

# Words on Wellness

YOUR EXTENSION CONNECTION TO NUTRITION AND FITNESS

## Personalize Your Plate



March is National Nutrition Month. This year's theme is "Personalize Your Plate." There is no one-size-fits-all when it comes to nutrition. Everyone is unique! Each of us has different tastes, traditions, and budgets.

Personalize your plate to make sure every bite counts by choosing "nutrient-dense" foods. Nutrient-dense foods are those that are high in nutrients, such as vitamins and minerals, but not very high in calories. The 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans suggests the following:

1. Start with personal preferences. When choosing nutrient-dense foods, be sure to think about the healthy foods you and your family truly enjoy. If you and your family enjoy the food you eat, you will be more likely to retain your healthy eating habits over time.
2. Celebrate your food traditions! For example, if your family traditionally enjoys eating spaghetti and meatballs, make the same dish using less sodium and saturated fat. Use low-sodium sauce. Use leaner beef or ground turkey for the meatballs. Choose whole grain pasta. With a few small changes, you can still enjoy any traditional dish.
3. Consider your budget. Healthy eating can be budget friendly and delicious. The ISU Spend Smart. Eat Smart. website, [spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu](https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu), is a great source for easy, low-cost recipes.

Sources:

[Eat Right](https://bit.ly/3tHoP6T), [bit.ly/3tHoP6T](https://bit.ly/3tHoP6T).

[Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020-2025](https://bit.ly/3jw8Nlv), [bit.ly/3jw8Nlv](https://bit.ly/3jw8Nlv).

## Energy Bites

Serving Size: 1 energy bite | Serves: 25

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 cups oats (old fashioned or quick)
- 1/2 cup unsweetened coconut flakes
- 1/4 cup chia seeds
- 1/4 cup mini chocolate chips
- 1/2 cup creamy peanut butter
- 1/3 cup honey
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions:

1. Stir all ingredients together in a medium sized bowl.
2. Cover a cookie sheet with foil or parchment paper. Drop mixture by tablespoonfuls onto the cookie sheet.
3. Refrigerate 1 hour.
4. Roll each drop of mixture into a ball. Place in an airtight container. Store in the refrigerator.

Nutrition information per serving:

90 calories, 5g total fat, 1.5g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 0mg cholesterol, 25mg sodium, 10g total carbohydrate, 2g fiber, 5g sugar, 2g protein

This recipe is courtesy of ISU Extension and Outreach's Spend Smart. Eat Smart. website. For more information, recipes, and videos, visit [spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu](https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu).





[www.extension.iastate.edu](http://www.extension.iastate.edu)

## Practicing Food Safety Each Day Keeps Foodborne Illness Away

One in six people get food poisoning—also known as a foodborne illness—every year in the United States. Young children, pregnant women, and older adults have a higher risk of foodborne illness.

Pregnant women are at high risk for listeriosis, a type of foodborne illness that causes miscarriage. Lower the risk by doing the following:

- Cook meat, seafood, poultry and eggs thoroughly.
- Do not eat cold deli meats or hot dogs. Heat sliced deli meats and hot dogs to 165°F or until steaming.
- Avoid raw bean sprouts, unpasteurized milk, or cheese made from unpasteurized milk.

Adults ages 60 years and older are at higher risk for foodborne illness because the immune system weakens with age. Likewise, young children are at higher risk because their immune systems haven't fully developed yet.

Keep everyone safe by following these food safety practices.

1. Clean: Wash your hands thoroughly. Clean and sanitize food preparation surfaces.
2. Separate: Keep raw meats apart from other foods that may be eaten without cooking, such as fruits and vegetables.
3. Cook: Cook foods to the correct temperature. Use this handout on food thermometers, [bit.ly/2YXooHu](http://bit.ly/2YXooHu), for more information.
4. Chill: Don't leave food out of the fridge for more than two hours.

For more information on food safety in the kitchen, visit [Ten Steps to a Safe Kitchen](#), [bit.ly/3rh2r24](http://bit.ly/3rh2r24).

Source: [Ten Steps to a Safe Kitchen](#), [bit.ly/3rh2r24](http://bit.ly/3rh2r24).

## Moving More = Better Health

Our bodies are built to move. There are many benefits to being active throughout the day. Moving your body for just 3–5 minutes every 30–60 minutes improves nearly every system in the body.

Studies show that moving for a few minutes every 30 minutes or so

- Improves digestion,
- Increases energy levels,
- Enhances mood,
- Promotes better blood flow,
- Improves posture, and
- Increases focus.

Get your body moving by taking a stroll away from your work area. Stretch muscles that feel tense. Shake your arms and legs or do simple exercises in your workspace. For example, you could do wall push-ups, repeatedly standing from your chair.

Print this useful infographic on [desk exercises](#), [bit.ly/36X4kte](http://bit.ly/36X4kte)!

Source: [Time to Move](#), <https://hr.umich.edu/benefits-wellness/health-well-being/mhealthy/faculty-staff-well-being/physical-activity/time-move>.