

EXTENSION CONNECTIONS

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS EXTENSION



Illinois Extension
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

We hope you enjoy your copy of this free monthly resource which highlights upcoming programs and topics for better living. To stay up to date on all of our programs, visit our web page: extension.illinois.edu/hmrs and follow us on Facebook @[uiextensionhmrs](https://www.facebook.com/uiextensionhmrs)

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Due to COVID-19, our offices are currently closed to foot traffic. Staff are working remotely but can be reached by phone or email. Visit our website for contact information or call your county office, leave a message and we will get back to you ASAP. Thank you!



Make every bite count with the new 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans are the nation's science-based guidance on how to eat for good health. The Guidelines encourage all Americans to start and maintain a healthy eating routine. Along with physical activity, improving what you eat can help you reduce your risk of chronic diseases, such as diabetes, heart disease, some cancers, and obesity. Taking the steps listed below will help you follow the Dietary Guidelines.

First: Take a look at your current eating routine. Pick one or two ways that you can switch to choices today that are rich in nutrition. A healthy eating routine can help boost your health now and in the years to come. Think about how your food choices come together over the course of your day or week to help you create a healthy eating routine.

It's important to eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy alternatives. Choose options for meals, beverages, and snacks that have limited added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium.

Choose from these simple tips to help you:

Focus on whole fruits

- Start your day with fruit at breakfast. Top cereal with your favorite seasonal fruit, add bananas or chopped apples to pancakes, or mix a spoonful or two of raisins into hot oatmeal.
- Keep ready-to-eat fruits in the refrigerator for a quick snack.
- For dinner, chop up a combination of seasonal, frozen, or canned fruits to make a quick fruit salsa to top fish or chicken. Add fruit such as orange sections, apple wedges, or grapes to a salad.



Vary your veggies

- Add shredded carrots to the lettuce and tomato in your sandwich, make soup from the veggies in your vegetable drawer, and snack on raw vegetables.
- Try a stir-fry with fresh or frozen vegetables for a quick meal or easy side dish.
- Pick out a vegetable that the family has not tried and get a new recipe from a cookbook, website, supermarket, or friend.



Make half your grains whole grains

- For breakfast, enjoy a whole-grain-based hot or cold cereal. Consider trying whole-grain puffs or flakes that are new to you—you might discover a new favorite!
- Instead of sandwich bread, try a whole-grain pita, tortillas, naan or other whole-grain flatbread, sliced breads, or rolls.
- Create your own trail mix with whole-grain cereal or enjoy whole-grain crackers with turkey, hummus, or avocado for a healthy whole-grain snack.



Vary your protein routine

- Broil lean beef cuts like sirloin, top round, or flank steak. Roast lean types of pork tenderloin or loin chops and slice into strips for dinner, salads, and sandwiches.
- Have fish or seafood twice a week. Make a lunchtime sandwich or salad with canned tuna, grill fresh or frozen tilapia or salmon for dinner, or enjoy fish tacos.
- Meatless meals are tasty and budget friendly. Try bean-based vegetarian chili or lentil soup, grilled or braised tofu with vegetables, or adding nuts to salads.



Tips continued on next page...

Dietary Guidelines Information sourced from DGA_2020-2025_StartSimple_withMyPlate_English_color.pdf

Follow a healthy dietary pattern at every life stage



At every life stage—it is never too early or too late to eat healthfully.



Move to low-fat or fat-free dairy milk or yogurt (or lactose-free dairy or fortified soy versions)

- Add low-fat or fat-free dairy to oatmeal or pureed vegetable soups instead of water, and to smoothies or scrambled eggs.
- The nutrients in dairy are important at every stage of life. Include foods like low-fat or fat-free dairy milk or yogurt. Need an alternative? Try lactose-free dairy milk or yogurt that's low-fat or fat-free or fortified soy versions.
- Looking for a beverage? Grab a glass of low-fat or fat-free milk or fortified soy milk (soy beverage). Choose the unsweetened option.



Choose foods and beverages with less added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium. **Tips for Less Added Sugars:**

- Choose packaged foods that have less or no added sugars, such as canned fruit packed in 100% juice for an easy snack, plain yogurt (you can add your own fruit), and unsweetened applesauce.
- Try chilled, plain water or sparkling water with a squeeze of fruit for a splash of flavor. Limit sugary beverages such as soda, lemonade, sports drinks, or fruit drinks.

Tips for Less Salt and Sodium

- Start simple by choosing foods with less sodium. Check the Nutrition Facts label and choose foods with a lower percent (%) Daily Value (DV) for sodium on the label, especially if a family member has high blood pressure, diabetes, or kidney disease.
- Cook at home! Preparing your own food puts you in control of how much sodium goes into your meals. Add flavor to foods with herbs, spices, lemon, lime, and vinegar instead of salt or seasonings high in sodium.



Sign up for these helpful apps and take charge of your health!

Start Simple with MyPlate App

Meet healthy eating goals one at a time! Use the Start Simple with MyPlate app to pick simple daily food goals, see real-time progress, and earn badges along the way. This easy-to-use app can help you make positive changes. Healthy eating can help you achieve a healthier life overall. Get started with Start Simple with MyPlate!



Download the Start Simple with MyPlate app today at www.myplate.gov/resources/tools/startsimple-myplate-app

Sign-Up for the EAT.MOVE.SAVE. Healthy Text Program!

Choose ONE of three ways to sign up to get 1-2 text messages per week! *Text message and data rates may apply. Text STOP to unsubscribe at any time.*



Use a smartphone camera to scan and sign-up with an online form.

OR

If you live in Rock Island or Mercer County:
Text "rockisland7" to (833) 369-2916

If you live in Henry or Stark Counties
Text "henry7" to (833) 369-2916

Keys for Embracing Aging FREE Webinar Series

What you do today influences your future. In this webinar series, you can learn how to take care of yourself now to embrace aging and grow gracefully, successfully, and with increased longevity. Register at go.illinois.edu/KeysforAging for these and more!

March 25, 10 a.m. | Positive Attitude A positive attitude affects overall happiness, health, and well-being. A positive attitude can also help you better manage life's transitions and challenges.

April 1, 10 a.m. | Eating Smart Eating right can help prevent illness and chronic disease while providing you with more energy. Your diet influences cholesterol, triglycerides, blood pressure, and more.



10 tips

Nutrition
Education Series

choose MyPlate

10 tips to a great plate



Making food choices for a healthy lifestyle can be as simple as using these 10 Tips.

Use the ideas in this list to *balance your calories*, to choose foods to *eat more often*, and to cut back on foods to *eat less often*.

1 balance calories

Find out how many calories YOU need for a day as a first step in managing your weight. Go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov to find your calorie level. Being physically active also helps you balance calories.

2 enjoy your food, but eat less

Take the time to fully enjoy your food as you eat it. Eating too fast or when your attention is elsewhere may lead to eating too many calories. Pay attention to hunger and fullness cues before, during, and after meals. Use them to recognize when to eat and when you've had enough.



3 avoid oversized portions

Use a smaller plate, bowl, and glass. Portion out foods before you eat. When eating out, choose a smaller size option, share a dish, or take home part of your meal.

4 foods to eat more often

Eat more vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and fat-free or 1% milk and dairy products. These foods have the nutrients you need for health—including potassium, calcium, vitamin D, and fiber. Make them the basis for meals and snacks.



5 make half your plate fruits and vegetables

Choose red, orange, and dark-green vegetables like tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and broccoli, along with other vegetables for your meals. Add fruit to meals as part of main or side dishes or as dessert.

6 switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk

They have the same amount of calcium and other essential nutrients as whole milk, but fewer calories and less saturated fat.



7 make half your grains whole grains

To eat more whole grains, substitute a whole-grain product for a refined product—such as eating whole-wheat bread instead of white bread or brown rice instead of white rice.

8 foods to eat less often

Cut back on foods high in solid fats, added sugars, and salt. They include cakes, cookies, ice cream, candies, sweetened drinks, pizza, and fatty meats like ribs, sausages, bacon, and hot dogs. Use these foods as occasional treats, not everyday foods.

9 compare sodium in foods

Use the Nutrition Facts label to choose lower sodium versions of foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals. Select canned foods labeled "low sodium," "reduced sodium," or "no salt added."



10 drink water instead of sugary drinks

Cut calories by drinking water or unsweetened beverages. Soda, energy drinks, and sports drinks are a major source of added sugar, and calories, in American diets.

Check out these FREE online workshops

Illinois Extension & Rock Island Public Library offer free online series: [Vegetable Gardening Made Easy](#)

Vegetable Gardening Made Easy is a Free online program that is designed to help those interested in starting a vegetable garden and for those wanting a refresher. They will be hosted by a local Illinois Extension Master Gardeners via Zoom. During each session, they will show a pre-recorded, “how-to” gardening video on the topic of the day from University of Illinois horticulture experts, followed by live Q & A with the Master Gardener. Each session has a different topic and participants can sign up for any they are interested in.

Here's the line up:

March 15 / 10 a.m. / Seed Starting Introduction

March 17 / 10 a.m. / Germination & Seedling Growth
Learn how to successfully start plants indoors from seeds for use later in the garden.

March 22 / 10 a.m. / Blueprint to Gardening & Planning & Prepping
Explore how you can go about planning your garden and different techniques that are used to plant gardens.

March 24/ 10 a.m. / Cool Season Vegetables & Warm Season Vegetables
Learn about the different types of vegetables that are commonly grown in gardens and the basics on how to grow them

March 29 / 10 a.m. / Hardening off and Transplanting & General Care
Discover how to prep seedlings that you grew indoors for being transplanted outdoors as well as basic garden care, including watering and fertilizing.

March 31 / 10 a.m. / Pest control considerations, and tips to garden safely
This session will be followed by a final Q&A session.

Register for the sessions of your choice at go.illinois.edu/VegGardening101

If you need an accommodation to participate, please email tmully@illinois.edu. Early requests are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time to meet your access needs.



Health at Home Series: Healthy Eats for a Healthy Beat Thursdays, 11:30 a.m.

Food choices can improve heart health and help manage conditions like high cholesterol and high blood pressure.

These FREE online workshops will give you the tools and resources you need to make heart-healthy decisions about food choices! Watch virtual cooking demonstrations in real-time, and participate in an interactive Q&A with Extension nutrition and wellness educators following each free session.

Register at go.illinois.edu/HealthyEats for these upcoming webinars:

March 4 | 11 a.m. | Focus on Fiber

A high-fiber diet promotes heart health, supports a healthy gut microbiome, and reduces the risk for diabetes. Learn about different types of fiber, the best sources of fiber, and simple ways to include more fiber in your meals.

March 11 | 11 a.m. | Life is Sweet: Eat Smart for Your Heartbeat

Learn how to identify added and natural sugars in your diet, increase knowledge of the nutrition facts label, and gain tips in limiting added sugar to keep your heart beating strong.

Let's Talk Money| Tues., March 2 - 23, 6:30 p.m.

Learn strategies to help understand spending habits, manage debt responsibly, understand credit scores, and save money for retirement and other important life events. Register at go.illinois.edu/TalkMoney for one or more sessions held on Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. (CT).

Weekly topics include:

- Credit Scores Revealed (March 2)
- Secrets for Financial Success (March 9)
- Framing Biases, Overcoming Hurdles (March 16)
- Make Your Savings Grow (March 23)



Four Seasons of Gardening: Adaptive Gardening March 9, 1:30 p.m. Register at: go.illinois.edu/fourseasons

Join Extension Horticulture Educator, Chris Enroth, as he discusses best practices for adapting your garden to accommodate age, mobility, or other means. Chris will also share how you can be successful in helping yourself, as well as others, to enjoy the art of gardening at home or in institutions like schools, assisted living facilities, and others.