## The Plate Method

The following are examples of foods you can choose to plan healthy meals. The amounts are listed to help you learn portions that fit on a 9-inch plate. A Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) or your diabetes care provider can help you to create a meal plan that is right for you. The foods you see on this sample plate are only examples! You can trade these foods for other foods in the same category.
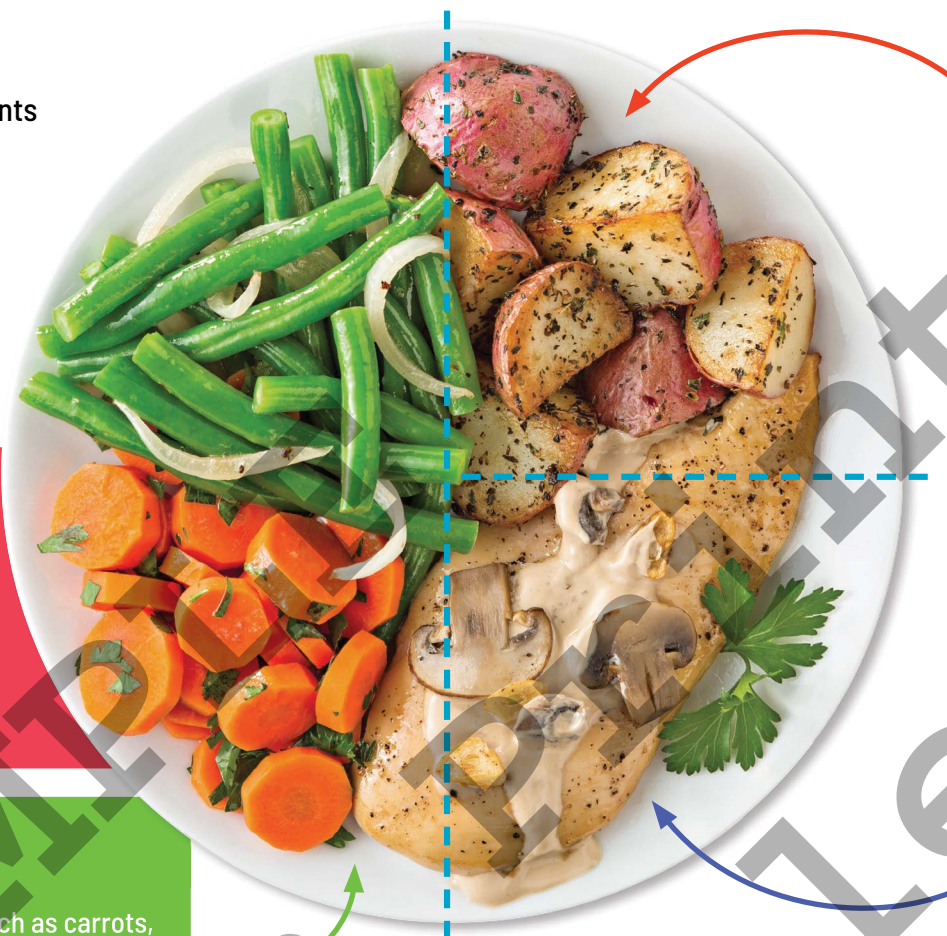
Milk and Milk Substitutes
1 serving of milk or milk substitute is about:
- 1 cup (8 fl oz) fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk or
- 1 cup (8 oz) fat-free or low-fat yogurt.

Fruit
1 serving of fruit is about:
- 1 small fresh fruit, such as a small apple, orange, pear, nectarine, or peach;
- 1 cup melon or berries;
- ½ cup canned fruit;
- 2 Tbsp dried fruits (blueberries, cherries, cranberries, mixed fruit, raisins); or
- ½ cup (4 fl oz) 100% fruit juice (apple, grape-fruit, or orange juice).

Fats
1 serving of fat is about:
- 1 Tbsp nuts or seeds,
- 1 tsp vegetable oil,
- 1 tsp *trans* fat-free margarine,
- 1 tsp regular mayonnaise, or
- 1 Tbsp regular salad dressing.

Nonstarchy Vegetables
Fill ½ of the plate with:
- Raw nonstarchy vegetables (such as carrots, celery, peppers, salad greens, spinach, tomatoes) or
- Cooked nonstarchy vegetables (such as broccoli, green beans, greens, cauliflower).

Grains,* Beans, and Starchy Vegetables
Fill ¼ of the plate with 1 of these choices:
- 2 slices bread*
- ½ large bagel* (2-3 oz) or 1 pita* (6 inches across)
- 1 hot dog or hamburger bun* (2 oz)
- 2 tortillas* (6 inches across)
- 1 cup cooked rice, pasta,* or mashed potatoes
- 6 to 9-inch corn on the cob
- 1 medium sweet potato or yam (5 oz)
- 1 medium baked potato (6 oz)
- 1 cup winter squash (acorn, butternut)
- 1 cup cooked beans or lentils
- 1 cup macaroni and cheese
- ¾ oz pretzels (20 small) or whole-wheat baked snack crackers

Choose whole grains whenever possible.

Protein
Fill ¼ of a plate with any of these choices:
- Lean meat, poultry, fish, or seafood
- Tuna, canned in water or oil and drained
- Cheese
- Eggs
- Lean lunch meat
- Tofu
- Beans and lentils

Healthy Food Choice Tips

Grains, Beans, and Starchy Vegetables
- Choose higher-fiber foods, such as dried beans and lentils; whole-grain cereals, breads, pastas, and crackers; corn tortillas; brown rice; and bulgur.
- Use whole-wheat or other whole-grain flours in cooking and baking.
- Use less fat in cooking and add less fat to cooked grains, beans, and pasta.
- For snacks, enjoy a small serving of cereal, lower-fat whole-grain crackers, or popcorn.

Milk and Milk Substitutes
- Choose fat-free or low-fat milk or yogurt.
- Choose unsweetened fat-free or low-fat yogurt and add your own fruit or toppings.

Nonstarchy Vegetables
- Choose fresh or frozen vegetables without added sauces, fats, or salt.
- Drain and rinse canned vegetables to help to lower the sodium (salt).
- Choose more dark green, orange, and red vegetables, such as spinach, broccoli, greens, carrots, chilies, peppers, and tomatoes.

Fruit
- Choose whole fruit more often than juices. Whole fruit has more fiber.
- If you drink juice, choose products that are 100% fruit juice.
- For canned fruit, look for products that are packed in water or juice instead of syrup.

Protein
- Choose fish and poultry more often. Limit fried fish or fried chicken.
- Remove the skin from chicken and turkey.
- Select lean cuts of beef, veal, pork, lamb, or wild game.
- Trim fat from around the edges of meat.
- Bake, roast, broil, grill, or boil instead of frying.
- Read food labels. Choose meats and cheeses with fewer than 5 grams of fat per ounce.

Fats
- Limit the amount of butter, oil, margarine, mayonnaise, and salad dressings you add to your foods.
- Cook with heart-healthy oils, such as olive or canola oil.
- Choose tub margarine rather than stick margarine. Look for "*trans* fat-free" on the label.
- Eat nuts or seeds in small amounts.

Key to Food Measurements

Tbsp = tablespoon	oz = ounce	lb = pound
tsp = teaspoon	fl oz = fluid ounce	g = gram