Nutrition and Spinal cord injury/spinal Dysfunction (SCI/D)

Eating well for life!

Eating well for life!

- *What's so different?*
  - **At first, weight loss is common**
  - Causes for losing weight:
    - Poor intake
    - Trauma increases how fast you burn calories
    - The body needs more energy to repair itself
    - Loss of muscle

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- *What's so different?*

  - **After Rehabilitation**:
  - Weight gain is common.
    - Causes for weight gain:
      - Less muscle (to burn energy)
      - Decreased activity

Unwanted weight gain can be avoided!

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- *What's so different?*

- **What should I weigh?**
  - Often times goal weights will be lower than before.
    - Paraplegia injury: 5-10% less than healthy weight before injury.
    - Quadriplegia injury: 10-15% less than healthy weight before injury.

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- *Weighty Matters*

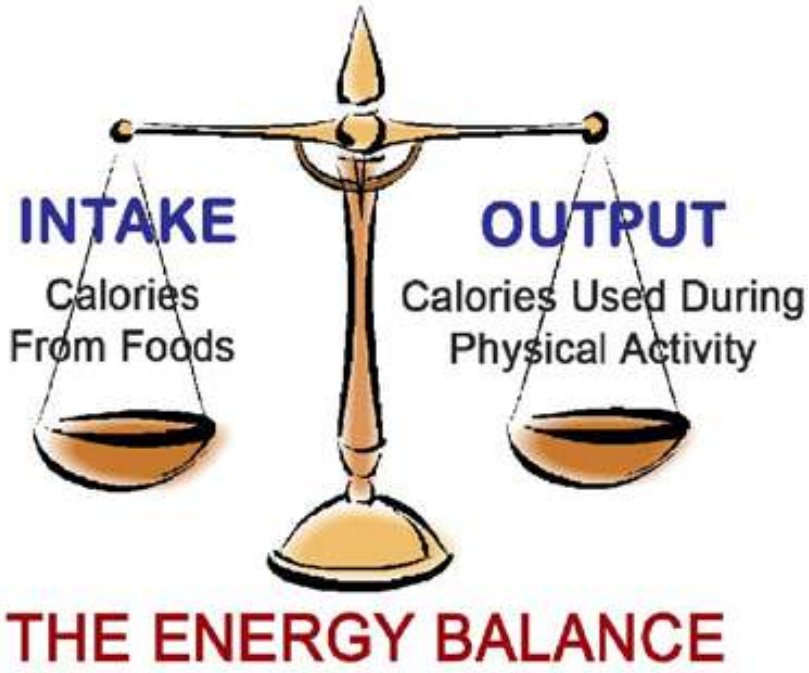
- **Eating well and maintaining a healthy weight does help!**
  - Lower risk for pressure sores
  - Improve energy level
  - Improve immunity (lower when not eating properly)
  - Prevent diabetes or improve blood sugars
  - Prevent strokes, improve blood pressure
  - Prevent heart related problems
  - Increase independence

Eating well for life

- **Balance**
- **Variety**
- **Moderation**

Eating well for life

- **Balance**



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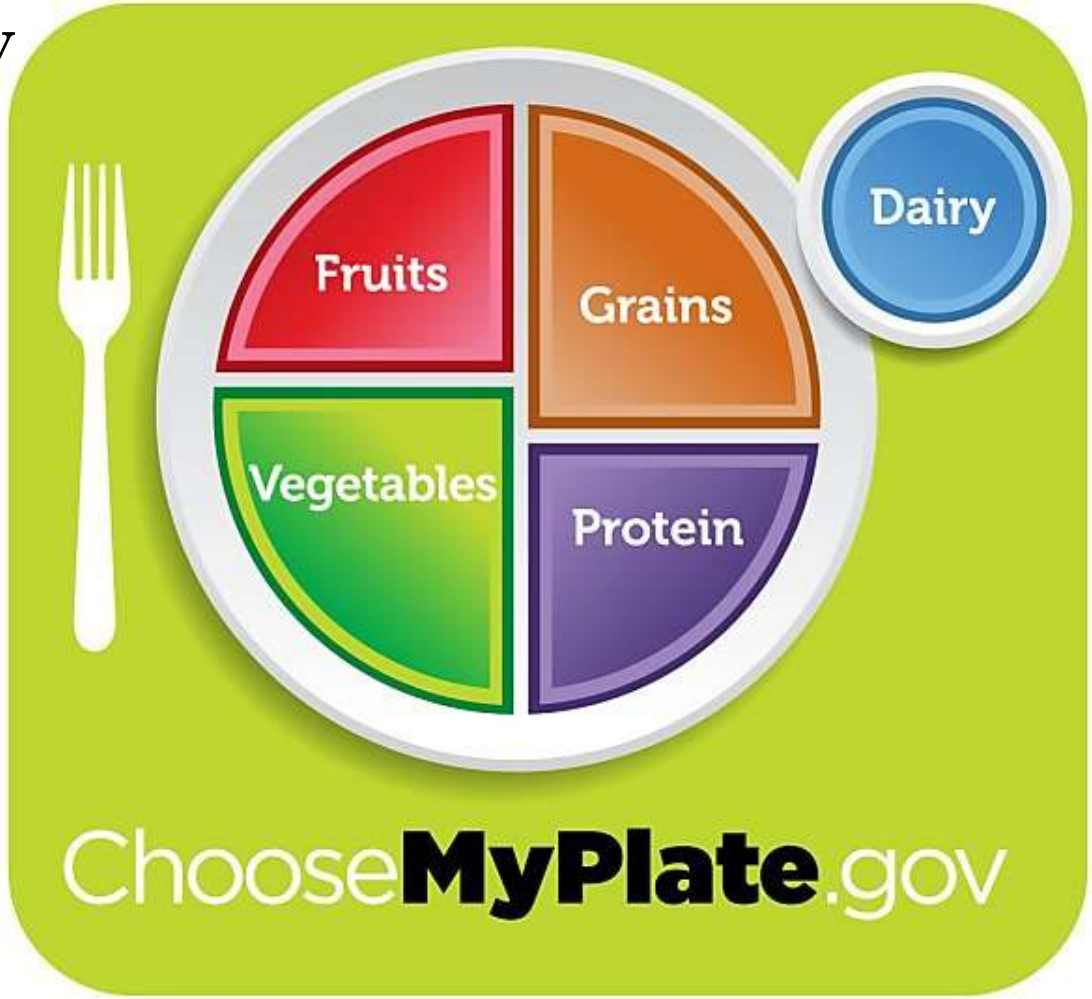
- **Variety**



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Variety

- Choose Nutrient Rich!
  - All colors fruits and vegetables
  - Whole grain, fiber-rich foods
  - Fat-free and low-fat dairy (or other calcium-fortified foods)
  - Lean meats, poultry, fish, eggs, beans, and nuts
- Make it convenient!
  - Keep frozen vegetables and fruits on hand.
  - Quick microwave "steamed" vegetables.
  - Toss frozen berries into cereals or yogurt.

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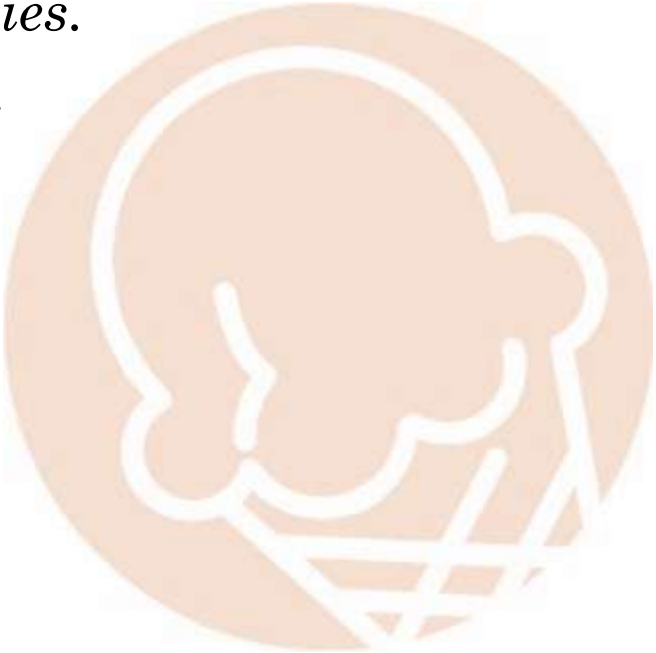
- Fitting in *fun food!*
  - *Get your quota of nutrient-rich foods first.*
  - *Be wise about portion size.*
  - *Use simple swaps to save calories.*
  - *Do what you can to stay active.*



Eating well for life!

- **What goes in, must come out**
  - Keep meals and snacks at regular times
  - Fiber and fluid are key to better flow
  - Increase fiber very gradually
  - Try beano to combat gas-forming foods

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- Fluids
  - Get enough fluids spaced throughout the day to help prevent infections and kidney or bladder stones.
  - Moderate how much you drink
  - Aim for calorie-free beverages (water!) to prevent unwanted weight gain.

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- Meet with your Dietitian at least once per year as part of your annual evaluation and more often as needed.

ME!