

TOOLS AND RESOURCES FOR HEALTHY WEIGHT AND WELL-BEING



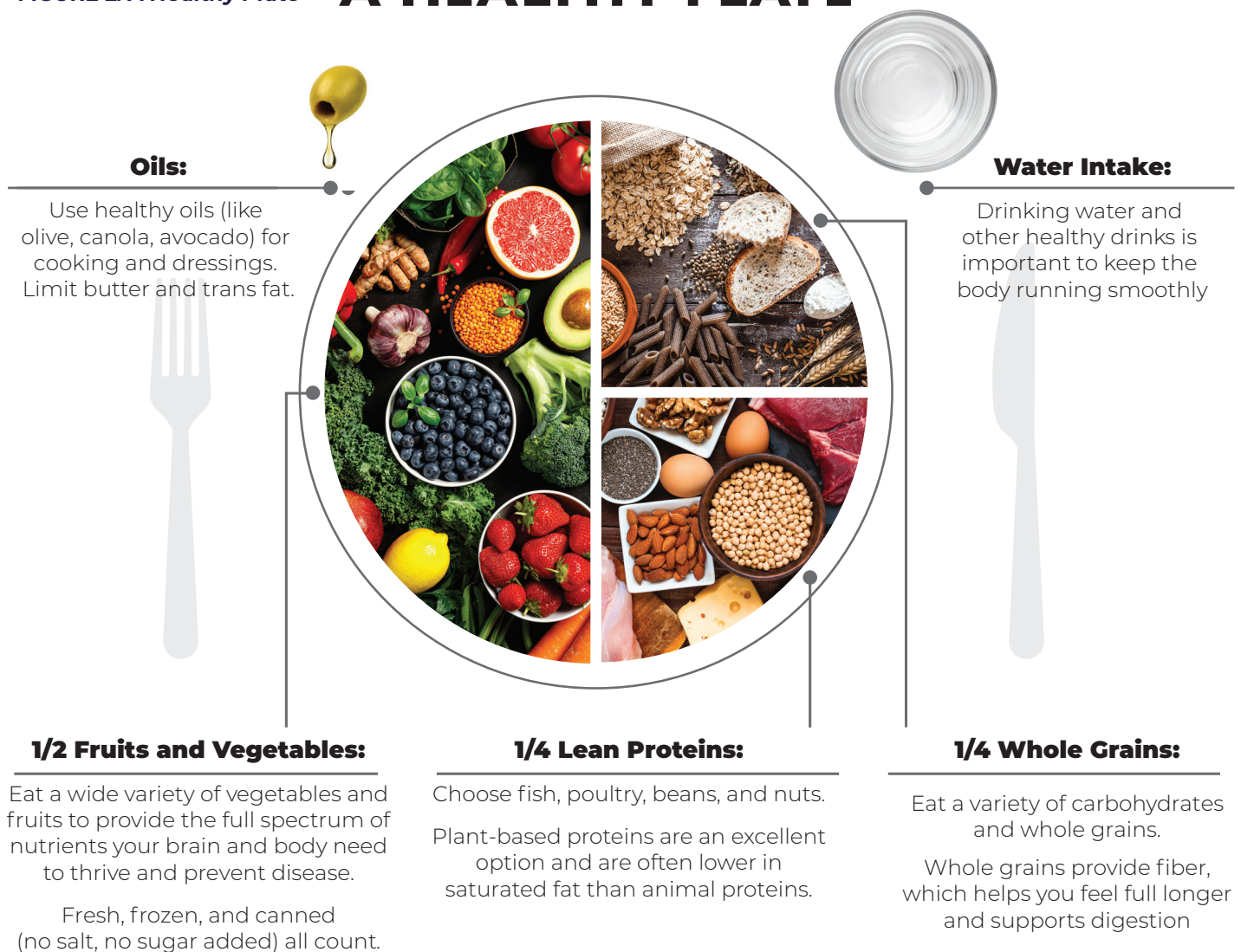
Healthy Foods

Attention to what we eat is a critical step in preventing overweight and obesity. For most people, the general recommended daily calorie range is 1,600–2,200 calories for adult women and 2,000–3,000 calories for adult men. Individual needs vary based on age, body size, and activity level.

A balanced plate helps people understand portion sizes and make healthier choices at every meal. A simple way to think about it is to divide your plate into sections. Figure 2 gives an example of how to build a healthy and balanced plate.

FIGURE 2. A Healthy Plate

A HEALTHY PLATE



Half Your Plate: Fruits and Vegetables

½ your plate should be filled with colorful fruits and vegetables.

- Aim for a variety of colors: greens, reds, oranges, purples. [Each color provides different nutrients.](#)
- Fresh, frozen, and canned (no salt, no sugar added) all count.

One Quarter: Whole Grains

¼ of your plate should be whole grains such as brown rice, whole-wheat pasta, quinoa, oats, or whole-grain bread.

- Whole grains provide fiber, which helps you feel full longer and supports digestion.
- Limit refined grains, such as white bread and white rice.

One Quarter: Lean Protein

¼ of your plate should include lean protein sources like chicken, turkey, fish, lentils, tofu, or eggs.

- Plant-based proteins are an excellent option and are often lower in saturated fat than animal proteins.
- Limit red meat, cheese, bacon, and processed meats.

Water Intake

- Drinking water and other healthy drinks is important to keep the body running smoothly. 11.5 cups for women and 15.5 cups for men are recommended daily, which can include water, tea, or coffee.
- While there is no fixed requirement, generally you need about **4 to 6 cups** (about 1 to 1.5 liters) of plain water per day, and to drink water when you feel thirsty.
- Water-rich foods like cucumbers, watermelon, strawberries, and soups can help you stay hydrated.

Fruit, Dairy, and Ultra-Processed Foods

- Ask a Registered Dietitian if you should eat fruit or dairy at your meals.
- Some people with chronic health conditions may need to limit their intake of sugar, including from fruits, or may have dairy allergies or lactose intolerance.
- If you avoid dairy, choose alternatives like lactose-free, almond, soy, or oat milk.
- Look for opportunities to choose less [processed food](#) when possible. If a food is ultra-processed, it has been changed from its original form with added fat, salt, sugar, and/or preservatives and other chemical ingredients. Check the ingredient lists on foods you are considering eating or buying.



Each color provides different nutrients.

[Learn More.](#)