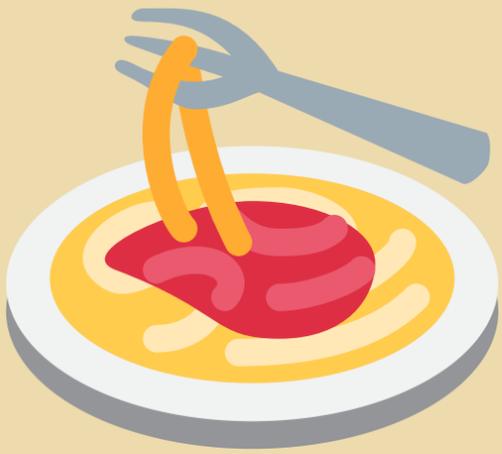


USING NON-PERISHABLE ITEMS TO BUILD A HEALTHY PLATE

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In the current COVID-19 crisis, we find ourselves wondering how to eat healthy while staying at home. Making fewer trips to the grocery store means that our food needs to last us longer. Some are at a loss for what items they should stock up on. Using MyPlate as a guide, you can make nutritious choices by adding some of these non-perishable (unrefrigerated) food items to your diet.



PROTEIN

Canned or dried beans and peas are always a great go-to source for protein and fiber without added saturated fat or cholesterol. If possible, choose items that are reduced sodium or no salt added. Prior to serving, rinse beans and peas in a colander to further reduce sodium content. Dried beans and peas require soaking before conventional cooking, but this step can be skipped when using a pressure cooker. Canned meat and seafood such as chicken, salmon, or tuna are convenient ways to add meat to your diet. Select those packed in water rather than oil, and remember to choose items with a minimal amount of sodium. Nuts, seeds, and nut butters (without added sugars) are another great way to get protein, and they are full of heart-healthy unsaturated fats.



FRUIT

Whether dried, canned, or fresh, fruit is full of fiber, vitamins and minerals. Vitamin C-rich fresh citrus can be kept at storage temp (50-70 °F) for up to 10 days. Choose fruits canned in water or their own juice. Avoid those canned in light or heavy syrup, as these are high in sugar. Dried fruits can be enjoyed on their own or mixed with whole grain cereal and nuts for trail mix.



GRAIN

Grains—particularly whole grains—are high in fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Whole grain pasta, whole wheat flour, whole grain cereal, brown or wild rice, quinoa, barley, amaranth, farro, oats, granola, tortillas, and popcorn are all excellent choices. When choosing pre-packaged items, aim for items low in sugar and high in fiber. For foods with several ingredients, like breads and cereals, "whole" should be the first word in the ingredients list.



DAIRY

Calcium and vitamin D are necessary for strong bones, healthy teeth, and prevention of osteoporosis. In our diet, these are most often found in dairy foods. Some great alternatives to refrigerated items are dry milk, ultra high temperature (UHT) pasteurized milk, and shelf-stable, plant-based milk beverages.



VEGETABLES

The beauty of canned vegetables is that you can enjoy your favorite regardless of the season. Vegetables are packed with fiber, vitamins, and various important minerals. When choosing vegetables, be sure to select those low in sodium or with no salt added. Draining and rinsing will also further reduce the sodium content.



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