

# Words on Wellness

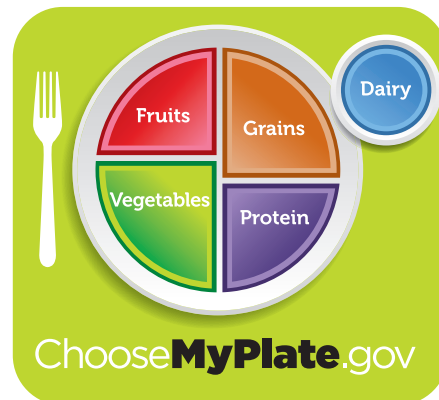
YOUR EXTENSION CONNECTION TO NUTRITION AND FITNESS

## Small Changes Add Up for Better Health

Food portions can be a challenge, but choosing sensible amounts of all food is important for achieving and maintaining a healthy weight. The best way to achieve and maintain a healthy weight is to make small, long-term changes in what you eat and drink, along with getting daily physical activity.

Follow the [MyPlate](http://www.choosemyplate.gov) ([www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov)) healthy eating food plan:

- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables—think variety and make it colorful.
- Make half your grains whole grains.
- Choose low-fat and fat-free dairy products.
- Vary your protein—poultry, seafood, meat, eggs, nuts, and beans.



### Other helpful tips:

- Avoid portion distortion—read labels, measure, and place servings into containers or baggies.
- Record the amount of food you eat with a three- to five-day food journal—you might be surprised!
- Use smaller bowls and plates at mealtime.
- Choose foods with less saturated fats, sodium, and added sugar.
- Cook more often at home to control the ingredients in your food.
- When dining out, look at nutritional information before ordering.
- Drink water or low-calorie beverages with meals.
- Get the recommended 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity each week.

Set realistic and achievable goals for your health. Remember, if you slip up one day don't dwell on it, just press on with your health goals in mind. Download [Key Nutrients from the Extension Store](#) (store. extension.iastate.edu/product/4184) for additional information.



Recipe used with permission from West Virginia University Extension Service.

## Citrus Infused Water

### Ingredients:

- 1/2 orange
- 1/2 lemon
- 1/2 grapefruit
- 1 cup ice
- Cold water

### Instructions:

1. Add fruit to a two-quart pitcher.
2. Gently press fruit with a spoon to release some of the juices.
3. Add ice to the pitcher, then fill with cold water; stir.
4. Serve immediately or chill, covered, in the refrigerator.



Get creative or try these seasonal combinations:  
Apple + Cinnamon Stick  
Cranberry + Orange



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## Is Your Fruit-infused Water Safe?

Fruit-infused water has become popular in recent years. It's a great way to drink more and stay hydrated. With no added sugar, it's a good alternative to juice or soda. The endless flavor combinations are tasty and refreshing. There are some important food safety tips to remember, however. To avoid increased bacteria growth and foodborne illness, follow these tips:

- Start with clean hands; wash hands with warm water and soap for 20 seconds.
- Wash produce thoroughly under cool running water. Use a clean produce brush on firm items such as oranges or lemons.
- Use clean cutting boards and utensils to avoid cross-contamination.
- Store infused water in the refrigerator at 40°F or below in a sealed pitcher.
- If you are taking your infused water on the go, make sure to drink it within four hours. Infused water at room temperature must be used or discarded after four hours to prevent bacteria growth.
- For best results, drain fruit solids within 24 hours and refrigerate water up to three days.
- Always start with clean equipment for new batches; avoid refilling the same pitcher.

Source: [Michigan State University Extension](http://www.canr.msu.edu/news/enjoy_infused_water_safely) (www.canr.msu.edu/news/enjoy\_infused\_water\_safely)

## Did Your Exercise Goals Take a Holiday?

The holiday season is a busy time of year, which may make it hard to get in the recommended 30 minutes of moderate physical activity five days a week. Even when these recommendations are met, there is an increased

risk for chronic disease when you are sitting for a prolonged period of time. There are plenty of ways to get moving, though. For instance, take the stairs instead of the elevator, walk the hallways at work on breaks, stand while you're on the phone, or stretch a couple minutes for every hour of prolonged sitting. At home, complete floor exercises during commercial breaks or march in place while you're cooking in the kitchen. These are small steps to reduce sedentary time and increase activity.

You can even enjoy the winter weather while getting in some exercise. Activities like ice skating, snowball fights, sledding, and making snow angels count toward your daily physical activity minutes.

Source: [eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org) (www.eatright.org/fitness/exercise/family-activities/family-exercise-ideas-for-every-season)

