

Food for Thought

March 2023

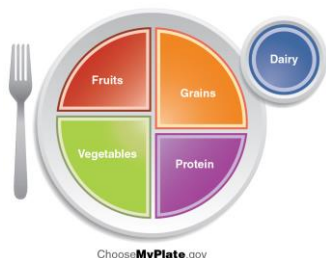
March is National Nutrition Month® Fuel for the Future

Each year during the month of March the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics celebrates National Nutrition Month®. The focus of the month is always on the importance of making informed food choices and developing healthful eating and physical activity habits. This year the theme is, **Fuel for the Future**, which showcases that no matter your age or activity level, making healthful food and drink choices will provide your body with energy now and fuel for the future.



Here are some simple ways we can Fuel for the Future:

- **Eat with the environment in mind:** Buying foods in season and shopping locally, when possible, not only benefits the planet, but it also may help you keep food costs down. Enjoying more plant-based meals and snacks is another option. Try more meatless meals or substituting some or all of the meat in recipes with plant-based proteins.
- **Stay nourished and save money.** When prices of food and other goods go up, buying healthful foods may not feel like a priority. Yet, many healthful foods are filling, cost less overall and help to manage or reduce your chances of developing certain chronic diseases. A little planning before you shop can go a long way in choosing foods that are affordable, satisfying and have a higher amount of nutrition.
- **Eat a variety of foods from all food groups.** Fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods and dairy all play a role in fueling our bodies. Choosing a variety of healthful foods is important, since foods can differ in the nutrients they provide. Follow MyPlate's Daily Recommendations for each food group to get the nutrients you need at each life stage. Eat foods in various forms including fresh, frozen, canned and dried.
- **Make tasty foods at home.** To increase variety in your eating routine, try new flavors and foods from around the world. Another way to eat healthier and save money is to learn cooking and meal preparation skills. This can help you find creative ways to use leftovers rather than tossing them.
- **Putting it all together.** Finding ways to include the foods you enjoy while getting the nutrients you need is important at any age. The foods and drinks we choose can be influenced by a variety of things, such as taste, cost, culture, convenience, and cooking skills.



A good place to start on your road to healthful eating is with [eatright.org](https://www.eatright.org), where you can read about healthful food choices, try out new recipes, watch videos and more! All of the content you'll find on [eatright.org](https://www.eatright.org) is science-based. After all, it is the website of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, which is the world's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals!

Green goes with St. Patrick's Day. Some people will go so far as to dye potatoes, pasta, milk or other foods green to make them colorful and festive. This is not necessary when so many healthy green colored foods can be found naturally.

Green fruits and vegetables contain health-promoting phytochemicals such as lutein. Regularly eating these foods can help protect against certain cancers, maintain healthy vision and promote strong bones and teeth.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources has included a tribute to St. Patrick's Day on their website with tips for including more greens in your diet.

Consider these ideas:

- Make a dark leafy green salad with green peppers.
- Include kiwi fruit, green grapes and/or honeydew melon in your fruit salad.
- Add avocado slices to salads and sandwiches. To maintain the green color, eat avocados immediately or sprinkle them with lemon or lime juice.
- Enjoy your favorite veggie dip with broccoli florets or a favorite fruit dip with green apple slices.
- Make a vegetable pizza with green peppers and/or spinach.
- Serve thinly sliced green onions over rice, pasta, broiled or baked fish or soups.
- Spinach noodles with topping of your choice.
- Asparagus and/or green pepper omelets with parsley garnish.
- Pesto on anything.
- Cream of broccoli or spinach soups.
- Kiwi served over a sponge or angel food cake.



Sources: National Nutrition Month® Resources (eatright.org); NNM_2023_Fuel for the Future Tip Sheet_English.pdf; https://extension.usu.edu/news_sections/home_family_and_food/eat-green-st-patricks retrieved 02/28/23

Eat Smart Idaho can help you learn how to eat well for less. For Information on Eat Smart Idaho classes, contact the Nutrition Instructor in your county:

Panhandle: Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai & Shoshone Counties
208-292-2525

North Central Idaho: Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis, & Nez Perce Counties
208-883-2267



To contact the Eat Smart Idaho Coordinator:

Kali Gardiner, RD, LD
Phone: 208-292-2525

www.eatsmartidaho.org
E-mail – kali@uidaho.edu

This work and material is supported and funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-SNAP and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture. USDA and University of Idaho are equal opportunity providers.