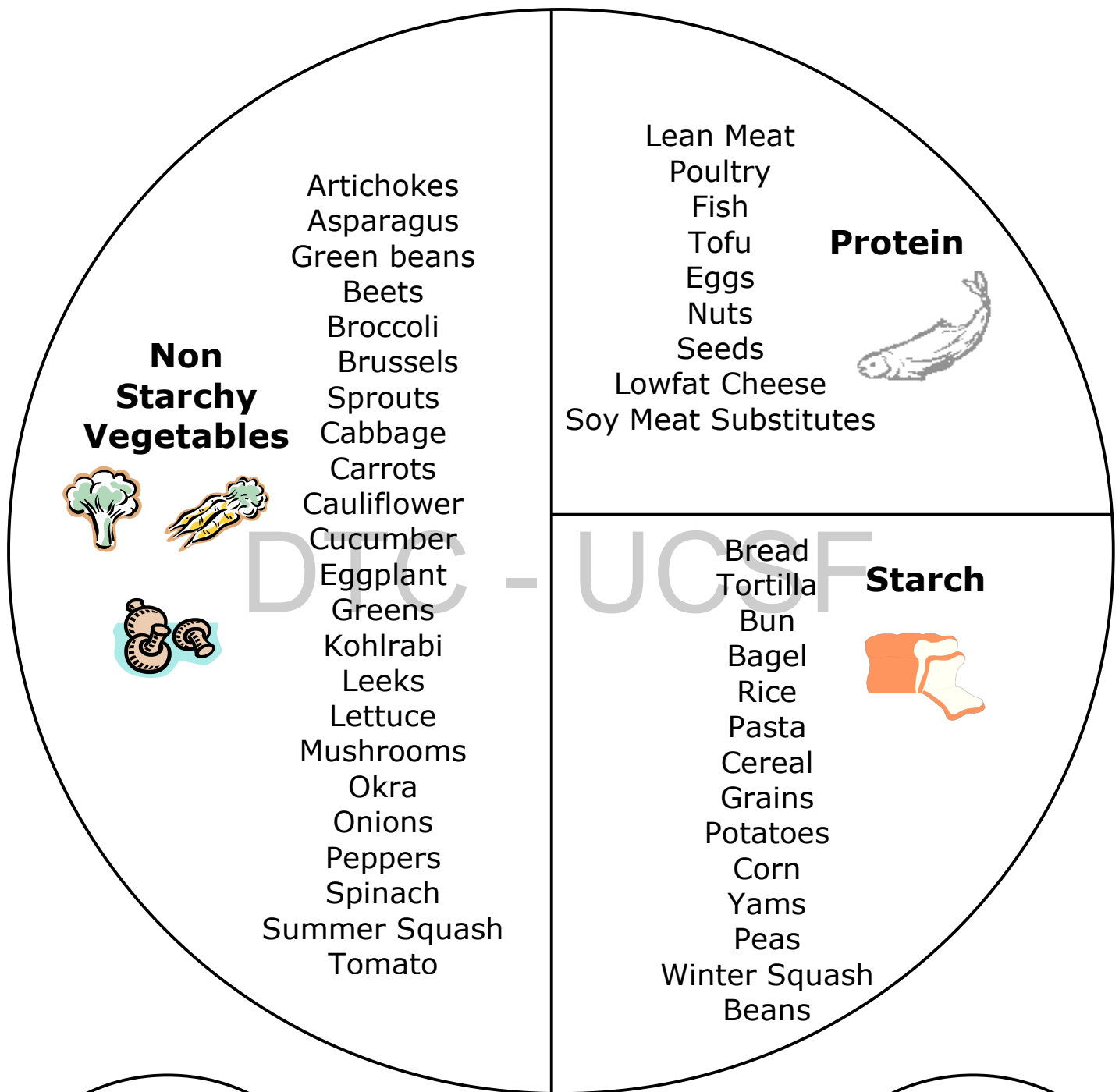



# Plate Method

## For Healthy Meal Planning




**Fruit**  
1 portion,  
if desired



**OR**

**Milk**  
1 portion  
milk or  
yogurt, if  
desired



**STEP 1: Fill Half (1/2) of Your Plate with Non-Starchy Vegetables.**

- ❑ Non-starchy vegetables are low in calories, low in carbohydrate, and high in fiber. This means non-starchy vegetables can help you feel full and more satisfied with your meal, but not lead to weight gain and high blood sugar.
- ❑ Aim for 1 to 2 cups of any vegetable (EXCEPT starchy vegetables listed in Step 3).
- ❑ Vegetables can be raw or cooked.

**STEP 2: Limit Protein to a Quarter (1/4) of Your Plate.**

- ❑ Choose lean meat, poultry, or fish. Your portion should not be bigger than the palm of your hand. Try just the egg whites for lower cholesterol.
- ❑ Choose tofu, nuts, or seeds. Aim for about 2 tablespoons of nuts and seeds or 1/2 cup of tofu.

**STEP 3: Limit Starch to a Quarter (1/4) of Your Plate.**

- ❑ Starch is a source of carbohydrate. Carbohydrate turns into an important fuel, called glucose, and limiting the portion size of starch helps control body weight and blood sugar.
- ❑ Choose a bun, tortilla, bread, bagel, rice, grains, cereal, pasta, or a starchy vegetable.
  - If you choose bread, limit to 2 slices or 1/2 bagel.
  - If you choose a hamburger/hotdog bun, limit to 1 bun.
  - If you choose a tortilla, limit to 2 small tortillas or 1 large tortilla.
  - If you choose rice, grains, pasta, cereal, or a starchy vegetable, limit the portion to no more than 1 cup – this is about the size of a woman’s fist. Starchy vegetables include beans, potatoes, corn, yams, peas, and winter squash.
- ❑ Choose most of your starches from whole grains, such as whole wheat bread or tortillas, brown rice, whole wheat pasta, whole grain and bran cereals, or beans.

**STEP 4: If Desired, Add 1 Portion of Fruit or Milk to Your Meal.**

- ❑ Fruit, milk, and yogurt are also sources of carbohydrate. To best control body weight and blood sugar, limit yourself to either fruit or milk at your meal. You may choose to save the fruit or milk as a snack.
- ❑ Because high carbohydrate liquids can quickly raise blood sugar, **avoid** drinking fruit juice.
- ❑ Examples of fruit portion sizes are:
  - 1 small apple, orange, peach, pear, banana, or nectarine (or half of a larger-size fruit)
  - 3/4 cup fresh pineapple chunks, blueberries, or blackberries
  - 17 grapes
  - 1 and 1/4 cups strawberries or watermelon
  - 1 cup cantaloupe, honeydew, or papaya
- ❑ Choose lowfat or nonfat dairy products for heart health and weight control.
- ❑ Examples of milk and yogurt portion sizes are:
  - 1 cup (8 ounces) of non-fat, 1%, or soy milk
  - 2/3 to 1 cup plain non-fat or aspartame-sweetened fruit yogurt

**STEP 5: Limit Added Fats.**

- ❑ Avoid adding fats to your foods like butter, margarine, shortening, mayonnaise, gravies, cream sauces, salad dressing, and sour cream. Instead, season foods with herbs and spices.
- ❑ Cook using lowfat methods such as baking, steaming, broiling, or grilling. Avoid frying foods.