

Optimize your health and weight by following these suggestions for

# Balancing Your Plate

About  $\frac{1}{2}$  of your plate should be fruits & vegetables.

*Try for several different colors.*

$\frac{1}{4}$  of your plate should be grains.

*Try to choose whole grains.*

healthy fats\*

$\frac{1}{4}$  of your plate should be protein.

*Try to choose a leaner option.*

## Fruits & Vegetables

- Provide vitamins, antioxidants, fiber and carbohydrates for energy
- Choose a rainbow of colored fruits and vegetables everyday to assure you are getting the full spectrum of health benefits.

## Meats & Meat Substitutes

- Provide protein, fats, and iron in red meat
- Include: beef, pork, poultry, fish, eggs, beans (pinto, black, navy), tofu, nuts and soy products
- If you do not eat meat, you should try to consume some other forms of protein at each meal

## Grains

- Provide fiber, B vitamins, and carbohydrates for energy
- Try to vary the grains you eat at each meal
- Include: breads (whole wheat is recommended), pastas, cereal, rice, tortillas, crackers

## Dairy

- Provides protein, calcium, fats, and carbohydrates for energy
- Include: milk, cheese, yogurt
- Try to go for low-fat dairy products. Regular products can be high in saturated fat and fat-free are often high in sugar.
- If you can't eat dairy because of lactose intolerance, try soy based milk and cheese products.

## Fats\*

- Yes! Your body needs fats to survive. Some fats are better than others. (avocado, nuts, olives, olive oil & canola oil)
- Fish and nuts are good sources of essential fats that enable your body to work properly.
- Occasionally choose sweets such as candy and other desserts only in addition to your balanced plate, rather than a large part of it.
- Fried foods provide fats, but should only be eaten in moderation.

\*If your foods already contain fat, added healthy fat is not necessary.



[healthydevil.studentaffairs.duke.edu](http://healthydevil.studentaffairs.duke.edu) • 681-WELL