

# summer wellness activity guide

Unit 1: Nutrition

ages  
**16-18**

**Oregon ASK**  
Afterschool & Summer for Kids Network



# Unit 1: Nutrition

Ages 16–18

## MY PLATE MENU

**ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:** Create a menu for a day for a friend or family member using MyPlate guidelines – talk about why this meal is healthy and why you think your family member will like it.

### SUPPLIES:

- Worksheets (provided)
- Writing utensils
- Paper

### STEPS:

1. Read the USDA tips on how to build a healthy plate
2. Using the MyPlate template as a guide, create a menu for 2 days for a family member
3. Next, write a couple of paragraphs talking about the choices you made, why your family member will like them, and how these meals are healthy

### HOW TO EXPAND:

- Present your menu to the friend or a family member and discuss with them why you made the choices you did and why you think these would be healthy meals
- Ask them whether or not they think following this menu would be feasible – why or why not? What are some of the barriers they experience when trying to eat healthy meals?
- If they have hesitations about how they could follow this menu, come up with modifications – are there ingredients that would be easier for them to find? Do these meals sound tasty?

### ADAPTATIONS/GOING VIRTUAL:

This activity can be completed from home. Call a friend or family member to discuss MyPlate, what they like to eat and your menu ideas. Then discuss the menu you made with them once you are done.

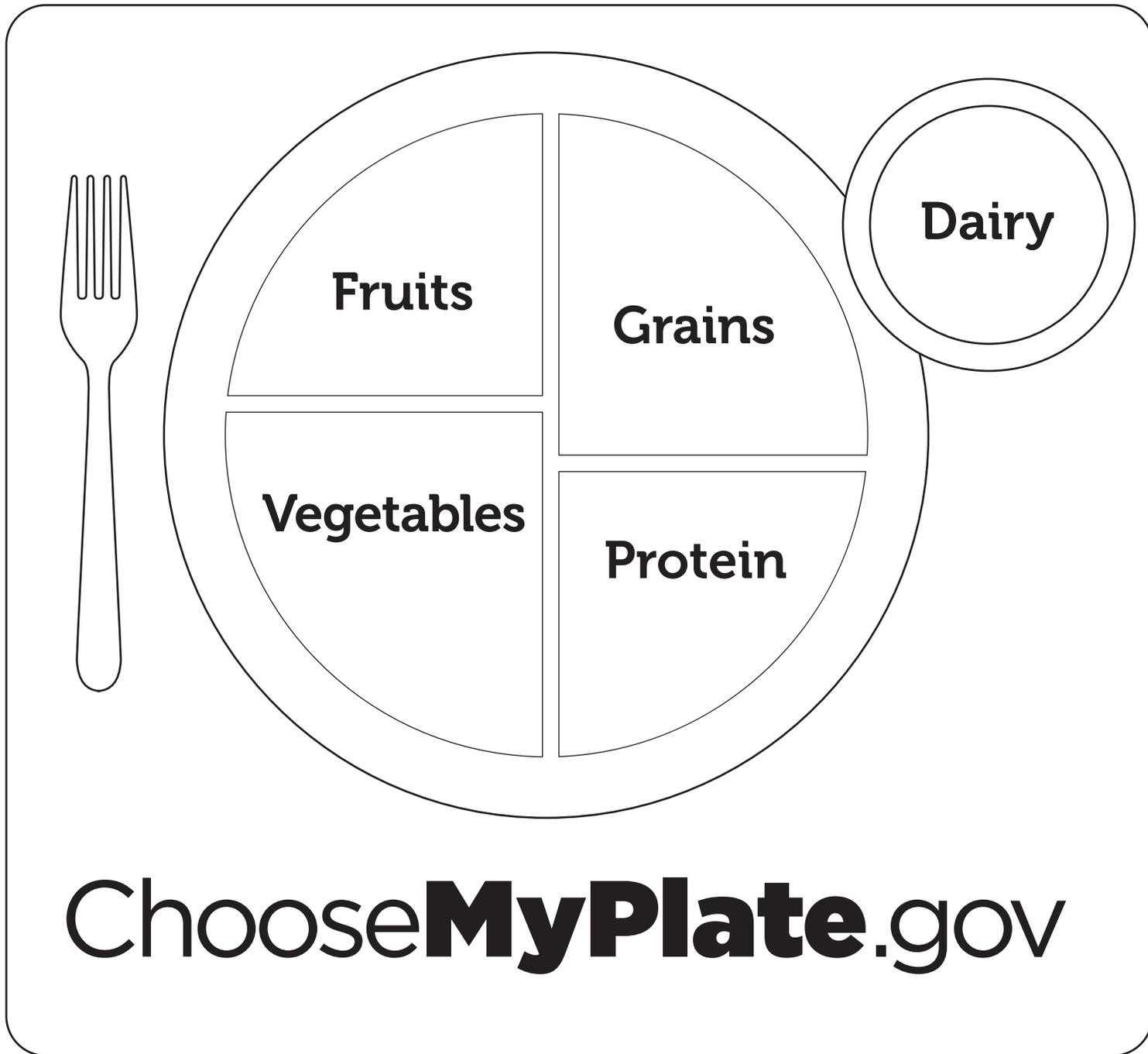
# MyPlate Food Groups

Food Group	What Counts As...
 <p><b>Fruits</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Whole Fruit</li> <li>- Fruit Juice</li> </ul>	<p><b>1 cup of Fruit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 cup fresh or canned fruit</li> <li>• 1 cup 100% fruit juice</li> <li>• 1/2 cup dried fruit</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Vegetables</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dark Green</li> <li>- Red and Orange</li> <li>- Beans and Peas</li> <li>- Starchy</li> <li>- Other</li> </ul>	<p><b>1 cup of Vegetables</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 cup fresh or canned vegetables</li> <li>• 1 cup 100% vegetable juice</li> <li>• 2 cups leafy salad greens</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Grains</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Whole Grains</li> <li>- Refined Grains</li> </ul>	<p><b>1 ounce of Grains</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 slice of bread (1 ounce)</li> <li>• 1/2 cup cooked pasta, rice, or cereal</li> <li>• 1 ounce uncooked pasta or rice</li> <li>• 1 tortilla (6 inch diameter)</li> <li>• 1 pancake (5 inch diameter)</li> <li>• 1 ounce ready-to-eat cereal (about 1 cup cereal flakes)</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Protein Foods</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Seafood</li> <li>- Meat, Poultry, and Eggs</li> <li>- Nuts, Seeds, and Soy</li> </ul>	<p><b>1 ounce of Protein Foods</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 ounce lean meat, poultry, or seafood</li> <li>• 1 egg</li> <li>• 1 Tablespoon peanut butter</li> <li>• 1/2 ounce nuts or seeds</li> <li>• 1/4 cup cooked beans or peas</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Dairy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Milk and Yogurt</li> <li>- Cheese</li> </ul>	<p><b>1 cup of Dairy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 cup milk</li> <li>• 1 cup fortified soymilk (soy beverage)</li> <li>• 1 cup yogurt</li> <li>• 1 1/2 ounce natural cheese (e.g., Cheddar)</li> </ul>

**Want your personal calorie and food group plan?**

Check out the MyPlate Plan at [www.ChooseMyPlate.gov/GetMyPlan](http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov/GetMyPlan).

For tips, visit [www.ChooseMyPlate.gov/StartSimple](http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov/StartSimple).



# Unit 1: Nutrition

Ages 16–18

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- What makes it difficult to come up with a menu for someone?
- What tips about building a healthy plate are the easiest and most difficult to follow?
- What are common barriers you think people have to healthy eating?

# Unit 1: Nutrition

Ages 16–18

## INTERVIEW

### INTERVIEW TIME

**ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:** Let's interview a friend or family member about what food means to them in their culture and talk about their experiences with healthy eating.

### SUPPLIES:

- Writing utensils

### STEPS:

1. Find a family or friend from a different culture than yourself to interview about the role food plays in their life
2. Come up with 8 interview questions including some about specific ingredients in the culture, common cooking methods, and traditions around food that they might know of
3. Conduct the interview (you can record it on a device if easier so that you don't have to take notes during the interview - but make sure to ask for permission)
4. After the interview is complete, record the answers and reflect on what you learned from the experience

### HOW TO EXPAND:

- Answer the interview questions yourself, then see how your answers compared to the person you interviewed
- Write a paragraph exploring how the persons' culture influenced their relationship and experiences with food

### ADAPTATIONS/GOING VIRTUAL:

This activity can be done over the phone or video call if done from home.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What aspects of our culture seem to have the biggest impact on our food choices?
- What did you have in common with the person you interviewed and what was different?
- What can you say about the traditions you learned about compared to your own?

# Unit 1: Nutrition

Ages 16–18

## NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

**ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:** Let's learn about what nutrition programs are available that increase food security and reduce hunger. These programs are available to anyone who qualifies for them and

### SUPPLIES:

- Internet connection
- Pen/pencil
- Paper

### STEPS:

1. Go to [this website](#) and choose a food assistance program
2. Using the website or any other resource obtain the following and write down your responses:
  - a. The name of the program
  - b. Who does this program help?
  - c. How do people qualify for this program?
  - d. What do they receive from this program/how often?
  - e. Why do you think this program is important?
3. With a partner or group, share what you found and compare and contrast the programs you chose.
4. Put everyone's program information together so that you have a book of resources available to anyone who needs them.

### HOW TO EXPAND:

Watch [this video](#) about school meals

Why do you think school meals are an important way to provide assistance?

Watch [this video](#) about how food assistance works

Watch [this video](#) about applying for food stamps in every state

How do you apply to them in your state?

### ADAPTATIONS/GOING VIRTUAL:

This program can be completed from home.

# Unit 1: Nutrition

Ages 16–18

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Do you know anyone who could benefit from the programs you found?
2. Why do you think it's important for programs like this to exist?
3. Why do you think there is a stigma surrounding food assistance and what are ways that we can fight that stigma?

# Unit 1: Nutrition

Ages 16–18

## CLEAN EATING?

**ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:** “Clean eating” is a term used frequently in social media to describe eating healthy; however this term can be misleading and give the idea that certain foods are good while others are bad and need to be completely eliminated. This can lead to restriction and bingeing cycles that make people feel guilty for eating certain foods. Let’s explore the trend of clean eating and the issues it can cause.

### SUPPLIES:

- Internet connection
- Writing utensils
- Paper

### STEPS:

1. Have you ever heard the term clean eating? If so, describe in your own words what it means to you and any experiences you have had with it. If not, what does it sound like to you? Write down your ideas.
2. Does clean eating seem helpful or hurtful in promoting health to you?
3. Do an internet search of clean eating and observe what it means – what foods are people eating? What type of people are promoting clean eating? Write your observations.
4. Do a social media search of clean eating and write similar observations as in step 2. What are the comments like in response to posts about clean eating?
5. Come up with some negative consequences around the clean eating movement. Turn to a classmate to discuss what you observed.

### HOW TO EXPAND:

Watch [this video](#) about the dangers of orthorexia and clean eating.

What is orthorexia in your own words? Have you observed anything you have seen in the video?

### ADAPTATIONS/GOING VIRTUAL:

- This activity can be done from home and discussed with family members instead of classmates.

# Unit 1: Nutrition

Ages 16–18

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- How do you think clean eating habits could cause issues with disordered eating?
- Do you feel pressure to eat “clean”?
- How does the clean eating movement affect those around you?
- Have you experienced any guilt with eating “bad” foods? How does this impact you?

# Unit 1: Nutrition

Ages 16–18

## FOOD MYTHS

**ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:** Let's learn about common food myths and explore the ones that interest you most. Unfortunately, myths about nutrition and food spread quickly and easily which can spread false information. It's important to learn about food from reputable sources so that you're well informed.

**SUPPLIES:** Internet connection, writing utensil, paper

### STEPS:

1. Choose three of the food myths below to research and debunk:
  - a. Carbs are bad for you and will make you gain weight.
  - b. Eating fat is not good for you.
  - c. Detox diets can help you eliminate toxins.
  - d. Foods with sugar are bad for you.
  - e. Vitamin C will prevent a cold.
  - f. Frozen fruits and vegetables are worse than fresh.
  - g. You shouldn't eat egg yolks.
  - h. You shouldn't eat at night.
  - i. Microwaving food is bad.
  - j. You should eat gluten-free even if you don't have celiac disease.
2. Research why your two choices are myths and put together a short presentation explaining what you found. Hint: [this article](#) may help.
3. Present this to other students.

### HOW TO EXPAND:

- Watch this [TEDEd video](#) on myths you learned in health class.
- Answer these questions:
  - Which one's did you believe?
  - Are there any you learned that are false?
  - Why do you think these myths are so easily believed?

### ADAPTATIONS/GOING VIRTUAL:

- If doing this from home, you can present your research to a family member or friend instead.

# Unit 1: Nutrition

Ages 16–18

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- Where do you see a lot of nutrition information that might be false?
- Which food myths did you believe? Where did you first hear them?
- Who do you think is a reputable source of nutrition information?

# Unit 1: Nutrition

Ages 16–18

## Food Production Journey

**ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:** Learning about where food comes from is important in learning about how much energy it takes to make food, how it impacts the environment and bringing about awareness of the food industry. When we buy food at the grocery store, we don't often realize the work that has been done to get it there.

### SUPPLIES:

- Internet connection
- Food item from home
- Writing utensil

### STEPS:

1. Choose a food item from your home that has a label or sticker on it.
2. Using the information provided, do as much research as you can to find out about where that food was produced. If you don't have enough information, look up the typical production method for the food in the state or country you live in.
3. Do you know if your food was imported from another state or country? Look up why the food is grown in that area and why foods tend to be grown in one place and exported to another.
4. Write or draw out the journey the food you chose had to take to be made from the very start to the finish in your home.

### HOW TO EXPAND:

- Think about the environmental impact of foods being imported and exported and write a reflection on this.
- Look up foods with the largest impacts on the environment and rank the top 5. Which ones of these do you consume regularly?

### ADAPTATIONS/GOING VIRTUAL:

This activity can be done from home.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What part of the food process were you unfamiliar with and what did you learn about them?

# Unit 1: Nutrition

Ages 16–18

2. What choices can we make to help reduce the environmental impact of the food we buy? Why might this be hard to do?

# Unit 1: Nutrition

Ages 16–18

## VITAMIN AND SUPPLEMENT INDUSTRY

**ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:** Let's learn about supplements and the supplement industry. Supplements are essentially synthetic nutrients usually in a pill form, for example, iron supplements provide large amounts of the nutrient iron. These are really common these days, but our body is much better at absorbing nutrients from foods themselves than from supplements. Additionally, supplements are unregulated by the FDA so we can't always be sure of what's in them. Supplements also contain nutrients in very high quantities, and it's important to remember that too much of something, even a good thing, can have negative effects.

### SUPPLIES:

- Internet connection

### STEPS:

- 1) Think of a supplement you take or one you have heard of a lot of people taking. If you're not sure, look up common supplements on the internet and choose the one you are familiar with.
- 2) Look at the bottle of supplements you have or look up a brand of the supplement you chose and see how much is in one serving.
- 3) Look up how much of the nutrient you need each day. This can be found by searching "recommended dietary allowance of \_\_\_" and compare it to how much is in the serving from the supplement, record your findings.
- 4) Look up foods that naturally contain your nutrient and make a list of foods that are commonly available to you that would help you consume more of that nutrient instead of a supplement.
- 5) Look up the definition of bioavailability. Given that nutrients are usually more bioavailable in foods than supplements, why do you think foods might be a better source of nutrients than supplements? Record your thoughts

### HOW TO EXPAND:

- 1) What is a nutrient deficiency? Look this up if you don't know. Now pretend you are a nutrition expert and patients have come to see you with the following deficiencies - what foods would you tell them to eat to get more of that nutrient:
  - a) Iron deficiency
  - b) Vitamin D deficiency

# Unit 1: Nutrition

Ages 16–18

- c) Calcium deficiency
- 2) In what situations do you think someone might need to take supplements?  
Brainstorm some ideas and share these ideas with classmates.

**ADAPTATIONS/GOING VIRTUAL:** This activity can be completed alone and from home if internet connection is available.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Given the amount of nutrients in supplements, why do you think it could be dangerous to take many supplements?
2. What are other reasons you can think of that could make supplements dangerous?
3. Why do you think supplements are so popular and so common?
4. What supplements are the most common among the people you know?

# Unit 1: Nutrition

Ages 16–18

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# Unit 1: Nutrition

Ages 16–18

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