



Healthy Eating In the College Dorm

One nice thing about most college dining halls is that they serve buffet style, so you can refill your plate as many times as you would like without having to pay any additional fees. But this *also* can make it very easy to overeat, since you don't see everything you consume on your plate at one time!

Like anywhere else, it is important to strive for variety when eating in the dorms. If you aren't sure how to get a good balance of foods and nutrients in your meals, try using the USDA's *Choose MyPlate* strategy—about one half of your plate should consist of fruits and vegetables, while the other half should consist of proteins and grains. Add a serving from the dairy group at each meal, and you've got all your bases covered! (See *diagram below*.)

Build a Healthier Plate

1. **Get plenty of complex carbohydrates.** Carbohydrates are the body's main source of energy. A few examples of complex carbohydrates include vegetables, brown rice, beans, and whole grain breads.
2. **Get adequate amounts of protein.** The amino acids found in proteins are needed for building and maintaining the body's tissues. Lean proteins will provide all of the essential amino acids while providing less fat and cholesterol than other protein choices. A few examples of lean proteins include poultry, seafood, tofu, beans, and egg whites.
3. **Reduce the amount of foods high in saturated fat.** While fat is one of the essential nutrients and is important for normal body function, saturated fats (commonly found in butter, cream and cheese) should be limited.
4. **Cut back on foods high in sugar.** These include cookies, cakes, ice cream, candies, and sweetened drinks, which are typically high in calories and very low in nutrients. Try to enjoy them as occasional treats, not every day foods.

Take Advantage of Fresh Produce

- Many dining halls have fresh fruits available for the taking. Instead of grabbing a bag of chips to take to class take an apple, banana, or orange!
- The salad bar can be used for more than just salads. Add some fresh greens to sandwiches or some chopped veggies to your pasta dishes!
- Make your own banana split, sundae or parfait using fresh fruit and low-fat yogurt or ice cream. Top with granola or nuts for a little extra crunch and nutrition!



For more information visit
www.ChooseMyPlate.gov