

Create Healthy Choices Program Policies

PURPOSE

"Families and individuals who utilize food pantries should have access to foods that will fill their bellies and nourish their bodies. There is a misconception that healthy foods are only available to the middle and upper classes. Regardless of geographical location or socio-economic status, we believe that everyone deserves access to foods that will help them be their best and live long, healthy lives."

"The goal of [these policies, for you as a volunteer], is to make healthier choices more visible to people receiving food from food pantries. We understand that people utilizing these services will not always be in a place where nutritious food is a priority for them, and we respect that. However, if people desire to make healthier choices, we want it to be easy."

-Create Healthy Choices Pantry Toolkit

The healthy choice guidelines [in these policies] are based on Feeding America's "Foods 2 Encourage," the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans, Healthy Eating Research Nutrition Guidelines for Charitable Food Systems, and Smart Snacks in Schools Guidelines. Create Healthy Choices (formally known as Thumbs Up for Healthy Choices) was developed by the Utah State University Extension's SNAP-Ed program, Create Better Health.



POLICY #1

Provide Nutrition Education for Pantry Volunteers



POLICY #2

Educate Clients on Making Healthy Choices

HEALTHY CHOICE STICKERS

Thumbs Up Shelf Talkers

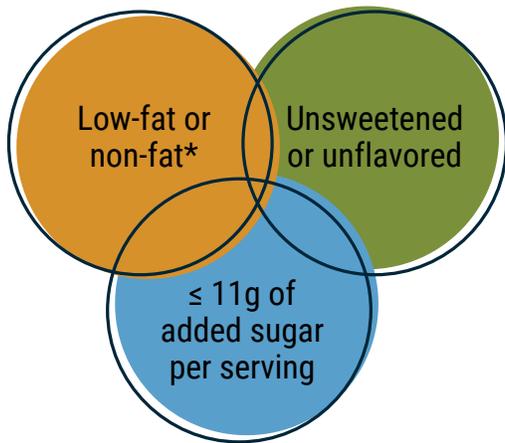
Shelf talkers are a marketing tool used to direct consumers' attention to a specific product. Shelf talkers have proven to increase the likelihood that a consumer will purchase/choose the item they are promoting.

Thumbs Up shelf talkers are meant to be placed in front of products that meet the criteria outlined in these policies.



Dairy

WHAT TO LOOK FOR:



In the Food Pantry

- Milk
- Cheese; cottage cheese
- Yogurt
- Milk alternatives (soy, rice, almond, or coconut milks)

Healthy choice tips

- Choose 1% or skim milk.
- Choose low-fat or non-fat cheeses.
- Choose unflavored/unsweetened milk, milk substitutes, and yogurts. Look for dairy products with <11 g of added sugar.

Why eat dairy?

Dairy builds strong bones and teeth, may help lower blood pressure, and reduce the risk for diabetes and heart disease.

Dairy is an important source of many nutrients that are often under-consumed in our diets including:

- Calcium
- Vitamin D
- Potassium

What is the recommended daily amount?



MyPlate recommends that the average adult eat/drink 3 cups of dairy each day. This provides the recommended amount of calcium.

1 cup of dairy is equivalent to:

- 1 cup (8 oz.) milk, yogurt, or milk alternative**
- 1.5 oz. natural cheese (cheddar, mozzarella, etc.)
- 1 oz. processed cheese (i.e. American)

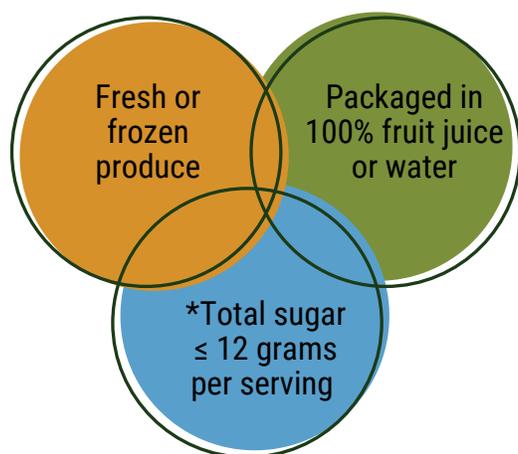
*Low-fat is 1% milk or yogurts and non-fat is skim milk or yogurts.

**Milk alternatives include soy, rice, almond, or coconut milk and dairy product alternatives (i.e. cheese)



Fruits

WHAT TO LOOK FOR:



In the Food Pantry

- Fresh, whole or sliced fruits
- Frozen fruit
- Canned fruit, in 100% fruit juice or water
- Dried fruits
- 100% fruit juice

Healthy choice tips

- Choose frozen, canned, or dried fruit with no added sugars, low sodium (<230 mg) and <2 g of saturated fat.
- Drain or rinse fruits packaged in light or heavy syrup to reduce added sugars.

Why eat fruits?

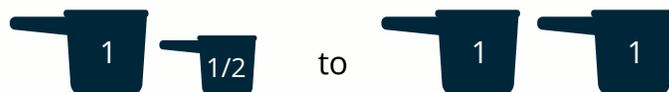
Diets rich in fruits are associated with a reduced risk of many chronic diseases including obesity, type II diabetes, heart disease, and certain types of cancer.

Fruits are an important source of many nutrients that are often under-consumed in our diets including, but not limited to:

- Vitamins A, C, and folate
- Potassium
- Fiber

Whole fruits offer more fiber and less sugar than 100% fruit juice, making it a better option.

What is the recommended daily amount?



MyPlate recommends that the average adult eat 1.5 to 2 cups of fruit each day. It is recommended that most of the fruit consumed be whole fruit, rather than juice.

1 cup of fruit is equivalent to

- 1 cup chopped or diced fruit
- 1/2 cup dried fruit
- 8 oz. 100% fruit juice
- 1 whole fruit, e.g. 1 medium pear, 1 small apple, 1 large banana (8-9")

*Fruits canned in light syrup or heavy syrup have a significant amount of added sugar. Fruits canned in water or 100% fruit juice have lower sugar content.

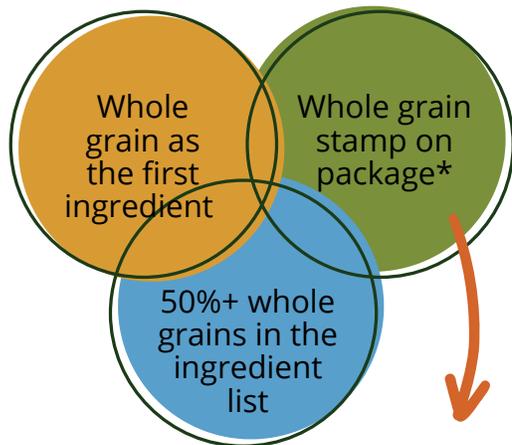


Grains

In the Food Pantry

- Whole wheat bread/rolls
- Whole grain crackers
- Brown rice
- Oats and oatmeal
- Popcorn without extra salt and butter
- Cereals with <10g of added sugar
- Whole grain pasta

WHAT TO LOOK FOR:



Why eat grains?

Diets rich in grains/whole grains may help reduce blood cholesterol levels and may lower the risk of heart disease, obesity, and type 2 diabetes. Many of the health benefits come from the fiber, which can be found in whole grains.

Fiber:

- Helps the digestive tract work properly and efficiently
- Transports cholesterol
- Keeps you feeling full longer

What is the recommended daily amount?

MyPlate recommends that the average adult eat 6-oz. of grains with half of the grains consumed being whole grains (~3 ounces).

1-oz. of grains is equivalent to:

- 1/2 cup cooked pasta
- 1 slice bread
- 1 small corn or flour tortilla
- 1/2 cup cooked rice
- 1/4 large bagel
- 3 cups popped corn
- 1/2 cup cooked cereal

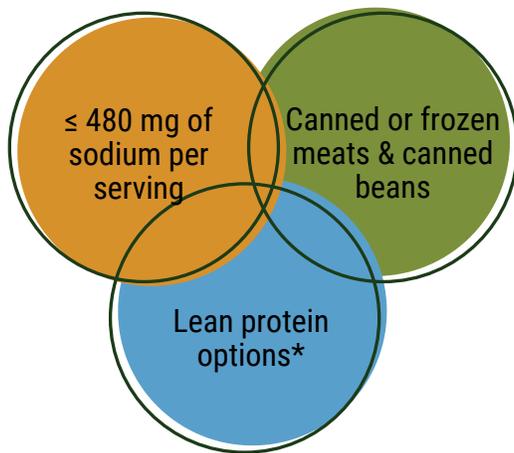


*The 100% Stamp appear on products containing one or more servings of whole grain in each labeled serving and that ALL the grain is whole grain. The 50%+ Stamp and the Basic Stamp appear on products containing at least half of a serving of whole grain per labeled serving.



Protein

WHAT TO LOOK FOR:



In the Food Pantry

- Fish, eggs, beef, chicken, pork, etc.
- Beans and lentils - dried or canned, no salt added
- Tofu or other soy products
- Nuts and nut butter
- Canned meats, in water

Healthy choice tips

- Trim fat and skin from meat before cooking.
- Drain fat from cooked ground meat and rinse in hot water.
- Drain and rinse canned meats and beans.
- Replace some of the meat in a recipe with beans to reduce fat and save money.

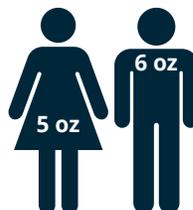
Why eat protein?

Protein is a building block for muscles, bones, cartilage, skin, and blood. Protein also helps the body grow and heal.

What is the recommended daily amount?

The amount of protein a person needs depends on the individual. MyPlate recommends protein amounts in what is called 'ounce equivalents'.

1 oz. of protein is equivalent to:



- 1 medium egg
- 1 Tbsp of peanut butter
- 1/4 cup cooked beans
- 2 almonds, 7 walnut halves, or 24 pistachios
- 1 slice of deli-sliced meat

Chicken, beef, seafood, and pork are more likely to be served in at least 3 oz. portions.

3 oz. is equivalent to:

- 1/2 of 1 small chicken breast half
- 1 small lean hamburger patty
- 1 can of tuna, drained

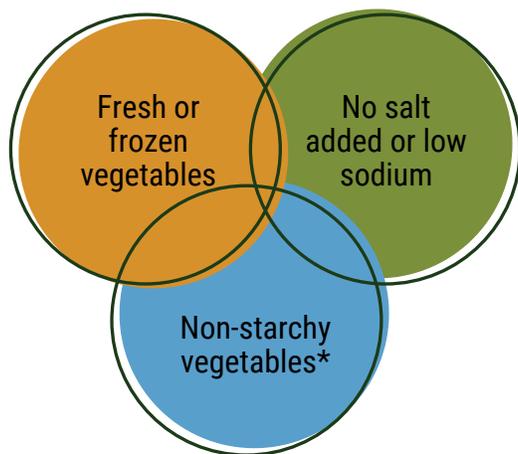
*85/15 ground beef (or leaner), skinless chicken breasts, lean turkey or roast beef luncheon meats, fish** (including salmon and sardines), beans, lentils, tofu, etc.

**It is recommended to eat two 4 oz. servings/week because of high omega-3 fat content.



Vegetables

WHAT TO LOOK FOR:



In the Food Pantry

- Fresh, whole or precut vegetables
- Frozen vegetables
- Canned vegetables, low-sodium or no salt added

Healthy choice tips

- Vegetables can be fresh, frozen, precut or canned.
- Canned vegetables that are labeled low-sodium or no salt added are the healthiest option.
- When low sodium options are not available, drain and rinse canned vegetables to reduce salt content.

Why eat vegetables?

Diets rich in vegetables are associated with a reduced risk of many chronic diseases including obesity, type II diabetes, heart disease, and certain types of cancer.

Vegetables are an important source of many nutrients because of their high content of vitamins A, C, and folate; potassium; and fiber.

Focusing on a variety of colors will ensure that you receive all the health benefits associated with eating vegetables. Different colors of vegetables offer different vitamins, minerals, and phytochemicals.

What is the recommended daily amount?



MyPlate recommends that the average adult eat 2.5 to 3 cups of vegetables each day. It is recommended that a wide variety of colors of vegetables be consumed.

1 cup of vegetables is equivalent to:

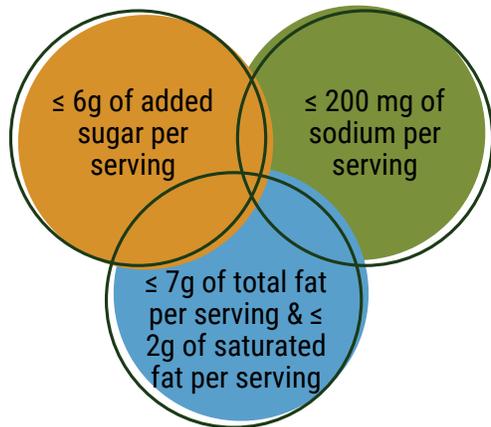
- 1 cup of cooked or raw vegetables
- 2 cups raw, leafy greens (lettuce, spinach, kale, etc.)

*Asparagus, beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, cucumber, dark leafy greens, eggplant, green bean/pea, mushrooms, onions, peppers, squash, tomato, etc.



Snacks

WHAT TO LOOK FOR:



In the Food Pantry

- Granola/Protein Bars or Trail Mix
 - First ingredient must be a whole grain, fruit, vegetable, protein, or dairy food.
- Nuts or Seeds
- Pretzels, Crackers, Rice Cakes, etc.
 - First ingredient must be a whole grain or vegetable (i.e. rolled oats, wheat, sweet potato).

Healthy choice tips

- Pick a food with fiber. Fiber is found in the skins of fruits and vegetables, whole grains and cereals, nuts and legumes.
- Add a source of protein. Protein can be found in eggs, nuts and nut butters, seeds, soy based products, beans, meats, poultry, and seafood.

Why eat snacks?

Snacks are small portions of food, just enough to keep your stomach full until it's time for your next meal. Snacks that include fiber and protein are the best at keeping you full and satisfied.

Healthy snack building

Build a satisfying and nutrient filled snack by including a grain, fruit or veggie, and protein.

- Grains give your body energy, help fuel your muscles, and keep you full with fiber.
- Fruits and vegetables bring vitamins, minerals, and lots of flavor.
- Protein foods keep you full, help build your muscles, and help your body heal.

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