

# NEWS You Can Use

## NUTRITION EDUCATION WITH SENIORS



March is National Nutrition Month. This year's theme is "Put Your Best Fork Forward." An old play on words, "put your best foot forward," but with a new twist which emphasizes healthy food choices.

Nutrition is not "one size fits all." By putting your best "fork" forward, you can choose healthful foods that work with your food preferences. Healthy eating doesn't need to be complicated, either. Make healthy meals you enjoy by following these tips.

**Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.** Fresh, frozen, and canned are all great options to include in a healthy diet.

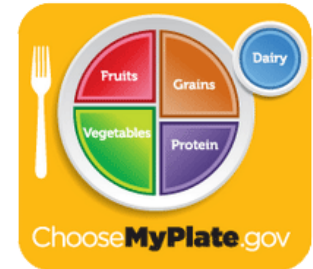
**Make half your grains whole.** Choose 100% whole wheat breads, cereals, pasta, and brown rice and eat these at least half of the time.

**Eat low-fat or fat-free milk, cheese, and yogurt.** Older adults need calcium and vitamin D for strong bones and teeth. Eat dairy three times every day.

**Vary your protein sources.** Include beans, peas, eggs, nuts, fish, lean meats, and poultry throughout the week.

**Enjoy your food, but eat less.** As we age, our nutrient needs increase even though we may need fewer calories. Make each of your choices count by choosing nutrient-rich foods.

Visit [EatRight.org](http://EatRight.org) to see more about National Nutrition Month 2017.



## What is an apricot in jail? Apricaught!

### Selection:

- Choose cans without leaks, dents, or bulges. Leaks, dents, and bulges could mean the **apricots** are unsafe to eat.
- Check the "Best by" or "Best if used by" date on the can.

### Storage:

- Store unopened cans in a cool, clean, dry place.
- After opening, keep the **apricots** in a tightly covered glass or plastic container for up to four days in the refrigerator or up to two months in the freezer.

### Nutrition: 1 cup of **apricots**:

- Provides 160 calories and 4 grams of fiber.
- Offers 2/3 of your daily vitamin A needs.
- Is naturally fat- and cholesterol-free, and low in sodium.
- Counts as one ounce equivalent from the MyPlate fruit group.

### Uses:

- Enjoy chilled **apricots** as a snack all on their own.
- Add **apricots** to cereal, oatmeal, or yogurt for a sweet punch of flavor.
- Blend **apricots** with yogurt to create a spread for a sandwich. Spread on a piece of whole grain bread, and include any lean meat or poultry, lettuce, and tomatoes for a balanced MyPlate meal.



# Is your refrigerator clean and safe?

Most of us protect ourselves, family, and friends from foodborne illness by making sure to store foods safely, prevent cross-contamination, and cook food to a safe temperature. But what about the refrigerator? The shelves can be a breeding ground for bacteria! Food spills, container leakage, and produce-gone-bad can leave behind germs. Start your spring cleaning by giving your refrigerator some much-needed attention.

- 1) Remove food items one shelf or drawer at a time. Place in a cooler with ice or cooling packs.
- 2) Use warm soapy water and a clean sponge to wipe down shelves and drawers.
- 3) Rinse with a clean sponge and water.
- 4) Dry with a paper towel or clean cloth.
- 5) Wipe food containers clean before returning to the refrigerator.
- 6) Clean the door handle frequently, as it is touched many times every day.



You can stay ahead of the game by wiping up spills and food grime as they occur. For more tips on keeping a clean refrigerator, visit <http://www.eatright.org/resource/homefoodsafety/four-steps/wash/how-clean-is-your-refrigerator>.

## Sweet & Tangy Chicken Quesadillas

**Serves: 4**  
**Serving Size: 1 quesadilla**

### Ingredients:

- 1 can (15 ounces) apricots
- 1 cup boneless, skinless chicken cut into bite-sized pieces
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup low-fat shredded cheese
- 4 whole-wheat tortillas (8 inches)



### Instructions:

1. Strain the juice from the apricots into a small bowl and cut apricots into small bite-sized pieces. Set aside.
2. Heat a skillet over medium heat. Spray with cooking spray. Add chicken and apricot juice.
3. Cook the chicken, stirring occasionally, until internal temperature reaches 165°F. Remove chicken and juice from skillet.
4. Put  $\frac{1}{4}$  of each ingredient (chicken mixture, cheese, apricots) on half of each tortilla.
5. Fold the empty side of the tortilla over the chicken, cheese, and fruit like closing a book.
6. Cook quesadillas until lightly browned on both sides. Make sure they are warmed through and the cheese is melted.

Top with salsa or serve with steamed peppers for a MyPlate-friendly meal.

**Nutritional analysis (1 quesadilla):** 320 calories, 12g fat, 6g saturated, 0g trans, 480mg sodium, 35g carbohydrates, 4g fiber, 11g sugar, 21g protein

This recipe is courtesy of ISU Extension and Outreach's Spend Smart Eat Smart website, <https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/>

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