

PRESENTATION GUIDE: Make *MyPlate* Your Plate!

INGREDIENTS FOR A DYNAMITE PRESENTATION

Supplies

- Food Card List
- Food Cards (1 set per person and 1x table)
- Whole Grain Ritz Cracker Food Label (1 per group)
- Flip Chart Paper
- Markers (one set for each group)

Handouts

- > MyPlate Icon
- > What is a Whole Grain?
- > What's On Your Plate?
- > Liven up Your Meals with Vegetables and Fruits
- > MyPlate Frequently Asked Questions

Objectives

Participants can:

1. List three key messages of MyPlate
 2. Identify foods from each food group
 3. Plan a meal using MyPlate concepts
 4. Find and utilize the available MyPlate website, tools, and resources
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I. What is MyPlate?

Good morning. My name is _____. Welcome to the *Make MyPlate Your Plate* presentation.

Today we are going to get you familiar with MyPlate, a tool to help you create healthy balanced meals without having to measure food.

In this training, you will learn about the food groups that make up MyPlate, how to plan a balanced meal using MyPlate, and what resources are available on the ChooseMyPlate website.

How many of you are familiar with MyPlate? (Wait for response).

I'm glad to see that some of you are already familiar with MyPlate. Let's take a closer look at the MyPlate tool. Please take out your MyPlate handout.



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*[Hold up handout: **MyPlate Icon**]*

As you can see, MyPlate contains sections that include fruits, vegetables, grains, protein, and dairy. It is designed to help people determine healthy portions of each food group in relation to each other.

So you might ask yourself, "What if I don't eat off of a plate? Can I still use this tool?"

Yes you can! Later we will do an activity that looks at this issue, but for now, let's get familiar with the MyPlate sections: fruits, vegetables, grains, protein, and dairy.

A. Fruits and Vegetables

Let's first talk about fruits and vegetables. The MyPlate message is to fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables.

I think most people can identify fruits and vegetables. Aside from eating half a plate of fruits and vegetables, we encourage you to choose a variety of colors, especially red, orange, and dark green vegetables like tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and broccoli. Each color provides us with different nutrients.

[Ask the audience]

What are some ways you incorporate fruits and vegetables into your day?

[After they answer]

Thank you for those ideas. Eating fruits and vegetables can protect against chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. Fruits and vegetables are not only high in nutrients, such as potassium, Vitamin C, Vitamin A, and folic acid but they are low in fat, sodium, and calories. In addition, they are high in fiber and have no cholesterol, since cholesterol is only found in animal products.

Finally, replacing high fat, high sugar foods with fruits and vegetables can be an important strategy for managing your weight. And you can meet the recommended amounts by eating fresh, canned (in natural juice), frozen, or dried. The most important point is that you eat them!

*[Hold Up: **Food Card Lists**]*

Please take out the Food Card Lists that are in your packet. We will be referring back to these. Now, please spread out the stack of food cards that are on your table so each person



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in your group can see them. Look at the food cards and pick up the cards you see that are fruits and vegetables?

[Ask the audience]

Which foods did you choose?

[After they answer]

Thank you. Those are some examples of foods that fit into the fruit and vegetable groups.

[Ask the Audience]

Now, let's take a look at the Food Card List for fruits and vegetables. Are there any fruits and vegetable that you eat that are not on the list?

[After they answer]

Thank you.

B. Grains

Now let's look at grains... You can see from the MyPlate handout that grains are a quarter of the plate.

Grains contain a variety of vitamins, minerals, and fiber and provide energy for the body. Foods in the grain group include whole grains like wheat, oats, and brown rice, or grain products, such as pasta, bread, barley, and tortillas.

The goal is to make half of your grains whole.

[Ask the audience]

Why do you think eating whole grain foods is better than eating foods made with refined or enriched flour?

[Wait for responses]

Whole grain foods contain more nutrients and fiber. If it's not a whole grain food, some part of the grain has been removed and you're missing fiber and necessary nutrients. That's why we encourage you to make at least half your grains whole, so you can get as much of the valuable nutrients and fiber from your grains as possible.



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[Hold up handout: **What is a Whole Grain.**]

Please pull out your handout “What is a Whole Grain”. It shows that grains are made up of three parts: the bran, the germ, and the endosperm. Each part contains different vitamins and minerals. Whole grain foods contain all three parts—even after they are ground up or processed—while refined or enriched flour or grain contains only the starchy endosperm with *some* nutrients added back in. It seems silly, but manufacturers had a reason to do this. Removal of the germ extended the shelf life of the product.

And because there are so many products it is hard to determine which are better to eat. To help you, there are some examples of healthful grains in the lower left corner of the “What is a Whole Grain” handout.

[Ask the audience]

Would anyone like to share some whole grain products they buy that aren’t on the list?

[After they answer]

Thank you!

This leads to another question: How do you know if you are buying a whole grain product?

[Wait for responses]

Specifically, you have to look at the ingredient list.

The first ingredient needs to be “whole grain”. To get some practice, we have a food label on your table to analyze. As you can see it is a Whole Grain Ritz cracker food label. Please take a couple of minutes and decide with your group if it’s a good source of whole grains.

[Ask the audience]

Would someone like to share what their group decided? Please name the first 3 ingredients, and tell us if it is a good source of whole grains. Was there anything else you looked at?

[After they answer]

That’s correct! It is NOT a good source of whole grains, even though it claims to be “Whole Grain”. As you can see by the ingredient list, the first ingredient is enriched white flour, not whole wheat flour, and there is less than 1 gram of fiber.



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There are many products on the market today that make it difficult to select healthy foods. Many products that claim to be a "whole grain" contain only a small amount of whole grain, and fiber and nutrients are missing. So check the ingredient list and nutrition label and choose wisely.

[Ask the audience]

Take a look again at the food cards on your table. Can anyone share with me the foods that fit into the grain group? Extra points if you can tell me whether it's a whole grain food.

[Discuss.]

[After they answer]

Thank you. Those are some examples of foods that fit into the grain group.

[Ask the Audience]

Take a look at the Food Cards list for grains, are there any foods that you eat that are not on the list that would be considered a grain?

[After they answer]

Thank you. Remember that you can only tell if processed foods are whole grain by looking at the ingredient list.

Although grains are primarily carbohydrates, they do have some protein. Now we will look at foods high in protein.

C. Protein

So why do we need protein? Protein helps rebuild tissue and replace red blood cells, hormones, enzymes and other necessary components of the body. Most protein foods also contain iron, an essential mineral needed to carry oxygen in the blood. Most of us eat enough from the protein group, but need to make leaner and more varied selections.

Animal products include beef (steak), pork (pork chop), poultry (baked chicken), seafood (shrimp, fish, or crab), and eggs. Plant-based protein foods include beans, peas, lentils, processed soy products, such as tofu and soy veggie burgers, nuts, and seeds. Plant-based proteins are great because they typically have less fat and are a healthier fat compared to animal fat. A variety of foods from the protein group are necessary for overall health. The



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MyPlate message encourages us to eat lean cuts (if we eat animal protein) and eat two (2) servings of seafood a week.

[Ask the audience]

Take a look at the food cards on your table. Can anyone share with me the protein foods they see in front of them?

[After they answer]

Thank you. Those are some examples of foods that belong to the protein group.

[Ask Audience]

Taking a look at the Food Card list for Protein, are there any foods that you eat that are not on the list that you think fit into this group?

[After they answer]

Thank you.

Now let's look at Dairy products, which are also a source of protein. The difference is that dairy products do not contain iron.

D. Dairy

Dairy products are not only a good source of protein, but are an excellent source of calcium. Calcium is an important mineral that makes up the structure of bones and teeth. It has a number of functions, including nerve transmission and muscle contraction. Foods in the dairy group include milk, cheese, and yogurt. MyPlate encourages us to choose fat free or low fat milk and dairy foods. Calcium fortified soy milk is also a part of this group, which is not a dairy product, but is a good source of calcium for people who cannot eat dairy foods.

Some people are lactose intolerant. Every person has a different tolerance level, with some able to digest most dairy products, while others are limited. If you are unable or do not want to consume dairy products, then it is necessary that you find good alternative calcium foods, such as sardines or other canned fish with bones, soy milk fortified with calcium, fortified tofu, and calcium fortified orange juice. Green leafy vegetables are also a good source. However, it is unlikely for most folks to get the daily recommended amount of 1,000 mg of calcium just through eating greens, since you would need to eat 11 cups of kale per day! If



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none of these options work for you, then you might want to speak with your health care provider about a calcium supplement.

[Ask the audience]

Take a look at the food cards on your table. Can anyone share with me the foods that belong to the dairy group or foods that are good sources of calcium?

[After they answer]

Thank you. Those are some examples of foods that fit into the dairy group and non-dairy foods that are good sources of calcium.

[Ask Audience]

Taking a look at the Food Card list for Dairy Products, are there any foods that you eat that are not on this list that would provide us with calcium?

[After they answer]

Thank you.

Another beverage important for our health that is not included in the MyPlate icon is... water.

E. Water

[Ask the audience]

How many glasses of water should you drink?

[After they answer]

Close! For the general population, women should consume about 11 cups and men about 15 cups. This amount includes soups, teas, drinks, and high water content foods like watermelon and tomatoes.

Although it's not part of the MyPlate icon, it is one of the messages you will find as you browse the ChooseMyPlate website. Everyone should drink more water and replace sugary drinks with water.



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II. MyPlate to Your Plate

The beauty of MyPlate is that you can estimate the portions using the MyPlate model. Just fit your food into the sections allotted by food group with half the plate fruits and vegetables. Remember to be aware of the size of plate or bowl you are using. Try not to over fill your bowl or plate or use a smaller size.

[Hold up handout, "What's on Your Plate?"]

Also included in your packet, is the handout, "What's on Your Plate" which gives recommended amounts for each food group based on an average adult 2,000 calorie daily food plan and other great tips for healthy eating. If you want to find amounts from each food group personalized for you, go to the website, Choosemyplate.gov and it will give you specifics.

How do mixed dishes fit into MyPlate?

[Ask Audience]

The MyPlate tool has some limitations. What are some of these limitations?]

[Wait for responses]

Right, we often eat foods that are mixed foods such as a burrito, fried rice, or chicken noodle casserole. And, many of us eat from a bowl or wrapper. For these dishes, you need to break them down into their basic components.

Whether you typically eat with a plate, a bowl, a wrapper, or anything else, you can still apply the concepts of MyPlate when putting together a healthier meal.

First imagine the different parts of your meal. Then think about where each of those parts fit into MyPlate food group sections. Let's try this with pepperoni and cheese pizza.

[Ask the audience]

Where would the crust go? Yes, in the grain section!

Where would the pepperoni go? Yes, into the protein section!

Where would the cheese go? Yes, into the dairy section!

Where would the tomato sauce go? Yes! Into the vegetable section.

[Ask the audience]

And do you think the tomato sauce would count as a whole vegetable? No!



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[Ask the audience]

What else is missing? That's right, more vegetables and fruits!

Activity 1

Now that you are familiar with the food groups, let's apply that knowledge. Please take out your set of food cards and the MyPlate handout. Imagine a sandwich with luncheon meat, some lettuce, and a slice of tomato. Take apart this sandwich by selecting the food cards that make up this sandwich and place them in the appropriate sections of the MyPlate.

[Give them 5 minutes to complete this task.]

[Ask the audience]

Would anyone like to share their experience? Were there any problems that arose? What did you do?

[After they answer]

[If the audience did not notice a lack of fruits and vegetables and lack of dairy/calcium you would say:]

You may notice that there are some vegetables, but not nearly enough, and no fruits. If there is a slice of cheese, you would still need more calcium/dairy.

[Ask the audience]

How might you improve this meal?

[After they answer]

Yes, thank you!

[Whatever fruit, vegetable, or dairy the audience mentions confirm with positive response.]

Activity 2

The next activity is to recall a meal you ate recently. Work as a team and draw a MyPlate model on the flip chart paper at your table. Using a meal that someone in your group ate recently, determine where each food goes on the plate then complete the following sentences:

This meal is healthy because_____... or

This meal can be healthier by changing/adding/decreasing/increasing_____...

[Ask the audience]

Before we start, do you have any questions about this exercise?

[Answer questions that relate to completing the flip chart paper activity.]



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Please take five minutes to draw your meal on the flip chart paper. When you are finished, tape your completed drawing on the wall so we can share with the large group.

Share Back after Activity

[Ask the audience]

- How was that exercise?
- What did you discover while trying to use MyPlate?
- Will someone share their plate with the group? *[Have a few volunteers share & explain their finished plate of food]*

Conclusion

You've learned today about MyPlate and food groups: fruits and vegetables, proteins, whole grains, and foods high in calcium. You've also learned how to apply MyPlate to your own meal. We have heard some easy ways to incorporate fruits and vegetables into meals and snacks.

[Hold up handout, "Liven up Your Meals with Vegetables and Fruits"]

For even more ideas, we have provided you with the tip sheet, "Liven up your meals with vegetable and fruits" And, for even more tips, please go to the vegetable and fruit sections of the ChooseMyPlate website (remember you have the ChooseMyPlate.gov website address in your packet.) *[Hold up the handout, **MyPlate Icon**].*

Hopefully now with the MyPlate tool, you will find it easier to eat healthier. And again, for further information about MyPlate, go to the ChooseMyPlate.gov website. You will find downloadable handouts, information, and interactive plans to track foods you eat and your physical activity.

It's important to remember to eat less overall, eat more whole foods and less processed foods, and move more.

[Ask the audience]

What are some changes you will make for you and your family?

[Wait for responses]

Those are some great ideas.

Thank you for your attention and have fun making MyPlate Your Plate!

References:

Vegetables and Fruits: www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/nutrition

Dairy: USDA nutrient database release 24

Water: (www.iom.edu/Reports/ /2004/Dietary-Reference-Intakes-Water-Potassium-Sodium-Chloride-and-Sulfate)



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