Put MyPlate on the Grill

MyPlate is the new USDA guide to healthy meals. You can use it to plan meals quickly. You can learn more at Choosemyplate.gov. MyPlate can also be a tasty guide to grilled meals.

Plan

- Planning ahead will help you serve up tasty and safe grilled foods. The right food and equipment makes preparation and clean up easier for everyone.
  - **Stock up on summer fruits and vegetables.** We usually grill meat, poultry and fish. But, fruits and vegetables can also be grilled. Farmers’ markets, backyard gardens and supermarkets are all great places to find grilling options.
  - **Get the right grilling stuff.** Reduce burning of foods during cooking by trimming fat from meat, fish and poultry. Use wood planks, aluminum foil or grill woks to keep food away from flames. Spray water on any direct flames.

Eat

- **Go fresh and local with grilled vegetables.** Be adventurous. Almost any vegetable can be grilled. MyPlate says to fill ¼ of your plate with vegetables. Here are some ideas.
  - Beets or sweet potatoes (cut in one-inch rounds, rub with olive oil)
  - Corn (loosen the husk, remove silk, add a dab of butter, wrap with foil)
  - Mushrooms (use your favorite marinade, wrap in foil and grill)
- **Pair lean proteins with whole grains.** MyPlate tells us to make ¼ of our plate grains (whole grains when possible) and ¼ lean proteins. This makes the perfect pair on the grill. Think about lean burgers with whole-grain buns. Try grilled Texas toast (thick slices of whole-grain bread brushed with olive oil and garlic) with BBQ chicken or lean ribs.
- **Grill up some sweet dessert too.** Grilled fruit is a simple, delicious and nutritious treat. MyPlate says to make ¼ of your plate fruit. It is easy on a grill. To grill fruit, cut it and soak in cold water. Then remove from water and cook over medium heat. Spray the grill with a non-stick spread if needed. Firm fruits work best. Try pineapple, pears and apples.

Enjoy

- Make grilling a group activity. Have older children turn items on the grill, while younger kids set the table or arrange the food on platters.