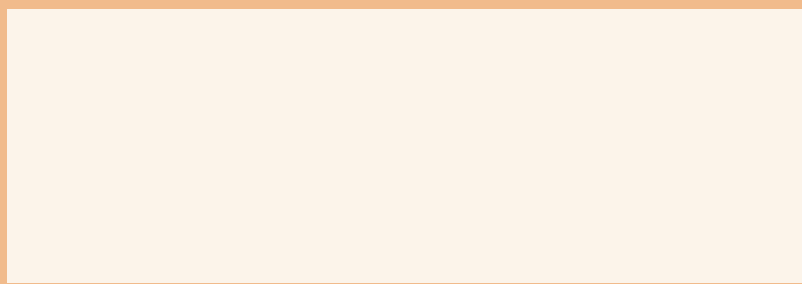




CREATING A BALANCED MEAL FOR YOUR CHILDREN



What constitutes a balanced meal?

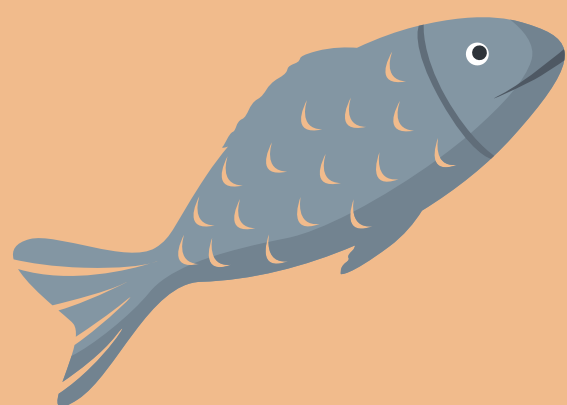
- Fruits and vegetables

- A diet rich in vegetables and fruits can lower blood pressure, reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke, prevent some types of cancer, lower the risk of eye and digestive problems, and positively affect blood sugar, which can help keep appetite in check.
- **IMPORTANT:** No single fruit or vegetable provides all of the nutrients you need to be healthy. Eat plenty every day.



- Whole grains

- Studies have shown that consuming whole grains lowers the risk of illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.
- Whole grains have dietary Fiber, which is important for the bowel to function properly. Fiber helps to increase food movement through the digestive system and reduce constipation.
- Whole grains also have B Vitamins, essential for a healthy nervous system. Your child's body needs thiamine, riboflavin, and niacin to convert and produce energy from fats, carbohydrates, and glucose.
- They also have minerals such as iron and magnesium. Iron is responsible for transporting oxygen in the blood, while magnesium builds strong bones and releases muscle energy.
- And they even have antioxidants! These strengthen the body's ability to fight infection and disease. Many people know they are in fruits and vegetables, but most are unaware that antioxidants are in whole grains, too.



- Protein

- The effects of protein deficiency and malnutrition range in severity from growth failure and loss of muscle mass to decreased immunity, heart and respiratory system weakening, and death.



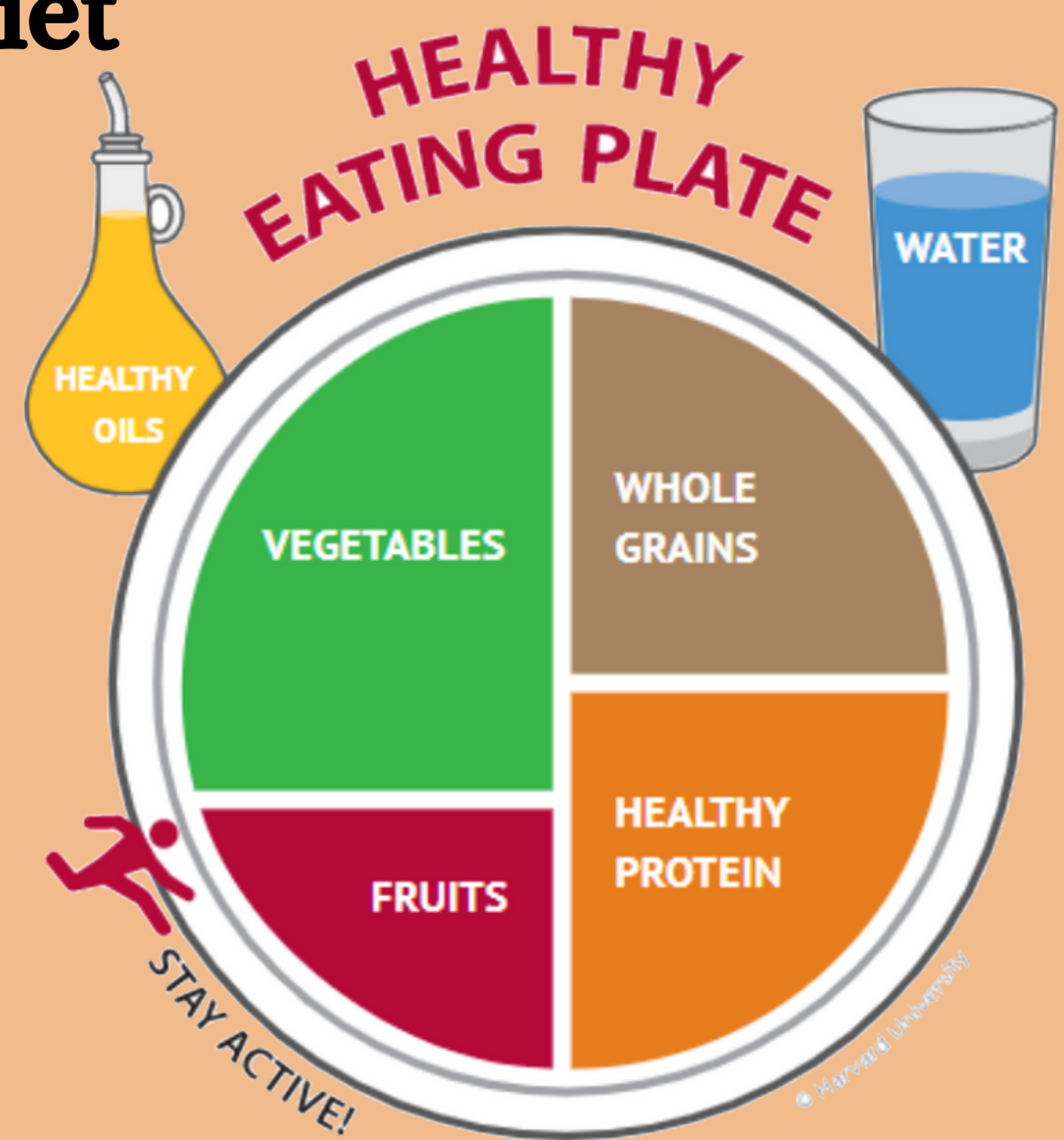
- Healthy fats

- A small amount of fat is essential to a healthy, balanced diet. Fat is a source of essential fatty acids, which the body cannot make itself. Fat helps the body absorb vitamins A, D, and E. These vitamins are fat-soluble, which means they can only be absorbed with the help of fats.
- Research also suggests they even lower the risk of developing heart disease, improve blood cholesterol levels, help with blood sugar control, and reduce inflammation.

- Water!

Building a Healthy and Balanced Diet

- Make most of your child's meal vegetables and fruits (1/2 of the plate)
 - TIP: Aim for color and variety
- Choose whole grains instead of refined grains (1/4 of the plate)
 - Examples: Whole wheat, barley, wheat berries, quinoa, oats, brown rice
- Protein (1/4 of the plate)
 - Examples of healthy protein sources include fish, poultry, beans, nuts
 - TIP: Avoid processed meats like bacon and sausage, and limit red meat.
- Healthy plant oils (in moderation)
 - Examples: Olive, canola, soy, sunflower, peanut oils
 - TIP: Avoid partially hydrogenated oils since they contain trans fat
 - Remember that low fat does not mean "healthy"
- Give your child water or tea
 - Skip sugary drinks, limit milk and dairy products to 1-2 servings per day, and limit juice to a small glass per day since it most likely contains added sugars.
- Keep your child active!
 - Staying active is important in weight control and staying healthy.



Lunchbox idea for your kid!

Recipe: Tuna salad sandwich (6 servings)

Ingredients:

- 4 (5 ounces) tuna packed in water drained
- 3/4 cup of olive oil mayonnaise
- 1/3 cup celery finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons red onion minced, about two small slices
- 2 tablespoons sweet pickle relish
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 clove garlic minced
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 12 slices of whole wheat bread
- 6 slices of iceberg lettuce

Instructions:

1. Combine tuna, mayonnaise, celery, onion, relish, lemon juice, and garlic in a medium bowl.
2. Season to taste with salt and pepper
3. Layer the tuna salad on a slice of bread, followed by lettuce.
4. Top with remaining bread, oil side down.
5. Enjoy!

