



Healthy Diet

It is the policy of Cherish to promote the health of our program participants and knowledge base of our staff. It is with this in mind that we encourage healthy eating. Support staff will encourage program participants to eat healthy, especially if under doctor's orders to follow a particular diet. That being said it is the program participant's decision as to what they eat.

It is important for support staff to respect and adhere to the wishes of the individual.

When support staff are assisting a program participant with meals, staff will not rely on processed and prepackaged foods.

Staff are not to rely on their personal beliefs or preferences when assisting with meal preparation or eating.

There are belief based diets that are often of the utmost importance to individuals. Some examples of these are Kosher diets, Hindu diets, Catholic diets, vegetarian diets, etc... The support staff must ask the individual if they have special belief-based diets when discussing diet preferences of the individual. If a support staff person feels ill equipped to purchase supplies and prepare food for special diets, they should speak to their supervisor to obtain more information.

Proper nutrition and weight management are key factors in maintaining good health.

It is extremely important for people of all ages to eat a healthy diet that meets their nutritional needs and does not contribute to excessive weight gain. However, eating healthy and controlling weight is not always easy to do, particularly for people with disabilities.

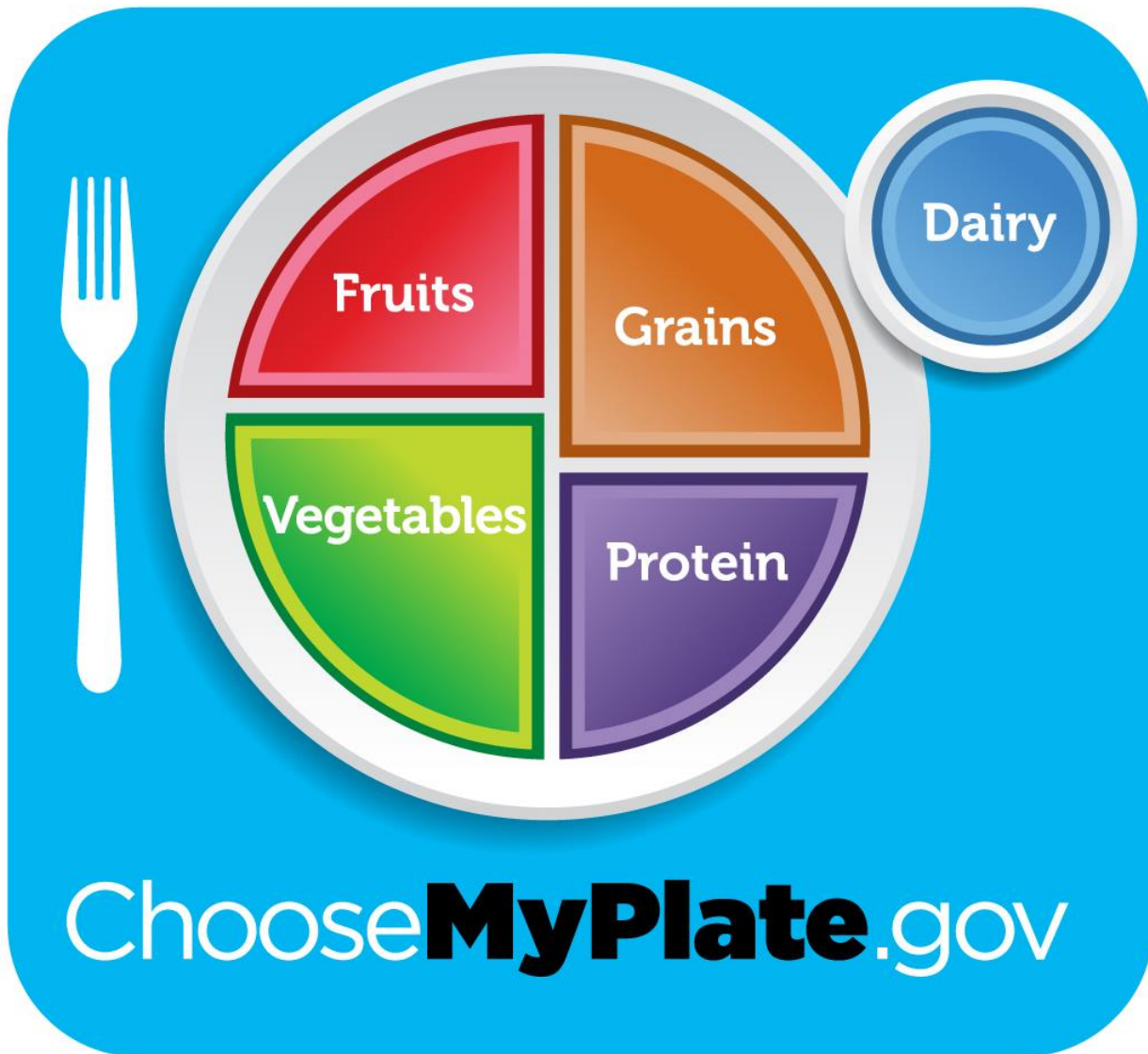
Persons with disabilities may find it more difficult to control their weight because they may not have independent choice in selecting the foods they eat. In addition, physical limitations may reduce their ability to exercise regularly. Due to disability-related limitations some people may lack the time, energy or ability to prepare healthy meals. They also may need to take medications that can contribute to weight gain. Good nutrition may be a major challenge for persons who have difficulty chewing and swallowing.

Difficulty Shopping and Cooking

Persons with disabilities that affect their mobility may find it difficult to get to a food market and to reach products on upper store shelves. It also may be hard for persons who live independently to prepare and cook fresh ingredients such as vegetables, fruits, and meats. Individuals who have spastic conditions that affect their arms and hands may find chopping and cutting foods to be a very slow and time consuming task. Those who use a wheelchair may have trouble reaching the top of the stove to check or stir cooking foods. As a result of



these limitations, persons with disabilities often end up ordering take-out or fast food from restaurants or eating TV dinners.



Support Staff May Choose Easy to Prepare Foods

Individuals living independently who rely on support staff for meal preparation, may find that the support staff's scheduled visits do not coincide with meal times. The staff may not have time to shop for fresh ingredients or to cook nutritious foods that may be desired by the consumer. Poor choices are often foods that are easy to prepare, such as canned soups and prepared meats that may be high in fat and salt. Another option is to have support staff prepare meals in advance and store them in the refrigerator to be heated up later at meal time.



Some Health & Wellness Resources

American Cancer Society	www.cancer.org
American Diabetes Association	www.diabetes.org
American Dietetic Association	www.eatright.org
American Heart Association	www.heart.org
National Cancer Institute	www.cancer.gov
National Institutes of Health, Osteoporosis and Related Bone Diseases	www.niams.nih.gov/Health_Info/Bone/
National Osteoporosis Foundation	www.nof.org
WomensHealth.gov	www.womenshealth.gov
5-A-Day	www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/

Persons with Disabilities Twice As Likely to be Obese

The increasing weight gain and obesity of American men, women and children has been widely publicized. But there has been less attention given to the fact that persons with physical, emotional and sensory disabilities are nearly twice as likely to be obese as the general population.

Overcoming Weight Management Barriers

Despite these barriers, persons with disabilities can achieve a healthy lifestyle that includes proper nutrition and moderate exercise. Recent research has shown that even small lifestyle changes can make dramatic differences.

Diet for People with Diabetes

A diabetes diet — medically known as medical nutrition therapy (MNT) for diabetes — simply translates into eating a variety of nutritious foods in moderate amounts and sticking to regular mealtimes. Rather than a restrictive diet, a diabetes diet or MNT is a healthy-eating plan that's naturally rich in nutrients and low in fat and calories, with an emphasis on fruits, vegetables and whole grains. In fact, **a diabetes diet is the best eating plan for most everyone.**

Recommended foods

Make your calories count with these nutritious foods:

- **Healthy carbohydrates.** During digestion, sugars (simple carbohydrates) and starches (complex carbohydrates) break down into blood glucose. Focus on the healthiest carbohydrates, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes (beans, peas, and lentils) and low-fat dairy products.
- **Fiber-rich foods.** Dietary fiber includes all parts of plant foods that your body can't digest or absorb. Fiber can decrease the risk of heart disease and help control blood sugar



levels. Foods high in fiber include vegetables, fruits, nuts, legumes (beans, peas, and lentils), whole wheat flour and wheat bran.

- **Heart-healthy fish. Eat heart-healthy fish at least twice a week.** Fish can be a good alternative to high-fat meats. For example, cod, tuna and halibut have less total fat, saturated fat and cholesterol than do meat and poultry. Fish such as salmon, mackerel, tuna, sardines and bluefish are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which promote heart health by lowering blood fats called triglycerides. However, avoid fried fish and fish with high levels of mercury, such as tilefish, swordfish and king mackerel.
- **'Good' fats.** Foods containing monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats — such as avocados, almonds, pecans, walnuts, olives, and canola, olive and peanut oils — can help lower your cholesterol levels. Eat them sparingly, however, as all fats are high in calories.

Foods to avoid

Diabetes increases your risk of heart disease and stroke by accelerating the development of clogged and hardened arteries. Foods containing the following can work against your goal of a heart-healthy diet:

- **Saturated fats.** High-fat dairy products and animal proteins such as beef, hot dogs, sausage and bacon contain saturated fats. Get no more than 7 percent of your daily calories from saturated fat.
- **Trans fats.** These types of fats are found in processed snacks, baked goods, shortening and stick margarines and should be avoided completely.
- **Cholesterol.** Sources of cholesterol include high-fat dairy products and high-fat animal proteins, egg yolks, shellfish, liver, and other organ meats. Aim for no more than 300 milligrams (mg) of cholesterol a day.
- **Sodium.** Aim for less than 2,300 mg of sodium a day.

My Daily Food Plan

Based on the information you provided, this is your daily recommended amount for each food group.

 <p>GRAINS 6 ounces</p>	 <p>VEGETABLES 2 1/2 cups</p>	 <p>FRUITS 2 cups</p>	 <p>DAIRY 3 cups</p>	 <p>PROTEIN FOODS 5 1/2 ounces</p>
<p>Make half your grains whole Aim for at least 3 ounces of whole grains a day</p>	<p>Vary your veggies Aim for these amounts each week: Dark green veggies = 1 1/2 cups Red & orange veggies = 5 1/2 cups Beans & peas = 1 1/2 cups Starchy veggies = 5 cups Other veggies = 4 cups</p>	<p>Focus on fruits Eat a variety of fruit Choose whole or cut-up fruits more often than fruit juice</p>	<p>Get your calcium-rich foods Drink fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk, for the same amount of calcium and other nutrients as whole milk, but less fat and Calories Select fat-free or low-fat yogurt and cheese, or try calcium-fortified soy products</p>	<p>Go lean with protein Twice a week, make seafood the protein on your plate Vary your protein routine—choose beans, peas, nuts, and seeds more often Keep meat and poultry portions small and lean</p>
<p>Find your balance between food and physical activity Be physically active for at least 150 minutes each week.</p>		<p>Know your limits on fats, sugars, and sodium Your allowance for oils is 6 teaspoons a day. Limit Calories from solid fats and added sugars to 260 Calories a day. Reduce sodium intake to less than 2300 mg a day.</p>		

Your results are based on a 2000 Calorie pattern.

Name: _____

This Calorie level is only an estimate of your needs. Monitor your body weight to see if you need to adjust your Calorie intake.

Policy reviewed and authorized by the Cherish owners at a formal Board of Directors meeting

Last policy review: 8/22/2023

