



# Go Go Gadget Grocery Shopping

BY AMY KOBOS · JULY 3, 2014

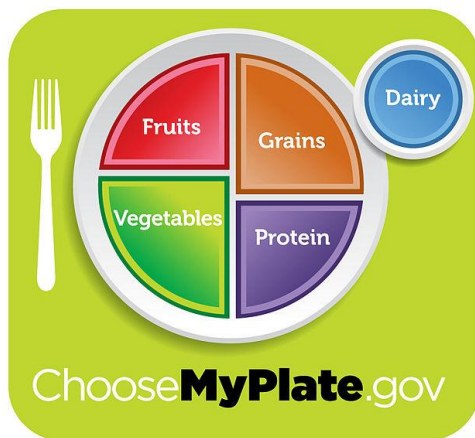
*If you are a beginner to healthy grocery shopping, this is a perfect place to begin.*

Who says you have to follow trendy diets and fads or eat organic to be healthy? Well guess what, you don't. Also, healthy food is affordable and DOES taste good – forget about the horror stories and past experiences of “health” food tasting like cardboard. You also don't have to go to

a special health foods store to find it. It is as simple as that plus a little bit of knowledge.



**1) You don't have to buy organic to be healthy.** Our bodies do a sufficient job clearing out any pesticide residual that may be in our food. Some produce is “dirtier” than others, but eating fruits and vegetables regardless if it is organic or not is still good for you. Eating organic is not a bad idea if you can afford it, but your body will do just fine otherwise.



**2) MY PLATE.** You may remember the Food Pyramid growing up as a kid in the 1900's. My Plate is the modern version and honestly the most sensible demonstration of how to eat a balanced diet. In a nutshell, your plate should be 50% fruits and vegetables 25% protein, 25% carbohydrates, and a little dairy on the side.

## UP YOUR ABILITY:

**A) Choose fruits and vegetables with color.** These have very beneficial phytochemicals and nutrients. If you can't buy fresh, then frozen is great. *P.S. Ketchup and French fries DO NOT count as a fruit or a vegetable.* Choose darker greens versus lighter greens, i.e., spinach versus iceberg lettuce. Have fun trying new things.

**B) Healthy protein examples:** White meats like chicken, shrimp, fish, pork, turkey and meat alternatives like nuts, tofu, beans, eggs, low-fat cheese/low-fat milk. Limit the amount or eliminate red meats like ground beef, steak, hot dogs, Slim Jims. I know, I know, some days we do feel like snapping into it, but please be mindful. There are lots of bad fats in red meat. Next time you make spaghetti or burgers, try ground turkey or chicken. You will be surprised that it does taste good without all the bad fatty gunk. If you do buy red meat, try to get a lean percentage above 90%.



**C) We need carbohydrates (a.k.a. glucose) to live.** This is what drives our cells around our body to deliver nutrients and elements. It is the energy source for building bones, muscles, and every metabolic process that goes

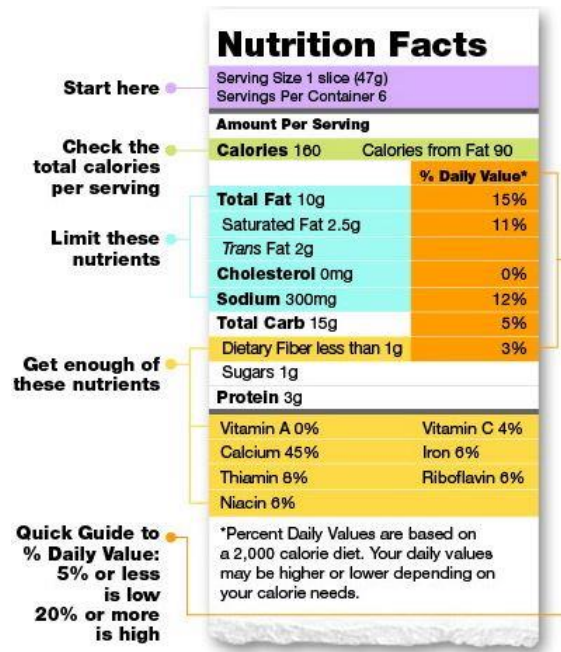
on in our bodies! Some people have this notion to be scared of carbs, but it is a fallacy. We cannot simply function without carbs. When we have too much, that's where our bodies run into problems. Moderation is key.

#### **Healthy carb examples:**

- Multigrain or wheat bread (the more stuff on it, the better). Limit the amount or eliminate white bread, white rice and white pasta. White bread can make you constipated.
- Healthy alternatives are brown rice, whole-grain pasta, steel-cut oats (*not instant oatmeal*), whole fruit (*not juices*), cereals with “whole grains” listed at or near the top of the ingredient list, beans, sweet potatoes.



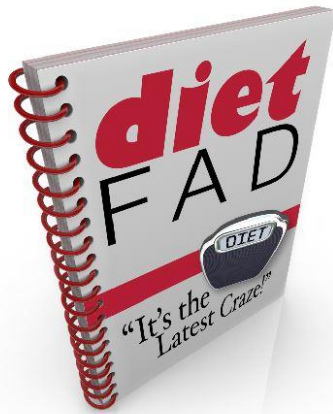
**3) Know how to read a food label:** This is probably the most important thing to know when grocery shopping. Know how many and what nutrients are going into your body. Are most of the ingredients sugar and garbage? Are there added sugars into the “fat-free” product? And why does sodium matter? Would Kool-Aid be a healthy drink option? What would be a healthier option? How many servings is in a can of soup? Look at the serving size. For a sufficient explanation, see this link and Nutrition Label provided by the American Heart Association [http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/GettingHealthy/NutritionCenter/HeartSmartShopping/Reading-Food-Nutrition-Labels\\_UCM\\_300132\\_Article.jsp](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/GettingHealthy/NutritionCenter/HeartSmartShopping/Reading-Food-Nutrition-Labels_UCM_300132_Article.jsp)



**4) Eating healthy is affordable.** In the long run, if you eat more healthy and less junkie, this will save medical costs from diet-related diseases like hypertension, diabetes, high cholesterol, erectile dysfunction, fatigue, anorexia (that’s just to just name a few!). You choose if you want to spend an affordable amount now versus if you want extremely high medical bills later on. You can compare shop: Do you buy the bunch of bananas for \$2 or the box of Cheez-Its for \$4?

**5) Be careful of trendy marketing,** i.e., “gluten-free,” “all natural,” “fat free”. Unless you have celiac disease (a gastrointestinal condition that will not process gluten well) or other ailment, then don’t worry about “gluten-free.” It is mostly a marketing thing. “Fat free” usually has a lot of sugars added to it and other junk. Sometimes it is smarter to buy the “low fat” version instead. Be mindful that these trendy phrases do not mean the food will not be healthy. ALWAYS Check the nutrition label and ingredients.

6) **Fad diets are usually complicated and sometimes just a bad idea.** You may have heard of



the 7-day diet, the Atkin's diet, South Beach diet, Hollywood diet, gluten-free diet, Paleo diet, fasting. Seriously, ladies and gentlemen, this is more complicated than it's worth. Although there may be some health benefits to some of the associated food products, these fad diets usually are very complex and require a lot of knowledge in order for them to work correctly (if there is a chance they work correctly, that is). If you stick with My Plate, you'll be in good shape. **Keep it simple.** Don't make it more trouble than its worth.



7) **Your body needs fat to operate.** Like carbohydrates, lipids (fats) help your body function. Our cells are made of lipids. If we don't have fat, we die. However, our bodies don't want tons of it. If you stick with the fats that are liquid at room temperature (unsaturated fats like olive and vegetable oils),

you are pretty good to go. The Institute of Medicine recommends 20% to 35% of our diet being healthy unsaturated fats.

8) **Limit or eliminate sodas, sweet teas, junk juices and beer!** You can EASILY shed off the pounds from just doing this as well as gain other health benefits like keeping your teeth and liver healthy. Remember to read the nutrition label. Is there anything in a can of soda or Kool-Aid that is good for us? Can't get away from beer, try a better quality beer and drink it more slowly; it's called mindful drinking and may limit your intake.



**Water is always the best beverage choice.**

**9) Healthy food DOES taste good.**

This doesn't seem so bad, right? You can do this. The next time you are at the grocery store, read the nutrition labels and try to pick healthier options than you did the time before or just try something new! Make sure you pick healthy foods you will enjoy. Your mind, body and soul will be happier.