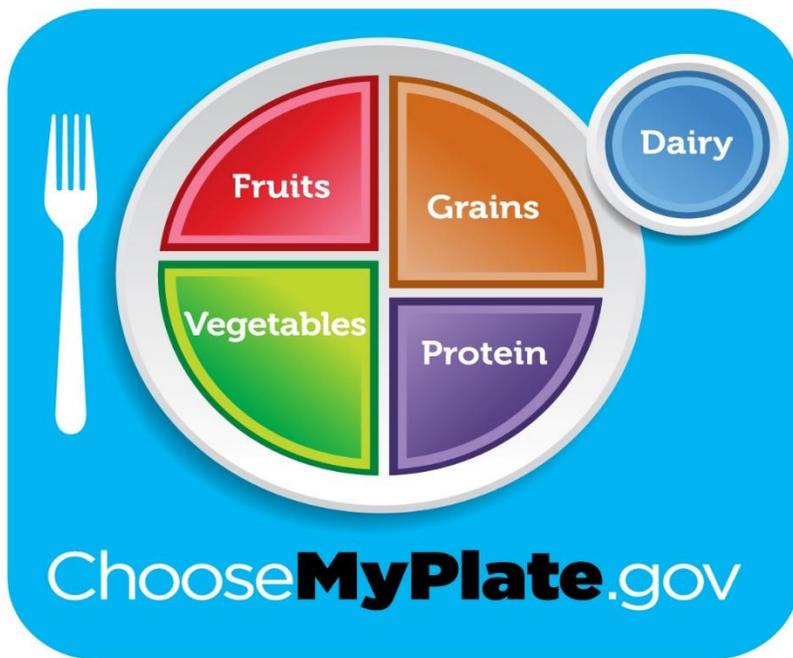


My Plate Education

“Quick Fix!” “Lose 10 pounds in 10 days!” “Eat whatever you want and still lose weight!” “The diet to end all diets!” – These, among endless other tag lines, accompany many popular diets. A quick google search for popular diets will give you a range of options to choose from promising almost everything imaginable. On the US News website, which ranks the best diets, you can read a detailed report on close to 50 diets. This can lead to a lot of confusion! The question remains: Where does one actually start if they want to improve their nutritional choices? In 2011, the USDA updated their recommendations and moved away from the food pyramid to My Plate recommendations. With this transition one of the major goals was simplicity.

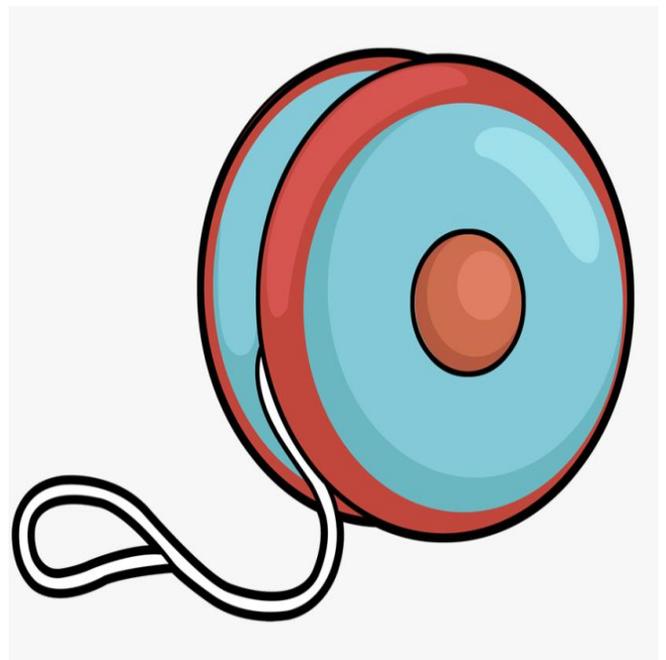


Key Takeaways:

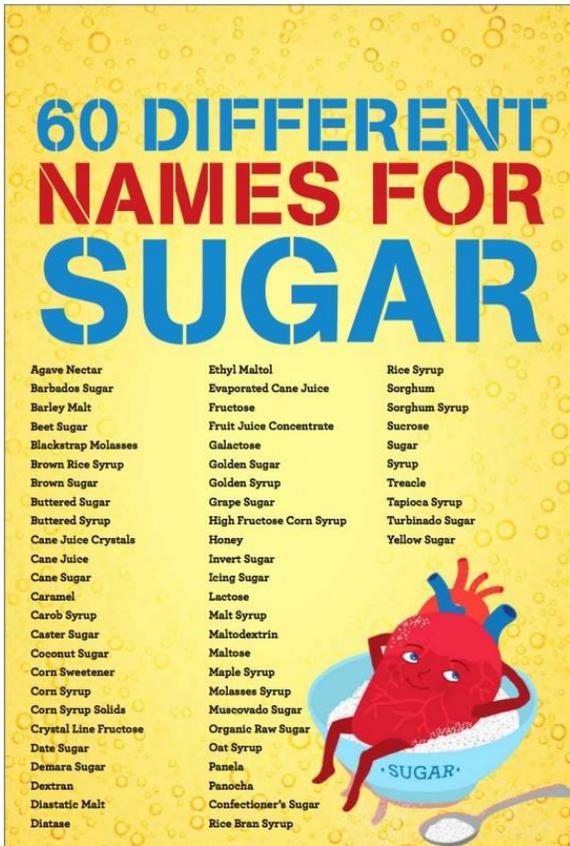
1. Half of your plate should be made up of fruits and vegetables.
2. Vary your veggies and fruits. Try something new!
3. Half of your grains should be whole grains. This means limiting white bread, white rice, and white flour-based pasta.
4. Vary your proteins: nuts, seeds, fish, and a range of meats, beans, and eggs.
5. Choose low fat dairy products.

Food Pyramid vs. the Others

It is true many popular diets result in weight loss. In the end weight loss largely comes back to eating less (highly restrictive diets are great at causing us to eat less). The issue is many diets are difficult to stick with over the long haul. We revert back to our traditional habits and the weight comes back (and more). We try a new diet, it works until it doesn't, and the weight comes back (and more). This common tendency is referred to as Yo-yo dieting (up and down over and over). Unlike many other diets, the My Plate suggestions are not restrictive but based on realistic suggestions and expectations.



Other Tips and Tricks



Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1/2 cup dry (40 g)
Servings Per container: 13

Amount Per Serving

Calories 150 **Calories from Fat 25**

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 3 g		4%
Saturated Fat 0.5 g		2%
Trans Fat 0 g		0%
Cholesterol 0 mg		0%
Sodium 0 mg		0%
Total Carbohydrate		9%
Dietary Fiber 4 g		15%
Sugars 1 g		
Protein 5 g		

Vitamin A **0%**
Vitamin C **0%**
Calcium **0%**
Iron **10%**

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65 g	80 g
Sat Fat	Less than	20 g	25 g
Cholesterol	Less than	300 mg	300 mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400 mg	2,400 mg
Total Carbohydrate		300 g	375 g
Dietary Fiber		25 g	30 g



Decrease sugar intake. Most Americans exceed the amount of total suggested sugar and added sugar intake. The only way to ensure you are staying within the recommended daily amount is to read the food label! If you find your favorite snack or drink is high in sugar it might be time to make the switch.

Make sure to read the food label, especially the serving size and servings per container. When is the last time you measured out 1/2 a cup of ice cream and stopped?

While the My Plate recommendations don't talk specifically about fats, Harvard's healthy eating plate highlights the importance of consuming foods rich in unsaturated fats, such as olive oil, fish, nuts, and seeds, while eliminating trans fats and limiting saturated fats.



Switch things out and eat lots of colors! If you have the My Plate suggestions down to a science your next step is to take a look at the colors on your plate. Make sure you see the rainbow as often as you can. This may take some research and the boldness to try something new! One way to do this is to commit to a local farm share or farmers market co-op. Each week you will get a new box of fruits and vegetables based on what is in season!



Start out slow with one or two changes. Do you never eat fruits and vegetables? Shooting for half your plate in week one will be rough. Start with a serving or two. Do you never read a food label? Reading each one might be impossible. Start with everything you drink. Making one change at a time and going slow and steady is a great pathway to success.