

### **Fill Half Your Plate with Vegetables & Fruit**

Vegetables and fruit are an important part of healthy eating as they contain important nutrients such as fiber, vitamins and minerals. Fresh, frozen or canned vegetables and fruit can all be healthy options. Choose frozen vegetables and fruit without added sugars, added seasonings, breading or rich sauces. Choose canned vegetables with little to no added sodium. Choose canned fruit with little to no added sugars.

#### **Tips to eat more vegetables:**

- Keep cut up fresh vegetables in the fridge for a convenient snack. Try broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, celery and/or cucumbers.
- Serve raw vegetables with your meals. Try cucumber, cherry or grape tomatoes, red, yellow or green peppers.
- Use pre-bagged vegetables that can be quickly tossed in a salad, stir-fry or casserole. Try baby carrots, green beans or leafy greens.
- Try new recipes that call for different types of leafy greens such as kale, spinach, bok choy, swiss chard, or mixed salad greens.

#### **Tips to eat more fruit:**

- Keep a bowl of fresh fruit on the counter as an easy snack to grab.
- Wash, cut and refrigerate extra fruit so you can have some on hand for meals and snacks.
- Add fruit to whole grain cereals or lower fat yogurt. Try bananas, mangoes, frozen berries, or canned peaches packed in water.
- Add fresh fruit to salads—try slicing pears, peaches or strawberries.
- Add frozen fruit, mashed bananas, crushed pineapple or apple sauce to baking.

### **Choose Plant-Based Protein Foods**

Plant-based protein foods provide more fiber and less saturated fat than other types of protein foods. This can be beneficial for your heart health. Examples of plant-based proteins include beans, lentils, chickpeas, tofu, nuts, seeds, peanut butter or other nut butter.

#### **Tips to include plant-based proteins:**

- Add nuts on cereal or nut butter in a smoothie
- For snacks, try nuts and seeds, roasted chickpeas, hummus with fresh veggies, or peanut butter with an apple or on celery sticks
- Try lentils in soup, spaghetti sauce or rice pilaf
- Try beans in salad, chili or in a burrito
- Try tofu in a vegetable stir-fry

### Choose Whole Grain Foods

Whole grains have important nutrients such as fiber, vitamins and minerals. Whole grains have more fiber than refined grains. Eating foods higher in fiber can help lower your risk of stroke, colon cancer, heart disease and type 2 diabetes. Examples of whole grains include brown or wild rice, buckwheat, barley, quinoa, whole oats, whole rye, and whole grain wheat. Whole grains can be eaten on their own or used as ingredients in products or recipes such as buckwheat in pancakes, oats in cereal, quinoa in a pilaf or whole grain wheat in bread or pasta.

#### **Tips to choose more whole grains:**

- Start your day with a bowl of oatmeal, whole grain cereal, or whole grain toast.
- Substitute brown rice in recipes that call for white rice, and use whole wheat pasta instead of regular pasta.
- Try adding barley, bulgur and quinoa to soups, salads and stir-fries.
- Try whole grain crackers or whole grain baked pita “chips” for a snack
- Bake with whole grain flours. In most recipes, you can substitute half of the white flour with whole grain flour.

### Enjoy Technology-Free Meals

Enjoy a meal without your cell phone, iPod, computer, TV or any other technological device. Research has found there is positive emotional, physical and mental benefits of eating without technology and eating as a family or group. Kids who have meals with their families from a young age eat more vegetables and fruit and learn to enjoy them.

#### **Tips to enjoy a technology-free meal:**

- Share conversation with those eating with you.
- Talk about your favorite part of your day.
- Share a funny story of the day.
- Plan what you are doing tomorrow.
- Enjoy the flavors and textures of the food that you are eating.
- Enjoy some quiet peaceful time with no technology distractions.

