MyPlate is the USDA simplest guide yet. Unlike the pyramids, MyPlate stresses fruits and vegetables over grains other foods. This comes from the recognition that most Americans consume less than half the recommended daily amount of fruits and vegetables each day. Why is this an issue? Consuming fruits and vegetables and fruits can help you ward off chronic diseases, like heart disease and stroke, control blood pressure, prevent specific types of cancer, avoid diverticulitis (a painful intestinal condition), and guard against cataract and macular degeneration, two common causes of vision loss. How do fruit and vegetables provide all of these benefits? They are full nature’s most amazing compounds: phytoneutrients! These nutrients are only found in organic matter and evidence suggests they might:

- Serve as antioxidants (a molecule that inhibits the oxidation of other molecules)
- Enhance the body’s immune response
- Enhance estrogen metabolism
- Convert to essential vitamins (i.e. beta-carotene, a phytonutrient, is metabolized into vitamin A)
- Enhance/cause death of cancer cells (apoptosis)
- Repair DNA damage caused by smoking and other toxic exposures
- Detoxify carcinogens through the activation of the Cytochrome P450 and Phase II enzyme systems

### Applying the MyPlate Guidelines Across Food Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Group</th>
<th>Daily Recommended Servings (2400 cal diet)</th>
<th>Tip</th>
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</table>
| Grains     | 8 servings  
(1 serving = 1 slice bread; 1 ounce ready-to-eat cereal; or ½ cup cooked rice, pasta, or cereal) | Make at least half of your grains, whole grains |
| Fruits     | 2 cups  
(1 cup = 1 cup raw or cooked fruit, ½ cup dried fruit, or 1 cup 100% fruit juice) | Select fresh, frozen, and dried fruit more often than juice |
| Vegetables | 3 cups  
(1 cup = 1 cup most vegetables, 2 cups leafy salad greens, or 1 cup 100% vegetable juice) | Aim for variety everyday: Dark green, red & orange, beans & peas, starchy veggies |
| Protein    | 6.5 units  
(Examples of 1 unit = 1 ounce lean meat, poultry, or seafood; 1 egg; 1 Tbsp peanut butter; ¼ cup cooked beans or peas; or ½ ounce nuts/seeds) | Each week try to eat seafood, lean meat & poultry, beans, peas, nuts, and seeds |
| Dairy      | 3 cups  
(1 cup is 1 cup milk, yogurt, or fortified soy beverage; 1½ ounces natural cheese; or 2 ounces processed cheese) | Select low-fat dairy products whenever possible |
Eating Healthy @ MIT Dining Halls

In 2011, Bon Appétit Management Company was selected by students and faculty to provide extensive food services to MIT dining halls. This onsite restaurant company is known for its culinary expertise and commitment to socially responsible practices.

Did You Know...

- **Bon Appétit** has established local numerous partnerships with bakers and farmers in Massachusetts, Maine, Vermont, Rhode Island and Connecticut. In fact, 15-20% of all food found in your dining halls is directly from **LOCAL FARMS** through Bon Appetit’s **Farm to Fork** program.
- MIT chefs use **fresh and unprocessed ingredients** to cook all your meals. They do not serve pre-made or frozen foods. Foods from whole ingredients tend to be more flavorful and nutritious than pre-made or frozen meals, which are typically preserved with a lot of sodium.
- **Fresh fruits and vegetables** are available every day at each of the house dining sites (a.k.a. dining halls)

Facts About MIT Dining Halls

| Simmons       | Grill 229 makes classic foods including hamburgers, turkey and veggie burgers with a variety of toppings and hand-cut fries.  
|               | Bowls lets you design a stir-fry bowl full of fresh vegetables  
|               | Rotisserie offers different meats including Cajun chicken, blackened pork, and sweet and sour pork. |
| Baker         | Sushi station for hand rolled vegetables, fish and seaweed  
|               | “Pi” station makes Italian styled pizza and calzones  
|               | Bowls station makes tasty stir-fry with international influences featuring fresh vegetables and proteins |
| McCormick     | Extensive vegan & vegetarian options  
|               | All meat served is **Halal**  
|               | Global station serves stir-fry, Korean BBQ and sushi  
|               | Creperia makes warm crepes for breakfast and dinner with a variety of fillings |
| Maseeh        | Taj station serves authentic food from different regions of Indian  
|               | Salad bar serves fresh protein toppings, greens and other vegetables  
|               | Kosher meat and pareve meals are prepared in a separate Kosher kitchen |
| Next House    | Smoke House Grill smokes different meats each night.  
|               | Roma Italia you can build your own pasta dish  
|               | Bits & Bytes is a station featuring small sized foods each day |

TIPS FOR EATING HEALTHY @ MIT

1. **Follow the My Plate Guidelines.** USDA’s My Plate is the gold standard for healthy eating—and can easily be applied to building your own plate in the Dining Halls.
2. **Load up your plate with vegetables FIRST.** Prioritize important **phytonutrients** in your diet by prioritizing them on your plate. Hit up that salad bar first! Look at all the options and menus before making a selection.
3. **Feel free to request modifications and substitutes.** Bon Appetit staff members are there for you. Don’t be afraid to ask for extra vegetables or request that your sauce be served on the side.
4. **Feed your brain!** Especially if you are planning on studying after eating, choose nutritious foods that will allow you to concentrate without hunger for a few hours. If you know you’ll be up late after dinner, all MIT dining halls allow you to take a piece of fruit with you for a night-time snack.
5. **De-Stress** by putting your books away at meal-time and enjoying your meals with other students. You’ll be more mindful of your eating and will be less likely to experience indigestion related to stress.
6. **Figure out your dining schedule.** Once you’ve established your class schedule, allot yourself time to consume at least 3 meals each day. This will help ensure you’re refueling on a regular basis and avoiding “eating on the run.”

References:

