

Down-Size Your Dinner

A great way to get started with a healthy lifestyle is to take a look at your plate. No, I don't mean for you to look at your china pattern, but look at the size of your plate and the types of foods that are usually on it.

The average dinner plate is about 12 ½ inches in diameter compared to 10 inches in 1955.

In the past 50 years, not only the plates that have gotten bigger; the portions have too.

What are healthy portion sizes?

Protein - One deck of cards - 1 **small** chicken breast, pork chop, steak, hamburger patty or fish fillet.

Milk - One cup - fat free milk or yogurt.

Fat - Thumbs up - the tip of your thumb (from the knuckle up) is 1 tsp of butter, margarine or salad dressing. Each teaspoon has 45 - 50 calories, so go easy on the fat.

Starch/Bread - One piece - one slice toast, ½ cup of mashed potatoes or ½ hamburger bun.

Fruit - One piece - 1 small piece of fruit or ½ cup canned fruit or juice.

Vegetable - FREE!! - Non-starchy vegetables are free foods - carrots, celery, green beans, and lettuce salad. It's what you put on them that matters. **BEWARE** - Don't over do it on the dressing or dip!

We live in a super-sized world and it's time to get our portions under control before **we** become super-sized too. It can be done without carrying around a scale or measuring cups. Use the Plate Method! It's an easy way to set up healthy meals with appropriate portion sizes for yourself and your family. First, measure across your dinner plate - Use a plate that is about 10 inches across. WARNING - Do not use an oversized plate and plan on only filling it part way. This almost always results in larger portions than planned. Also, check that your cereal bowls are the right size too. Fill the bowl with 1 cup of cereal - the proper portion size for most cereals and soup.



How to Do The Plate Method

Visually divide your plate into fourths.

One-fourth of your plate will contain a **meat or protein** source – Lean meats are best.
Another fourth of your plate contains **bread/starch/or grain**. Preferably *high in fiber*.
The remaining half of your plate should contain vegetables (may skip at breakfast). Vary the selection of vegetables and aim for bright colors – Eat a Rainbow. If you choose a starchy vegetable like corn, peas, or squash, try to also include a non-starchy one like green beans, red or yellow peppers, a leafy green salad or carrots.
To balance out your meal, add an **8 oz glass of fat free milk** and a **medium-sized piece of fruit** for dessert

The Plate Method of Meal Planning

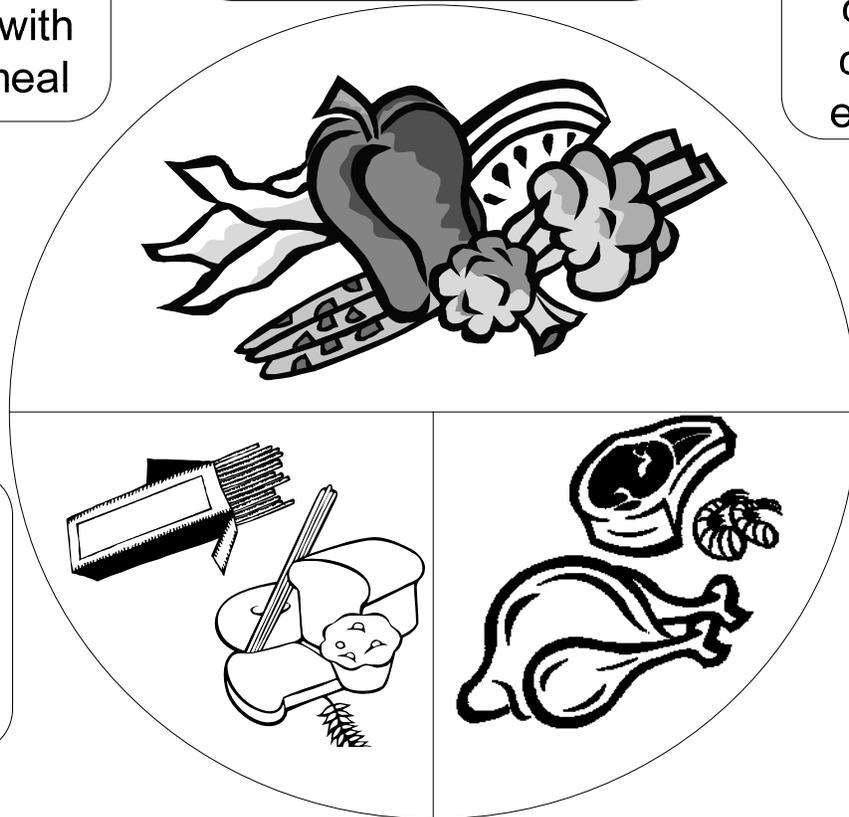


One serving of fruit with each meal

Half of your plate should be covered with vegetables



One serving of low-fat dairy with each meal



One-fourth of your plate should contain a whole-grain bread or pasta

One-fourth of your plate should contain a meat or high protein food

Enjoy and Be Healthy!