

# Food as Medicine



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- One of the largest carriers in the FEHB
- Exclusively Federal / Postal / Annuitants
- Extensive nationwide network of doctors, dentists, hospitals and other providers
- Your friend in federal

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# Today's presenters



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Manager, Health Engagement | GEHA



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Healthy Living | Giant Food

# Agenda

- What does “Food as Medicine” mean?
- How to build health promoting, disease fighting plate
- Food as Medicine: Nutrients of Concern



# Food as preventive and healing “medicine”



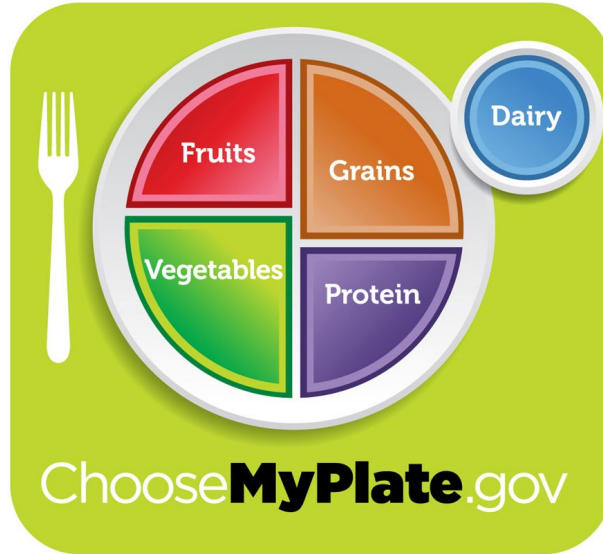


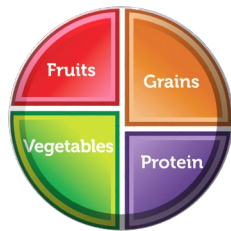
## **More variety = more nutrients**

There are no superfoods, but there are foods that are more nutrient dense than others

# Are you familiar with MyPlate?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Not sure

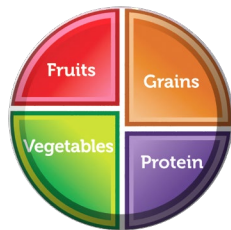




# Building your plate: produce

- Eat the rainbow: orange, red and dark green fruits and vegetables
- All forms count: fresh, frozen, canned

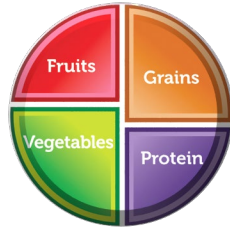




# Building your plate: grains

- Choose whole grains and high fiber starches
- Check ingredient list for the word “whole” to be listed first



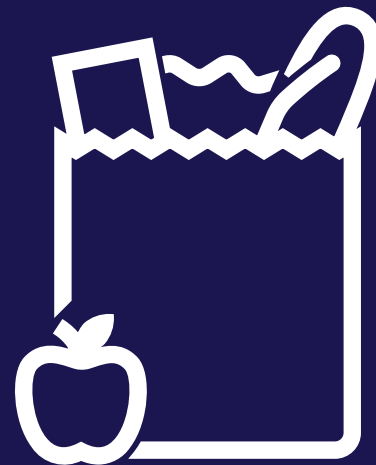


# Building your plate: protein

- Choose:
  - seafood, poultry and lean cuts of meat
  - eggs and low-fat dairy
  - edamame, nuts, seeds and beans
- All forms count: fresh, frozen, canned

# Building a Food as Medicine pantry

- Nutrients of concern
  - Fiber
  - Probiotics
  - Sodium
  - Fat
  - Sugar



# Which nutrient of concern do you think is most impactful on overall health?

- a) Fiber
- b) Probiotics
- c) Sodium
- d) Fat
- e) Sugar



# Fiber: a **SUPER** nutrient

Fiber is one of the most powerful nutrients in the fight against disease.

- Lowers glucose and cholesterol numbers
- Reduces inflammation
- Improves gut health
- Improves satiety



# Fiber-filled sources

- **Fruits**
  - avocados, bananas, berries and pomegranate arils
- **Vegetables**
  - lima beans, squash, onions, green peas and collard greens
- **Whole grains**
  - Beans: black beans and lentils
  - Seeds: chia and flax seeds



# Fiber facts

- Women: Aim for 22 to 28 grams per day
- Men: Aim for 28 to 34 grams per day
- Label reading:
  - Look for 5 grams per serving
  - **20%** daily value
  - Whole grain stamp



## Nutrition Facts

About 8 servings per container  
**Serving size 1/2 cup (57g)**

**Amount per serving**  
**Calories 230**

**% Daily Value\***

**Total fat** 8g 10%

Saturated Fat 1g 4%

*Trans Fat* 0g

**Cholesterol** 0mg 0%

**Sodium** 3mg 0%

**Total Carbohydrate** 35g 13%

Dietary Fiber 7g 23%

Total Sugars 7g

Includes 0g Added Sugars 0%

**Protein** 6g

\*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food constitutes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

# Probiotics: for the microbiome

Probiotics (live active bacteria) support digestion, the immune system, vitamin production and promote happiness

- **Good bacteria** helps us digest our food, get nutrients from our food and fight disease
- **Bad bacteria** can cause digestion problems and chronic disease





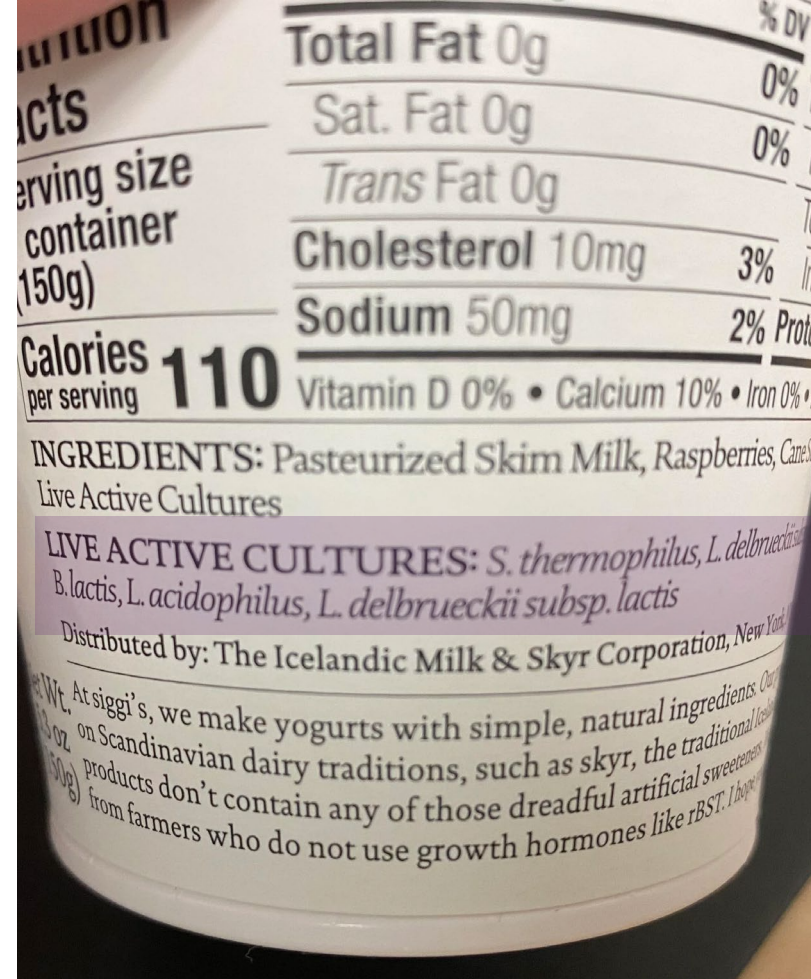
# Probiotic sources

- **Dairy**
  - Kefir and yogurt
  - Some cottage cheese
  - Some cheeses
- **Plant-based**
  - Tempeh and miso
  - Teas
- **Fermented produce**
  - Sauerkraut or kimchi
  - Some pickles



# Probiotic facts

- Keep your good bacteria happy with PRE-biotics aka FIBER
- Label reading:
  - Look for “live active cultures” on the package



# Fat: friend and foe

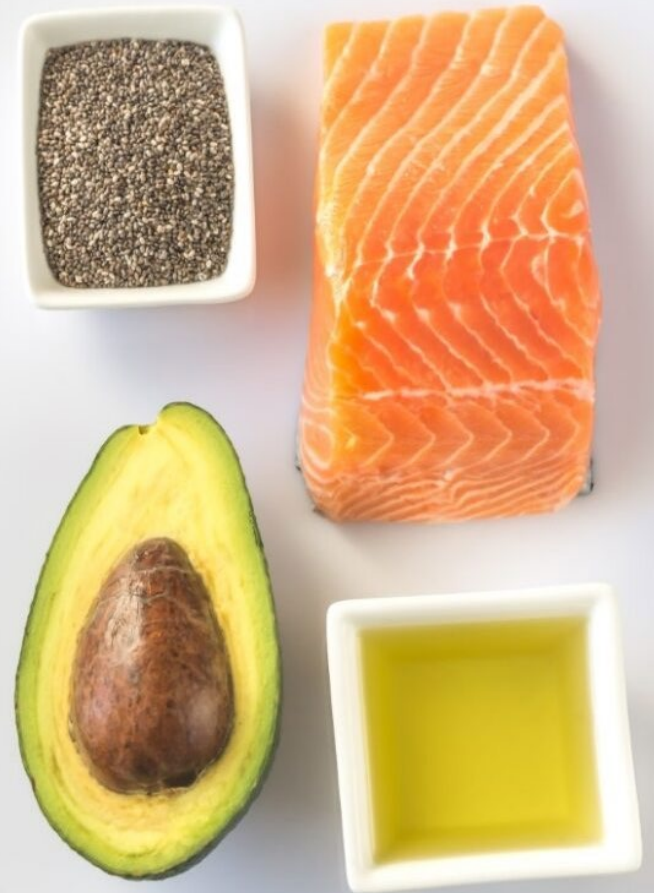
Fat makes food taste great. It helps us feel full and satisfied. But not all fats are equal!

- **Saturated and trans fats**
  - negatively impact LDL and triglycerides
- **Mono and poly unsaturated fats**
  - positively impact HDL
  - lower LDL



# Fat sources

- **Saturated and trans fats**
  - solid at room temperature
  - butter, coconut oil, shortening
- **Mono and polyunsaturated fats**
  - liquid at room temperature
  - plant oils, fish, nuts, seeds, avocados
  - Includes Omega 3's (polyunsaturated)



# Fat facts

- **Dietary guidelines for healthy adults:**
  - Total fat: **20%** to **35%** of daily calories
  - Saturated fat: **10%** or less of daily calories
- **Label reading:**
  - Total fats are all the fats
  - Only saturated and trans fats are required; limit these to **<5%** Daily Value

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
8 servings per container	
<b>Serving size</b>	<b>8 fl oz (240mL)</b>
<b>Amount per serving</b>	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>% Daily Value*</b>	
<b>Total Fat</b> 0g	<b>0%</b>
Saturated Fat 0g	<b>0%</b>
<i>Trans Fat</i> 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg	<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 5mg	<b>0%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 27g	<b>10%</b>
Dietary Fiber 0g	<b>0%</b>
Total Sugars 25g	
Includes 23g Added Sugars	<b>46%</b>
<b>Protein</b> 0g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 0mg	0%
Iron 0mg	0%
Potassium 40mg	0%

\* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

# Sodium: the flavor enhancer

Salt and sodium are often used interchangeably, but sodium is actually the mineral that makes up **40%** of salt.



# Where does most of your sodium intake come from?

- a) Canned foods
- b) Salty snacks and treats
- c) Eating out
- d) Salt shaker



# Sodium sources

- **Home**
  - Highly processed foods
  - Condiments
  - Canned soups
- **On the go**
  - Almost everything





# Sodium facts

- **Dietary guidelines for healthy adults:**
  - 2,300 mg or less per day for standard diet
  - 1,500 mg per day for American Heart Association (AHA) low sodium diet
- **Label reading:**
  - <5% Daily value is considered low
  - >20% Daily value is considered high

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# Sodium swaps

- Choose lower sodium options
- Use alternate flavor enhancers:
  - Low/no salt herbs and spices
  - Acid, like vinegar or citrus
  - Heat from hot sauces or peppers (fresh or dry)



# Sugar: fast energy carb

Are there healthier sugars? Should we swap honey for white sugar, agave for brown sugar?

- Simple carbohydrates, can raise blood glucose levels, triglycerides, and increase chronic inflammation
- Excess added sugar consumption has been linked to several chronic diseases



# Sugar sources

- **Total sugars**
  - All the sugars (natural + added)
- **Added sugars**
  - Sugars added during processing (sweeteners, syrups, honey, concentrated fruit and vegetable juices)



# Sugar facts

- **Dietary guidelines for healthy adults:**
  - Total sugars: no recommendation
  - Added sugars: 50 grams or less per day
- **Label reading:**
  - **<5%** Daily value is considered low
  - **>20%** Daily value is considered high

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
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# Sugar swaps

- Choose lower sugar options
- Use alternate flavor enhancers
  - Low/no sugar spices
  - Extracts



# Food As Medicine strategies

## Easy win

- Use Guiding Stars to find better-for-you options. Available as a smartphone app.

## Next step

- Set an easy challenge for yourself: identify one nutrient of focus and stick to recommendations

## All in

- Follow MyPlate for most meals





# Take a store tour (or join a virtual one)

Learn more at  
[giantfood.com/healthyliving](https://giantfood.com/healthyliving)





# Wrap-up: Food as Medicine is...

- Adding more nutrient dense, disease fighting foods to your eating strategy
- Paying attention to nutrients of concern: fiber, probiotics, salt, fat and sugar



*Food is not a substitute for medicine  
but it can go a long way to helping prevent  
long term disease and promote better health*

# GEHA member resources

- Elevate and Elevate Plus plans
  - Rally digital health platform
  - Learn more at [geha.com/WellnessPays](https://geha.com/WellnessPays)
- High, Standard and HDHP plans
  - GEHA Well-being portal
  - Learn more at [geha.com/HealthRewards](https://geha.com/HealthRewards)
- All GEHA plans
  - Healthy recipes and health and wellness articles
  - Learn more at [geha.com/Blog](https://geha.com/Blog)
- GEHA website for benefit information [geha.com](https://geha.com)

# Q&A



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Healthy Living | Giant Food

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This is a brief description of the features of Government Employees Health Association, Inc.'s medical plans. Before making a final decision, please read the GEHA Federal brochures which are available at [geha.com/PlanBrochure](https://geha.com/PlanBrochure). All benefits are subject to the definitions, limitations and exclusions set forth in the Federal brochures.

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# Thank you

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Q&A chat will go on through 1 p.m. Eastern time

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