



## What Foods Can Do For You

You've been told over and over to eat right. To choose low-fat and fat-free dairy foods (milk, cheese and yogurt), fruits, vegetables, whole grains and protein foods. But why? What do these foods do for you? Will they give you super powers? Well, not exactly. They will, however, help to provide your body the essential vitamins and nutrients it needs in order to grow stronger and healthier. The chart below shows you why nutrient-rich low-

fat and fat-free dairy foods, fruits, vegetables, whole grains and protein are good for you. The number of servings you need in each group depends on your age, gender and level of physical activity. To find out what is right for you, go to [www.ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov).

Food Group	Nutrient & What It Does	Types of Food	What are some typical serving ideas?
Dairy	<p><b>Calcium</b> helps build strong bones and teeth, plays an important role in nerve function, muscle activity and blood clotting</p> <p>Potassium helps maintain healthy blood pressure and helps regulate your body's fluid balance</p> <p><b>Protein</b> helps build muscle and repair body tissue</p> <p><b>Vitamin D</b> helps your body absorb calcium for its use in building strong bones</p>	<p>Low-fat and fat-free milk (white and flavored), cheese (Cheddar, American, mozzarella) or yogurt (plain, flavored, added fruit)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 cup (8 oz) of milk</li> <li>• 1 ounces of natural cheese or 2 ounces of processed cheese</li> <li>• 1 cup (8 oz) of yogurt</li> </ul>
Fruit	<p><b>Vitamin C</b> helps your body heal cuts and bruises and fight infections</p> <p>Potassium helps maintain healthy blood pressure and helps regulate your body's fluid balance</p> <p><b>Fiber</b> helps your digestive system work properly</p>	<p>Apples, oranges, bananas, pears, peaches, grapes, kiwi, berries (strawberries, blueberries, raspberries) melons (watermelon, cantaloupe, honeydew) pineapple, papaya</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1/2 small apple - 1/2 cup</li> <li>• 4 large strawberries - 1/2 cup</li> </ul>



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Vegetables	<p><b>Fiber</b> helps your digestive system work properly</p> <p>Potassium helps maintain healthy blood pressure and helps regulate your body's fluid balance</p> <p><b>Vitamin A</b> helps your eyes adapt to the dark and keeps your skin healthy</p> <p>Vitamin E helps protect the body's cells and tissues.</p>	<p>Broccoli, cauliflower, corn, peas, green beans, spinach, mushrooms, celery, carrots, white potatoes, sweet potatoes, squash</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 medium carrot (or 6 baby carrots) = 1/2 cup</li> <li>• 1/2 large ear of corn = 1/2 cup</li> <li>• 1 cup raw spinach = 1/2 cup serving</li> </ul>
(Whole) Grains	<p><b>Carbohydrates</b> help give you energy</p> <p>Fiber helps your digestive system work properly</p> <p>Magnesium helps keep muscles healthy and bones strong</p>	<p>Whole wheat breads, rolls, crackers, brown rice, whole wheat pasta, oatmeal, whole grain cereals, popcorn</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 cup of whole grain cereal = 1 oz</li> <li>• 1 slice whole grain bread = 1 oz</li> </ul>



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Protein Foods	<p><b>Protein</b> helps build and repair muscle and other body tissue.</p> <p><b>B Vitamins</b> help your body release energy, play a vital role in the nervous system, and help both in the formation of red blood cells and building of tissues.</p> <p><b>Vitamin E</b> helps protect the body's cells and tissues.</p> <p><b>Iron</b> is used to carry oxygen in the blood.</p> <p><b>Magnesium</b> helps keep muscles healthy and bones strong.</p> <p><b>Zinc</b> helps the immune system function properly.</p>	Lean meat, poultry, fish, dry beans or peas, eggs, nuts and seeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 to 3 ounces lean meat, fish or poultry</li> <li>• 1 cup cooked beans = 2 ounces lean meat</li> <li>• 2 tablespoons peanut butter, 25 almonds or 1 egg = 1 oz of lean meat</li> </ul>

\* Based on an 1800 calorie diet. To find the amount that is right for you, go to [www.ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov).