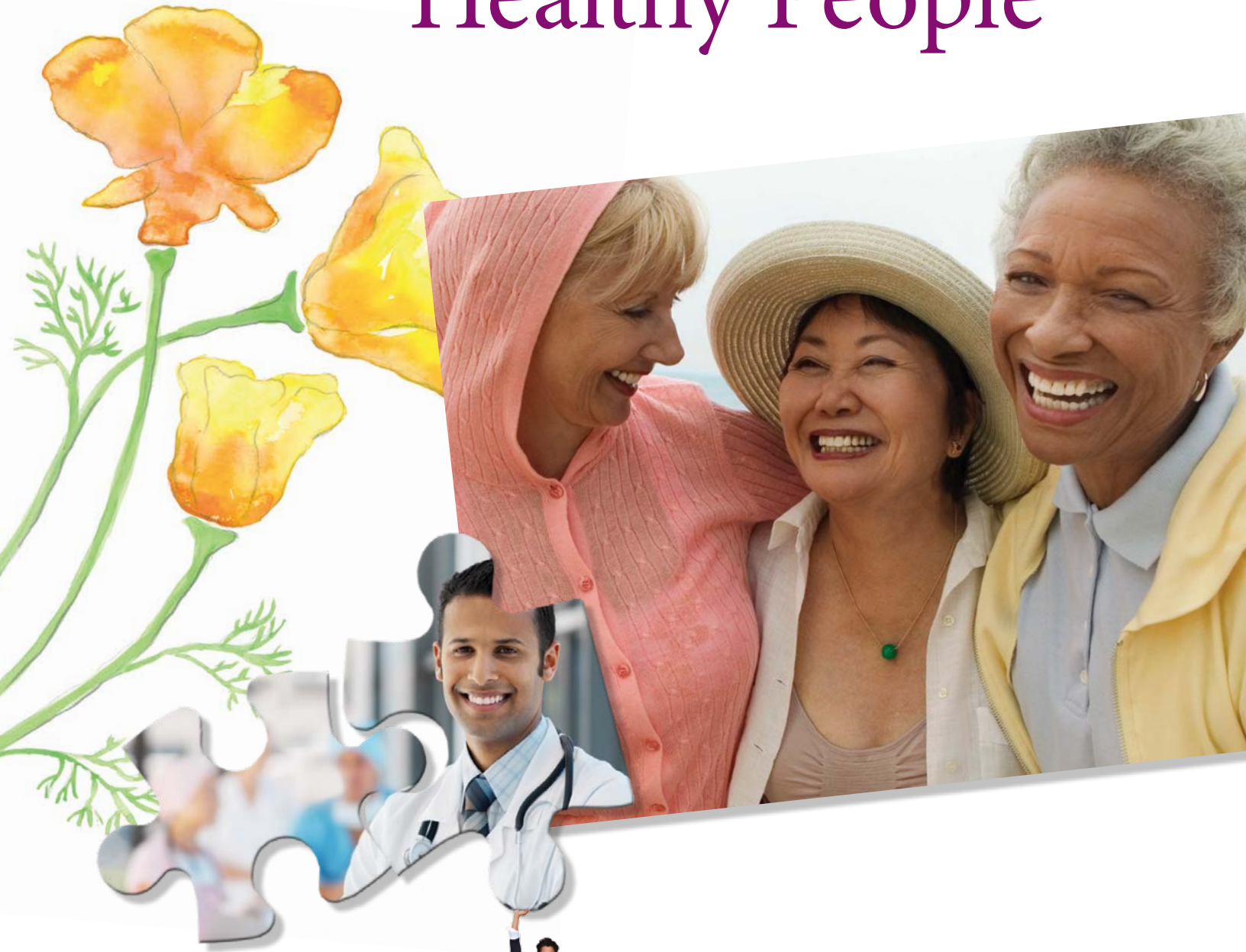


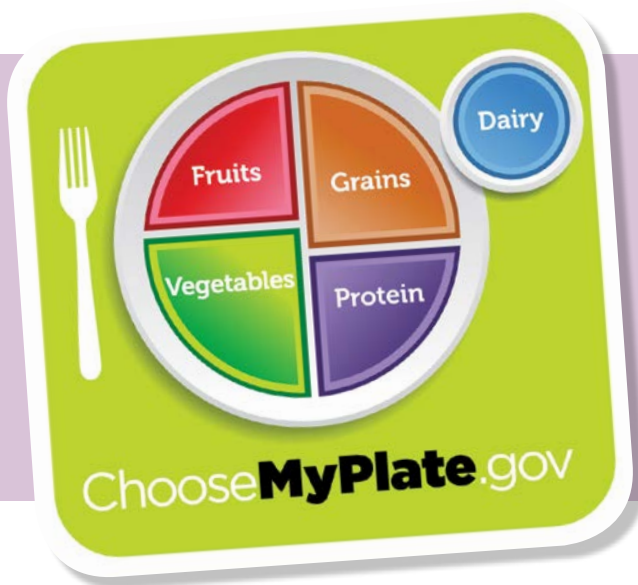
# Healthy Habits for Healthy People



**Karen Boyd,  
Health Net**  
*We make a  
difference, one  
member at a time.*



Health Net®



# Eat Right

It isn't always easy to eat right and get regular exercise. Sometimes, age or a disability can make these things hard to do. Take a look at the tips in this handout. They will help you stay on track with your healthy habits.

It's important to eat foods from each food group. Try to set up your plate like the one above. Half of your plate should be fruits and veggies.

## *Focus on fruits*

- Mix the colors of fruits.
- Try apples, bananas, oranges, kiwis, and grapes.



## *Vary your veggies*

- Eat different colored vegetables.
- Try dark green veggies like broccoli, spinach and collard greens.
- Drink 100% vegetable juice.



## *Get enough dairy*

- Choose low fat or fat-free milk, yogurt and cheese.
- If you can't drink milk, try a lactose-free option, like soy milk.



## *Eat more whole grains*

- Choose 100% whole wheat bread.
- Look for foods with "whole grain" listed as the first ingredient.
- Try oatmeal, plain popcorn, corn tortillas, brown rice, and whole wheat pasta.



## *Go lean with protein*

- Choose lean beef, seafood, turkey, and chicken (baked or grilled).
- Try beans, lentils and eggs.
- Snack on unsalted nuts and seeds.
- Eat soy products such as tofu.



Sources from [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov).  
USDA does not endorse any products, services or organizations.

Eating well is important at every stage of life. It helps you stay strong and feeling good! Eat the right foods to lower your risk of getting a stroke, diabetes, bone loss, and heart disease. If you have one or more of these diseases, the right foods will help you manage them better.



## Don't forget these important nutrients!

- **Calcium**



Broken bones are sometimes caused by osteoporosis. When you have osteoporosis, this means your bones are thin and weak. Be sure to get enough calcium in your diet. This nutrient helps give you strong bones. Foods and drinks in the dairy food group are good sources. Soy milk may be a good choice too if you can't drink regular milk. Be sure to choose fat-free and low fat options.

- **Vitamin D**

When taken with calcium, vitamin D also helps with good bone health. Some foods with vitamin D include salmon, tuna and eggs. Get some direct sunshine on your skin and your body can make its own!



- **Vitamin B12**



This vitamin helps your body make blood cells and helps keep your nervous system healthy. Foods with vitamin B12 include fish, meat and dairy products. Ask your doctor about a dietary supplement.



Drink plenty of water every day. Don't wait until you are thirsty! Your body needs water to work properly. Drink some with each meal and in between meals. Aim for more than 8 cups each day.

## *Talk to your doctor or a nutritionist!*

A disability or an illness might require you to get more of a certain nutrient, like more protein and fiber. Sometimes, the medicines you take might interfere with certain nutrients.

Always ask your doctor first before taking a supplement. Eating the right foods will help make sure you have the energy you need to be active.



# Have Trouble Eating?

There are times when eating can be a problem. If this happens, the following tips may help.

## *Chewing food*

If you have trouble chewing your food, try the following:

- Try softer fruit. Instead of fresh fruit, like apples, try canned fruit, applesauce or bananas. Smoothies, mashed fruits and cooked vegetables are good choices.
- If eating meat is a problem, try softer meat like ground meat. You may also replace meat with foods from the protein group, like eggs or tofu.
- If you still have trouble chewing food, visit your dentist or doctor. You might have problems with your teeth, dentures or gums.



## *Loss of appetite, taste or smell*

There may come a time when food doesn't taste or smell the same. Sometimes, you just don't feel like eating as often. Try the following:

- Eat regular meals with family or friends. It may be easier to eat when others are eating with you.
- Try cooking your food a little differently. Using different spices might help with the taste or smell.

## *Stomach problems*

Some foods can give you gas or other stomach problems. Try replacing milk with cheese and yogurt. They tend to have less lactose. Instead of cabbage, try some green beans and carrots. It's a good idea to talk to your doctor about stomach problems.



Talk to your doctor if you are taking medicines. They can affect the way you taste or smell food. Some medicines can sometimes make you less hungry.



## Cooking and shopping for food

If you have trouble cooking or shopping for food, there are options that can help.

- **Consider having meals delivered to your home**, or take part in meal programs at community centers.
- **Make meals that require few ingredients.** A salad or sandwich on whole wheat bread are tasty options. Limit prepared microwave meals. They often have a lot of salt and fat.
- **Ask a friend or family member** to shop for groceries.



**Ramon Munoz,**  
**Health Net**  
*We get members  
what they need.*



# Get Plenty of Exercise

Exercise can be fun for everyone, and it is never too late to start. Choose activities you enjoy. Adults should try to get 30 minutes of exercise every day.



Regular exercise gives you more energy and peace of mind, lowers stress, and helps with many health problems. If you have a disability, work with a doctor who understands your needs.

## Start smart

When you're ready to begin:

- Talk to your doctor first. Your doctor can help create a safe exercise program based on your medical needs. Your doctor can also get advice from other providers (like a physical therapist) so you get a program that's right for you.
- Start slowly. It's okay to do 10 minutes of exercise at a time, 3 times a day.
- Wear comfortable clothing and shoes. Drink water before, during and after exercise.

- Don't forget to warm up and stretch before exercising. Warm up by marching in place or making different arm movements for a few minutes.
- Consider the help of a family member or a personal trainer to help you exercise. They can help move certain parts of your body you can't move on your own. It's important to move your joints in a full range of motion so they stay flexible.
- If you feel pain during exercise, stop right away. Talk with your doctor to see if you should continue.

## Types of exercise

There are many types of exercise to choose from. They include cardio, strength, stretching, and balance exercises. Each type of exercise helps you in different ways. Take a look at the options below. Choose activities that match your fitness level and ability.

## Cardio

Cardio exercises are also called aerobic exercises. They are good for your heart and lungs, and can help delay or protect against heart disease. When doing these exercises, your heart will beat faster and you will breathe a little faster.

Exercise is good for everyone, and every bit counts. For questions, or for more information about the Fit Families for Life DVD and exercise band, call Health Net's Health Education Information Line at **1-800-804-6074**.



Cardio exercises include:

- fast walking and jogging,
- swinging your arms in front of you in a punching motion,
- bicycling and swimming,
- dancing, and
- playing sports.

You can also do cardio exercises while sitting in a chair. Take a look at Health Net's Fit Families for Life DVD. Try the standing or chair exercises.

### Strength

If we don't exercise, we begin to lose muscle. It doesn't matter how old or healthy you are, or if you have a disability. It affects everyone. This can make it harder to do everyday things, like lift boxes or open heavy doors. Strength exercises are meant to help build your muscles. They can also help make your bones stronger. Some people think they need to go to a gym to build muscle. That's not true. Do strength exercises 2–3 times a week.

Ask your doctor for exercises that are right for you. Here are some examples:

- **Arm and leg raises.**
- **Standing up and sitting down** on a chair repetitively.
- **Push-ups:** You can do these on your knees or by pushing against the wall. If in a wheelchair, apply the brakes and use the armrests. Slowly lift your body off the seat and slowly return to a seated position.
- **Bicep curls:** Water bottles or canned foods can be used as weights.

Exercise bands can also be used to build muscles. If you have one, follow along to the Fit Families for Life DVD.

### Stretching

Stretching exercises help keep your muscles flexible. They also help reduce pain and stiffness in your body. With more flexibility, it becomes easier to bend and reach for things. It's best to stretch after your muscles are warmed up. Major muscles to stretch are your neck, back, chest, arms, and legs. Try yoga or tai chi.



**Lisa Pasillas-Le,**  
**Health Net**  
*We're part of your  
health team.*

## Balance

Keeping good balance helps in many ways. You are less likely to fall and hurt yourself with proper balance. This is really important when we get older. Try balance exercises for at least 10 minutes every day. If needed, use the support of a chair, table or another person when first starting balance exercises. If you are unsure, ask your doctor first before trying these activities:

- **Balance yourself** on one foot for 10 seconds, then switch.
- **Get up and down** from your chair without using your hands.
- **Walk heel-to-toe** in a straight line.



You can also do balance exercises in a chair. Try lifting light objects from the floor. Slowly bend over from different sides. You can also try to reach for things behind you.

## Cal MediConnect members:

To learn more, call the Health Education Information Line at **1-800-804-6074 (TTY: 711)**.

To speak with a nurse about your health or to learn more about online wellness programs, call the Member Services number on the back of your ID card or visit **[www.healthnet.com/calmediconnect](http://www.healthnet.com/calmediconnect)**.

This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Please always follow your health care provider's instructions. Programs and services are subject to change.

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