

# Creating Healthy Patterns

## Dear Parents and Caregivers,

The 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines from the USDA provide a direction in consumer nutrition that focuses on the goal of adopting healthier eating patterns that span a lifetime. To help support your family with integrating these guidelines into your family meals, the National Pork Board and the award-winning curriculum specialists at Young Minds Inspired (YMI) have teamed up to create this program.

The activity will help your child learn about making small changes to their diets to support overall healthier eating patterns. Using MyPlate guidelines, your child will practice meal planning as they are reminded that lean protein, including several cuts of pork, is an important part of a balanced diet.

We hope you enjoy exploring these activities with your child and find them helpful in planning family mealtimes.

Sincerely,



Dr. Dominic Kinsley  
Editor in Chief  
Young Minds Inspired



Questions? Contact YMI toll-free at 1-800-859-8005, or by email at [feedback@ymiclassroom.com](mailto:feedback@ymiclassroom.com).

## Grade Level

Grades 6-8

## What Your Child Will Learn

The standards-based activity in this program will help:

- Reinforce nutrition and wellness practices.
- Raise awareness about food choices.
- Encourage meal planning.

## How to Use the Activity

There is one standards-based activity in this program with a MyPlate template, along with tips for parents and caregivers. Download and print the activity sheets and template. Your child will need access to the Internet for the activity.

## About the USDA Dietary Guidelines\*

The guidelines are designed to help Americans eat healthier and help prevent diet-related chronic diseases. They include five key points to help people improve their eating habits:

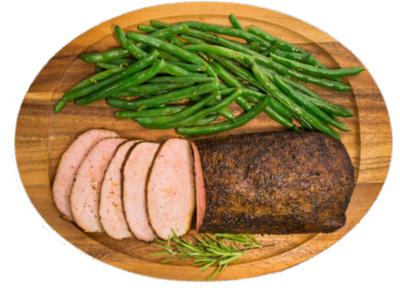
1. Follow a healthy eating pattern across the lifespan.
2. Focus on variety, nutrient density, and amount.
3. Limit calories from added sugars and saturated fats and reduce sodium intake.
4. Shift to healthier food and beverage choices.
5. Support healthy eating patterns for all.

## Activity Patterns for Life

Discuss the guideline recommendations above with your child, and talk about how you might better implement them as a family.

Give your child a copy of the activity sheet and MyPlate template. On the activity, remind them there are three menu options for breakfast and lunch that are all nutrient-rich, and therefore, their choice should be based on their personal food preference and the nutrient that is added to their diet as a result. Your child can find nutrient information at [fdc.nal.usda.gov](http://fdc.nal.usda.gov).

On the MyPlate sheet, have your child design a balanced meal for Dinner Winners that supports a healthy eating pattern based on lean pork as the source of protein. (Lean cuts of pork include tenderloin, pork chops, and sirloin roast.) Remind them that pairing pork with fruits and vegetables is an easy — and tasty — way to meet the USDA dietary guidelines. Pork is nutritious, affordable,



and easy to prepare. Your child might check out the [choosemyplate.gov/eathealthy/start-simple-myplate](http://choosemyplate.gov/eathealthy/start-simple-myplate) and the [pork.org](http://pork.org) links in the Resources below.

Once done, talk about your child's choices. How successful were they in creating a balanced meal?

## Make Mealtimes Family Time

With your child, brainstorm ways your family can make small changes that align with the USDA Dietary Guidelines and MyPlate recommendations. Create a list or have your child create a mini-poster with tips to post on the refrigerator.

Also, review the tips for parents and caregivers on the Make Mealtimes Family Time letter. Have your child help you prepare the recipe featured to help reinforce the guidelines and creating balanced meals.

Encourage your child to research pork recipes and plan meals using MyPlate guidelines that you might try making together for the family. Keep track of the family favorites!

## Resources

- Pork Cooking: [pork.org/cooking](http://pork.org/cooking)
- Pork Nutrition: [pork.org/cooking/pork-nutrition](http://pork.org/cooking/pork-nutrition)
- Pork At-Home Cooking on YouTube: [bit.ly/3a1i6KT](http://bit.ly/3a1i6KT)
- Pork Recipes: [yummy.com/page/pork](http://yummy.com/page/pork)
- 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans: [dietaryguidelines.gov/current-dietary-guidelines/2015-2020-dietary-guidelines](http://dietaryguidelines.gov/current-dietary-guidelines/2015-2020-dietary-guidelines)
- USDA MyPlate: [choosemyplate.gov](http://choosemyplate.gov)
- Young Minds Inspired: [ymiclassroom.com/at-home-learning](http://ymiclassroom.com/at-home-learning)

\* 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans: [dietaryguidelines.gov/current-dietary-guidelines/2015-2020-dietary-guidelines](http://dietaryguidelines.gov/current-dietary-guidelines/2015-2020-dietary-guidelines)

## Activity

# Patterns for Life

The USDA's Dietary Guidelines for 2015-2020 are designed to help establish healthy eating patterns that, over time, help maintain good health and prevent disease. You can upgrade your diet by pairing favorite foods with more nutrient-dense foods to make healthier combinations. Staying physically active helps "seal the deal" for better health over time!

### Tips for Healthy Eating Patterns

Your eating pattern represents what you normally eat based on your personal, cultural, and traditional preferences as well as your family's budget. To make your eating pattern healthier:

- Eat a variety of foods that contain high-quality nutrients in relation to the amount of calories they contain.
- Upgrade food favorites by pairing them with nutrient-dense options and shift to healthier food and beverage choices over time.
- Keep portion sizes in check by eating recommended amounts.
- Cut back on foods and beverages with added sugars and saturated fats, as well as those high in sodium.

### "Start Simple" with MyPlate

Success in achieving healthier eating patterns comes by taking small steps within your normal routine. Try it out! Review the scenarios below, choose your preferred option, and write in the nutrient(s) your choice will add and why you chose it. Check out [choosemyplate.gov](http://choosemyplate.gov) for nutrition information.

## Breakfast Scenario

You need a quick breakfast to be on time for school, so you reach for a **cereal bar**.

### Nutrient Upgrade Options

- 8-ounce glass of lowfat milk
- Slice of whole-grain toast
- Apple

Option/Nutrients added: \_\_\_\_\_

I chose this option because \_\_\_\_\_



## Lunch Scenario

Your team just won a tough game. Everyone is starving, and you all head across the street for a quick **pork taco**.

### Nutrient Upgrade Options

- Ask for veggies with the taco.
- Skip the tortilla chips and ask for fruit.
- Skip the soda and go for chocolate milk.

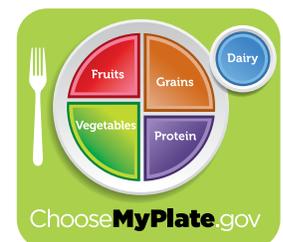
Option/Nutrients added: \_\_\_\_\_

I chose this option because \_\_\_\_\_



## Dinner Winners

Using MyPlate for meal planning is a great way to visualize building a balanced meal that supports healthy eating patterns. Plan and record a meal featuring lean pork as the protein on the MyPlate activity sheet. Lean cuts like pork chops and tenderloin are rich in nutrients and low in fat and cholesterol. Be sure to follow food safety rules and cook pork chops, roasts, and tenderloin to an internal temperature of between 145°F (medium rare) and 160°F (medium), followed by a 3-minute rest.



# Make Mealtime Family Time

## Tips for Parents & Caregivers

The 2015-2020 USDA Dietary Guidelines emphasize establishing healthier eating patterns as part of an overall health strategy for life. Making small changes that work for your family, like switching out fries for fruit when making a fast food run, or adding more veggies or fruits to your family's favorite meals, will help you incorporate the new guidelines into your family's food routines.

We also hope that you will consider including lean cuts of pork in your daily meals. Lean cuts, like pork chops and tenderloin, are great choices because they are nutrient rich. Below is a delicious, easy-to-prepare and kid-friendly pork recipe. Invite your child into the kitchen and enjoy fun family time together as you prepare it tonight!

Pair this recipe with a simple mixed-greens salad, grapes, and lowfat or non-fat milk to boost the nutritional value of this tasty entrée at home!

## Easy, Breezy Honey-Chipotle Pork Kabobs

15 minutes prep, 45 minutes cook. Serves 4.



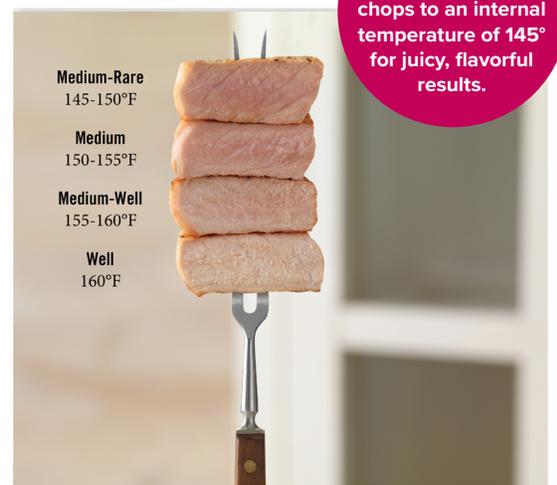
### Ingredients

- 1 lb. New York (top loin) pork chops, about 1" thick, cut into 1" cubes
- 1 orange-fleshed sweet potato (about 12 oz.), cut into 1" cubes
- 12 oz. small red or white potatoes, about 1" in diameter (or halved if 2" in diameter)
- Salt, to taste
- ½ cup barbecue sauce
- ½ cup honey
- 3 canned chipotle chiles in adobo sauce, minced, or more to taste
- 12 scallions, white and light green parts only, cut into 1" pieces
- ½ cup goat cheese, crumbled
- 1 Tb. fresh cilantro, chopped

### Instructions

1. Place all potatoes in a medium saucepan and cover with 1" cold water seasoned with salt. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce to a simmer and cook until potatoes are still firm, 3-5 minutes. Drain and set aside to cool slightly.
2. Combine barbecue sauce, honey, and chipotles in a small bowl. Divide mixture in half and set both batches aside.
3. Thread pork, potatoes, and scallions onto 8 12" skewers (pre-soaked in water if wood or bamboo). Cook 2½ to 3 minutes on each side on an oiled grill heated to medium-hot, brushing with one batch of sauce on each turn. Cook until all sides are browned, pork is cooked through, and the sauce is depleted, about 10 minutes. Transfer skewers to a platter and let rest 3 minutes.
4. Sprinkle skewers with cheese and cilantro. Serve hot with the remaining batch of sauce on the side.

Remember to cook your pork chops to an internal temperature of 145° for juicy, flavorful results.



For more tasty and nutritious pork recipes and tips, visit [pork.org/cooking](http://pork.org/cooking)



# Go with Lean Protein—Pick Pork

Choose **MyPlate**.gov

