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**EXTENSION**

# Nutrition for Older Adults: Planning Healthful Meals with the USDA MyPlate Plan

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Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Fact Sheets  
are also available on our website at:  
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## Planning Healthy Meals

Use the USDA MyPlate Plan to find the types and amounts of food recommended each day for your calorie needs. For 2,000 calories the USDA MyPlate Plan recommends:

- Grains 6 oz
- Vegetables 2½ cups
- Fruits 2 cups
- Dairy 3 cups
- Protein foods 5½ oz
- Oils 6 tsp
- Limit calories for other uses to 240 calories
- Limit sodium to less than 2,300 milligrams a day
- Limit saturated fat to less than 10% of calories a day
- Limit added sugars to less than 10% of calories a day

Spread the foods recommended by the USDA MyPlate Plan across the day into meals and snacks.

On the back is an example of spreading the amounts recommended for 2,000 calories into three meals and a snack.

## Sources

United States Department of Agriculture. Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020-2024.

United States Department of Agriculture. ChooseMyPlate.gov. Accessed at: [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov) Sources

How you spread the types and amounts of food across the day recommended for your calorie needs may look different, this is just an example.

## Build a Healthy Diet

Everything you eat and drink is important. A healthy diet can help you be healthier now and in the future. When building a health diet remember to:

- ✓ Focus on variety, amount and nutrition.
- ✓ Choose foods and beverages with less sodium, saturated fat and added sugars.
- ✓ Start with small changes to build healthier eating.
  - o Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
    - Focus on whole fruits.
    - Vary your veggies.
  - o Make half your grains whole grains.
  - o Move to low-fat and fat-free dairy.
  - o Vary your protein routine.
  - o Eat and drink the right amount for you.

## Example of Spreading the Types and Amounts of Food Recommended by the USDA Daily Food Plan across the Day into Meals and Snacks

Food Groups	2,000 calories	Breakfast	Lunch	Snack	Dinner
Grains (oz)	6	2	2		2
Vegetables (cups)	2 1/2		1		1 1/2
Fruits (cups)	2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2
Dairy (cups)	3	1	1		1
Protein foods (oz)	5 1/2		2		3 1/2
Oils (tsp)	6	1	2		3

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