

# MyPlate 4-Step Plan for Summer

Here are 4 easy steps for making your summer active, healthful, and a total blast.

## Step #1: Exercise

The weather is warmer, which makes summer a great time to exercise. After all, now you won't have to battle icy paths, crowded gyms, or freezing wind. Feel free to experiment until you find a way to exercise that is fun for you!

According to MyPlate, exercise can reduce your risk of...

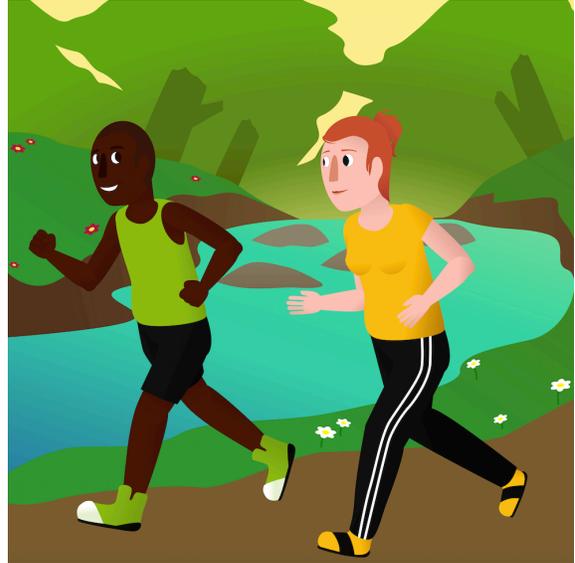
- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Stroke
- Type 2 diabetes

## Step #2: Stock up on Fruits and Veggies

One great way to pick up some new fresh fruits and vegetables to try is by visiting a local farmers' market. At these markets, you can often try samples, talk with farmers about the best way to prepare the foods, and get trustworthy recommendations about new foods that you might like.

You can also get wonderful produce at most supermarkets. Just be sure to shop in season. Seasonal produce is fresher, tastier, and often much cheaper.

According to MyPlate "Eating a diet rich in vegetables and fruits as part of an overall healthy diet may reduce risk for heart disease, including heart attack and stroke, [it may also] protect against certain types of cancers."



## Step #3: Steer Clear of Empty Calories

MyPlate asserts, "Solid fats and added sugars add calories to the food but few or no nutrients. For this reason, the calories from solid fats and added sugars in a food are often called empty calories."

Bear in mind that a little bit of empty calories can be just fine. The key is moderation, not deprivation. When you're going for a treat, have it in small portions and really enjoy it. For the rest of the time, find a more healthful alternative.

## Step #4: Stay Hydrated!

Hydration is especially important in the hot summer months, even more so if you're going to be active and exercising.

So how much water do you need? MyPlate maintains, "Water is an important nutrient for the body, but everyone's needs are different. Most of us get enough water from the foods we eat and the beverages we drink. A healthy body can balance water needs throughout the day."