

# MAKING HEALTHY CHOICES FOR SENIORS: WEEK 2

## Explore the food groups

Eating from each of the five food groups – fruit, vegetables, grains, protein and dairy – provides the body with a wide range of nutrients that it needs to work properly.

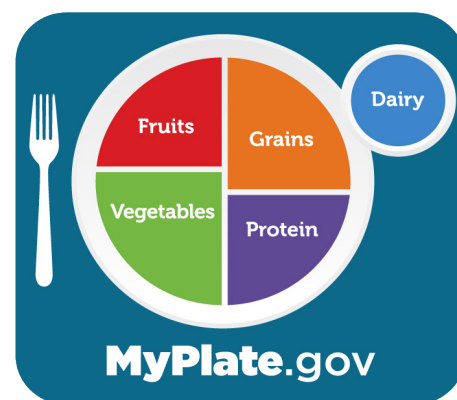
Not only is it important to make sure you are eating from each of the food groups, but it is also important to eat a variety of foods within each food group. This is because different foods contain different nutrients. For example, if you only eat carrots, you are missing out on some of the vitamins and minerals that come from broccoli, such as magnesium, vitamin B-6 and vitamin C.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's MyPlate is a tool that you can use to help you eat foods from each food group. MyPlate illustrates the five food groups that are the building blocks for a healthy diet using a familiar image – a place setting for a meal. You may remember past tools, such as MyPyramid, the Food Guide Pyramid or the Food Wheel. To learn more about each food group and recommendations for you, visit [www.choosemyplate.org](http://www.choosemyplate.org).

Try taking a look at your plate the next time you eat. Do you have food from every food group? Start to think about how you can include all of the food groups in your meals. The next step is to think about ways to have a variety of foods from within each food group. If you have grandchildren, remember, children learn by watching you so if you eat and try a variety of foods, they will be more likely to try a variety too.



© istock.com/belchonock



### Did you know?

You can prepare for many meals ahead of time by chopping up fresh ingredients such as veggies and storing them in a baggie or food-safe container in the refrigerator. Try this with the Quesadilla recipe. Portion out the beans, cheese and veggies. Then you can easily grab the ingredients when you're ready to make the meal. When cooking with a microwave, you may need to pre-cook fresh vegetables such as zucchini, mushrooms or peppers for a better texture and flavor.



© istock.com/ladi59



## WEEKLY RECIPE

Remember to wash your hands and prepare food safely.

### Microwave Quesadilla (serves 1)

1. Use an **8-inch 100% whole-wheat tortilla** on a microwave-safe plate.
2. Add **1/8 cup canned black beans, 1/4 cup pre-cooked veggies (like onions, bell peppers and mushrooms) and a sprinkle of cheese** to the tortilla.
3. Put in the microwave. Cook for 20 to 30 seconds and check if the cheese is melted. If not, cook for another 20 to 30 seconds or until the cheese is melted.
4. Fold in half. Then let sit in the microwave for a minute to let it cook a little longer and cool down.
5. Remove from microwave. If desired, serve with **nonfat sour cream** and **salsa**.

## MSU Extension programming

Michigan State University Extension helps people improve their lives by bringing the vast knowledge and resources of MSU directly to individuals, communities and businesses.

To help you be healthy at every stage of life, MSU Extension delivers affordable, relevant, evidence-based education to serve the needs of adults, youth and families in urban and rural communities. Programs focus on helping you gain the skills you need to buy and prepare nutritious, budget-friendly foods, increase your physical activity and stretch your food dollars.

MSU Extension's children and youth programs address needs and issues from birth through age 19, providing parents with educational resources related to your child's development

and giving youth the opportunity through 4-H programs to build leadership and teach practical life skills.

With a presence in every Michigan county, Extension faculty and staff members provide tools to live and work better. From a personal meeting to information online, MSU Extension educators work every day to provide the most current information when people need it to ensure success – in the workplace, at home and in the community.

**For more information or to join a class, visit [www.canr.msu.edu/outreach/](http://www.canr.msu.edu/outreach/). To find your local county office, visit [www.canr.msu.edu/outreach/county](http://www.canr.msu.edu/outreach/county).**

### Acknowledgements

Adapted by Krystal Avila, Heather Dyer, Ashly Nelson, Yolanda Thrash, Amanda Hulet and Karen Barbash from the original family newsletter set developed by Erin E. Powell, MS, RDN; Tom Cummins; Elizabeth Dorman and Denise Aungst, MS; for MSU Extension. Based on a concept created by Denise Aungst and Layne Schlicher for MSU Extension. Originals were produced by ANR Creative for MSU Extension. Adaptations for the senior series were produced by the MSU Extension Educational Materials Team.

This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – SNAP.

**MICHIGAN STATE**  
UNIVERSITY

**Extension**

MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer, committed to achieving excellence through a diverse workforce and inclusive culture that encourages all people to reach their full potential. Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national

origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status. Issued in furtherance of MSU Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Jeffrey W. Dwyer, Director, MSU Extension, East Lansing, MI 48824. This information is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names does not imply endorsement by MSU Extension or bias against those not mentioned. IP-WEB-1:2021-PA/LG