northern, adzuki), edamame (green soybeans), green and black-eyed peas, lentils, soy or other protein patties or links (choose very rarely), tempeh, tofu

| Daily Servings | Serving Size | Protein |
|----------------|--------------------|------------|
| 2-5 servings | ½ cup cooked beans | 7-10 grams |

Whole Grains

Amaranth, barley, brown or wild rice, buckwheat, bulgur, farro, millet, oats, quinoa, rye, sorghum, whole-grain bread, whole-grain unsweetened cereal, whole-wheat pasta, whole-wheat tortillas

| Daily Servings | Serving Size | Protein |
|----------------|--|-----------|
| 5-8 servings | ½ cup cooked grain ¾ cup dry cereal 1 slice bread 1 small tortilla (6 inches) | 4-8 grams |

Tips to Get Started

- Think about the meatless meals you already cook at home: whole-wheat pasta with marinara sauce; black beans and rice; lentil soup and salad.
- Change a favorite recipe to be plant-based.
 - Make burritos or tacos with beans, rice, and vegetables without the meat and cheese.
 - Prepare chili with beans and no meat.
 - Replace burgers with veggie burgers or grilled portobello mushrooms.
 - Make kebabs with vegetables such as onions, bell peppers, summer squash, and mushrooms.
 - Make lentil or split pea soup without meat, and don't use chicken or beef broth.
- Try some new recipes. Check the end of this booklet for resources. You can also get cookbooks from your local library or Kaiser Permanente Healthy Living Store.
- Use frozen fruits and vegetables for an easy, low-cost way to eat more plants.
- When you cook beans from scratch, the quick-soak method can help remove some of the indigestible sugars that cause gas.
 - Put the beans in a large pot and cover with 2 inches of water.
 - Bring to a boil for 3 minutes.
 - Cover and set aside for 1 to 4 hours.
 - Rinse and drain well.
- Drink plenty of water. It's best to avoid fruit juice and other sugary drinks, and to avoid or cut down on regular and sugar-free soda.
- Check out a farmers market for good deals on produce.
- Use spices, fresh herbs, and nutritional yeast to add flavor.
- Try adding more hearty, savory flavors with mushrooms, miso or other fermented foods, tomatoes, and potatoes.

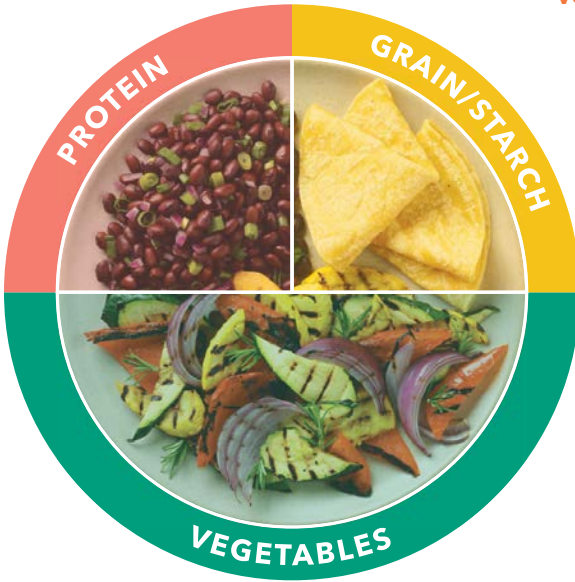
Creating Plant-Based Meals

The Healthy Plate

Use the healthy plate method to portion your food in an easy and healthy way for each meal.

Fill $\frac{1}{4}$ of your plate with a **plant-based protein**.

Fill $\frac{1}{4}$ of your plate with a **healthy grain or starchy vegetable**.



Fill $\frac{1}{2}$ of your plate with **nonstarchy vegetables**.



Add a **fruit**, a **salad**, and **1 ounce of nuts** to at least one meal or as part of a healthy snack.

Meal Ideas

Breakfast

Have oatmeal, quinoa, or barley with nuts, fruit, and unsweetened almond, rice, hemp, or soy milk alternative. An ounce or two of nuts and a piece of fruit is a quick and easy option. Make a smoothie with a tablespoon of almond butter, a banana, unsweetened almond milk, and a handful of kale or other green leafy vegetable. Try a tofu scramble with vegetables.

Lunch and Dinner

Have a large salad or a large serving of cooked nonstarchy vegetables with beans and potatoes or a whole grain.

Sample Menus

- Breakfast**
- Breakfast burrito with beans and vegetables
 - Small piece of fruit
 - Tea or coffee
-

- Lunch**
- Whole-wheat pita with hummus, tomatoes, red onions, and cucumber
 - Kale sautéed with vegetable broth
 - Salad with vegetables and balsamic vinegar
 - Banana
 - Unsweetened tea
-

- Dinner**
- Grilled portobello mushroom “burger” with caramelized onions
 - Quinoa and bean salad
 - Broccoli
 - Kale salad
 - Strawberries
 - Unsweetened tea

Special Nutrients to Consider

If you have questions about any of these nutrients, especially about whether you should take a supplement, **talk with your doctor or registered dietitian.**

Protein

Protein builds and repairs muscles, bones, skin, and the immune system. You also need it to make hormones and enzymes. Proteins are made up of amino acids. Your body can make some amino acids. The ones your body cannot make are called *essential*.

You can easily meet your protein needs each day from plant foods such as beans, peas, lentils, nuts, seeds, soy products, whole grains, and vegetables. Quinoa, a seed that acts like a grain, is a great source of protein and all the essential amino acids.

Adults need about 0.36 grams of protein per pound of body weight a day. Multiply your weight by 0.36 to find out how much protein you need. For example, if you weigh 160 pounds: $160 \times 0.36 =$ about 58 grams of protein a day.

B12

Your body needs vitamin B12 to make red blood cells and for nerve function. If you don't get enough B12, you can develop anemia or nerve damage. Most B12 comes from animal foods. **B12 is found in some fortified foods, such as cereal, rice or hemp milk, meat substitutes, and nutritional yeast.** Read labels for these products to make sure B12 has been added.

Because it may not be easy to get enough B12 from fortified foods, it may be best to take a supplement. As you get older, your body is less able to absorb B12. Your doctor may suggest a supplement or shot to help prevent a deficiency.

Vitamin D

Vitamin D is needed for strong bones and for muscles, nerves, and the immune system to work properly. Very few foods have vitamin D. We get most of our vitamin D when the **skin is exposed to the sun**, but many people do not make enough this way. **Some foods, such as soy or almond milk and cereal have added vitamin D.** You may need to take a supplement.

Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Omega-3 fatty acids, such as EPA and DHA, may lower the risk of heart disease and help the immune system and brain. **Good sources include ground flaxseeds and flaxseed oil, walnuts, chia seeds, and canola oil.** Plant-based omega-3s don't easily convert to EPA and DHA in the body. For some people, including pregnant women or people with chronic health conditions, taking a micro-algae supplement may be helpful.

Tell Your Doctor About Your Plant-Based Eating

Making a lot of healthy changes can lower your blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol. Plant-based eating can also affect thyroid or blood-thinning medications [warfarin (Coumadin)]. If you are taking medications, make sure to tell your doctor that you are plant-based eating. He or she may need to change some or all your medications. Your health condition may need to be monitored more often for a short time.

This week I will:

| | |
|--|------------|
| | (what) |
| | (how much) |
| | (when) |
| | (how many) |

How confident are you that you will succeed with your plan?



0 = not confident at all

10 = totally confident

I will make a commitment to _____ to
(friend or family member)
follow my action plan and report back on how I did.

Did you complete your action plan?

| Yes | No |
|-----|----|
| | |

| | |
|------|--|
| Name | |
| Date | |

Congratulations on taking this important step to improve your health and wellness!

If you find you can't do plant-based eating 100% of the time, that's OK. Any movement toward more plants and fewer animal products, processed foods, and sweets can improve your health!

