

MAKING HEALTHY CHOICES: WEEK 2

Explore the food groups

Eating from each of the five food groups – fruit, vegetables, grains, protein and dairy – provides the body with a wide range of nutrients that it needs to work properly.

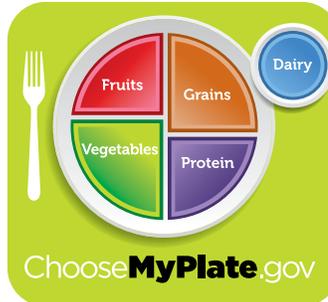
Not only is it important to make sure you and your children are eating from each of the food groups but it is also important to eat a variety of foods within each food group. This is because different foods contain different nutrients. For example, if you only eat carrots, you are missing out on some of the vitamins and minerals that come from broccoli, such as magnesium, vitamin B-6 and vitamin C.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's MyPlate is a tool that you can use to help you and your family eat foods from each food group. You may be familiar with the past tools, MyPyramid or the Food Guide Pyramid.

MyPlate illustrates the five food groups that are the building blocks for a healthy diet using a familiar image – a place setting for a meal. To learn more about each food group and recommendations for you and your family, visit www.choosemyplate.org.

Try taking a look at your plate the next time you and your family eat. Do you have food from every food group? Start to think about how you can include all of the food groups in your meals. The next step is to think about ways to have a variety of foods from within each food group. Remember, your children learn by watching you so if you eat and try a variety of foods, they will be more likely to try a variety too.

In next week's newsletter, we will start to explore the vegetable food group.



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Did you know?

You can prepare for many meals ahead of time by chopping up fresh ingredients such as veggies and storing them in a baggie or food safe container in the refrigerator. Try this with the Microwave Quesadilla recipe and add black beans and cheese. Your kids will then be able to easily grab everything they need from one place. When cooking with a microwave, you may need to pre-cook fresh vegetables such as zucchini, mushrooms or peppers for better texture and flavor.

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WEEKLY RECIPE

Remember to wash your hands and prepare food safely.

Microwave Quesadilla (serves 1)

1. Use a **100% whole-wheat tortilla** for your quesadilla base.
2. Add **¼ cup black beans, a sprinkle of cheese and veggies** to tortilla.
3. Place on microwave-safe plate and microwave for 20 to 30 seconds or until cheese is melted. Be careful. It will be hot!
4. Fold in half.
5. Let food rest for 3 minutes to allow the food to fully cook.
6. Enjoy!



MSU Extension programming has something to offer every member of your family

Michigan State University Extension helps people improve their lives by bringing the vast knowledge and resources of MSU directly to individuals, communities and businesses.

To help you be healthy at every stage of life, MSU Extension delivers affordable, relevant, evidence-based education to serve the needs of adults, youth and families in urban and rural communities. Programs focus on helping you gain the skills you need to buy and prepare nutritious, budget-friendly foods, increase your physical activity and stretch your food dollars.

MSU Extension's children and youth programs address needs and issues from birth through age 19, providing parents with educational resources related to your child's development and giving youth the opportunity through 4-H programs to build leadership and teach practical life skills.

For more information or to join a class, contact your local MSU Extension county office or visit www.msue.msu.edu.

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To find your local county office visit msue.msu.edu/county.

Acknowledgements

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