

APRIL 2018

HEALTHY EATING TIP  
OF THE MONTH

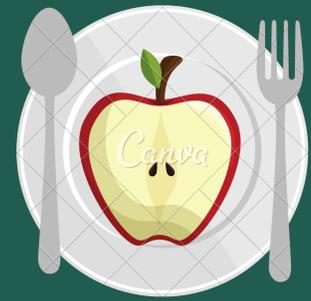
colon

your plate

With plant-based foods

## The benefits of eating colorfully:

Filling your plate with a wide variety of colorful fruits and vegetables is considered more beneficial than just eating one or two different types. All plants have different amounts of antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, and other nutritious components. Eating many colors means you are eating a wider variety of nutrients!



## Getting more color on your plate:

Aim to eat five different colors of fruits and vegetables throughout the day. Experiment with fruits and vegetables you haven't tried before to make adding plants to your plate even more exciting!

## Supplements won't cut it:

Research has shown that supplement forms of the vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants found in plants are ineffective in reducing disease risk. Scientists believe this might be because the antioxidants in fruits and vegetables work together with the proteins, fiber, and other nutrients in the body to prevent and fight disease.



# Shopping Tips

Instead of packaged snack items, pick up portable fruits and vegetables like baby carrots and lunchbox-sized apples for quick, healthy snacks.

- Eating fresh fruits and vegetables when they are in season\* (when they are grown and harvested in your region) means your produce will likely be higher in nutrient content.
- Seasonal, local produce is not only more nutritious, but often more flavorful and affordable than fruits and vegetables grown off-season and farther from home.

Visit your local farmers' market to find locally grown, seasonal produce.

\* See the Resources section below for Michigan's guide to seasonal produce

- Ultra-processed foods have been associated with an increased risk for cancer. Limit the amount of these foods and focus on whole, fresh ones.
- Some examples of ultra-processed foods are:

Sugar-sweetened beverages

Donuts, pastries, & cookies

Cake mixes

Energy bars & cereal bars

Chicken & fish "nuggets"

Hot dogs & sausages

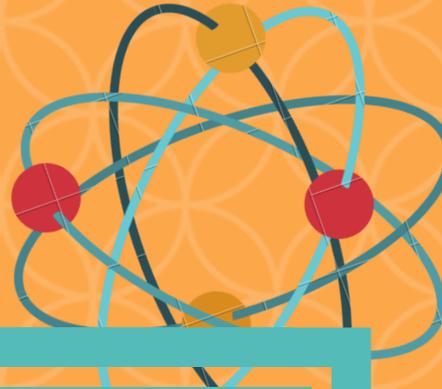
Pre-prepared pizzas

Instant soups or noodles



# What are FREE-RADICALS?

Free-radicals form when atoms gain or lose one electron. This is a normal part of many cellular processes in the body.



The production of too many free-radicals can damage cells and may lead to disease.

Higher amounts of free-radicals are produced with exposure to radiation, toxins, and cigarette smoke.

The phytochemicals found in plant foods can be used by the body to reduce free radical production.

The color of fruits and vegetables can be an indicator of which phytochemicals they contain.

Keep reading to learn more about the different phytochemicals and their functions!

# Phytochemicals By Color

red

Anthocyanidins

Lycopene

Ellagic Acid

blue/purple

Resveratrol

Anthocyanidins

Catechin

green

Lutein

Indoles

Zeaxanthin

yellow &  
orange

Beta-carotene

Beta-cryptoxanthin

Flavanones

Organosulfur compounds

Quercetin

white

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# Phytochemicals A to Z

## Anthocyanidins

Most common in red and purple produce, these compounds have been linked to improved blood vessel health. Try adding some roasted beets to a salad or throw some blueberries on your morning cereal for an extra dose of anthocyanidins!

## Beta-carotene & beta-cryptoxanthin

These two carotenoids can be used by the body to make vitamin A, which is vital for skin health, immunity, and vision. Carotenoids also have potent antioxidant properties. Green leafy and yellow/orange veggies are great sources of carotenoids.

## Catechin

This flavanoid found in red and purple fruits, such as grapes and plums, could reduce risk for heart disease and certain cancers. Catechin can also be found in dark chocolate!

## Ellagic acid

Ellagic acid is one of a large group of phytochemicals called polyphenols, which have been shown to have anti-inflammatory and antioxidant effects.

Strawberries, raspberries, red grapes, and nuts are good sources of this disease-fighting phytochemical.

## Lycopene

This well-known carotenoid is common in tomatoes and other red fruits and vegetables, such as peppers. Lycopene may be protective against heart attacks and prostate cancer. Cook your tomatoes for the biggest lycopene punch!

## Lutein & Zeaxanthin

These two compounds may protect eye health and fight certain cancers. Get plenty of dark green and orange vegetables in your diet to reap the benefits!

# Building a Plant-Based



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## Plate

2

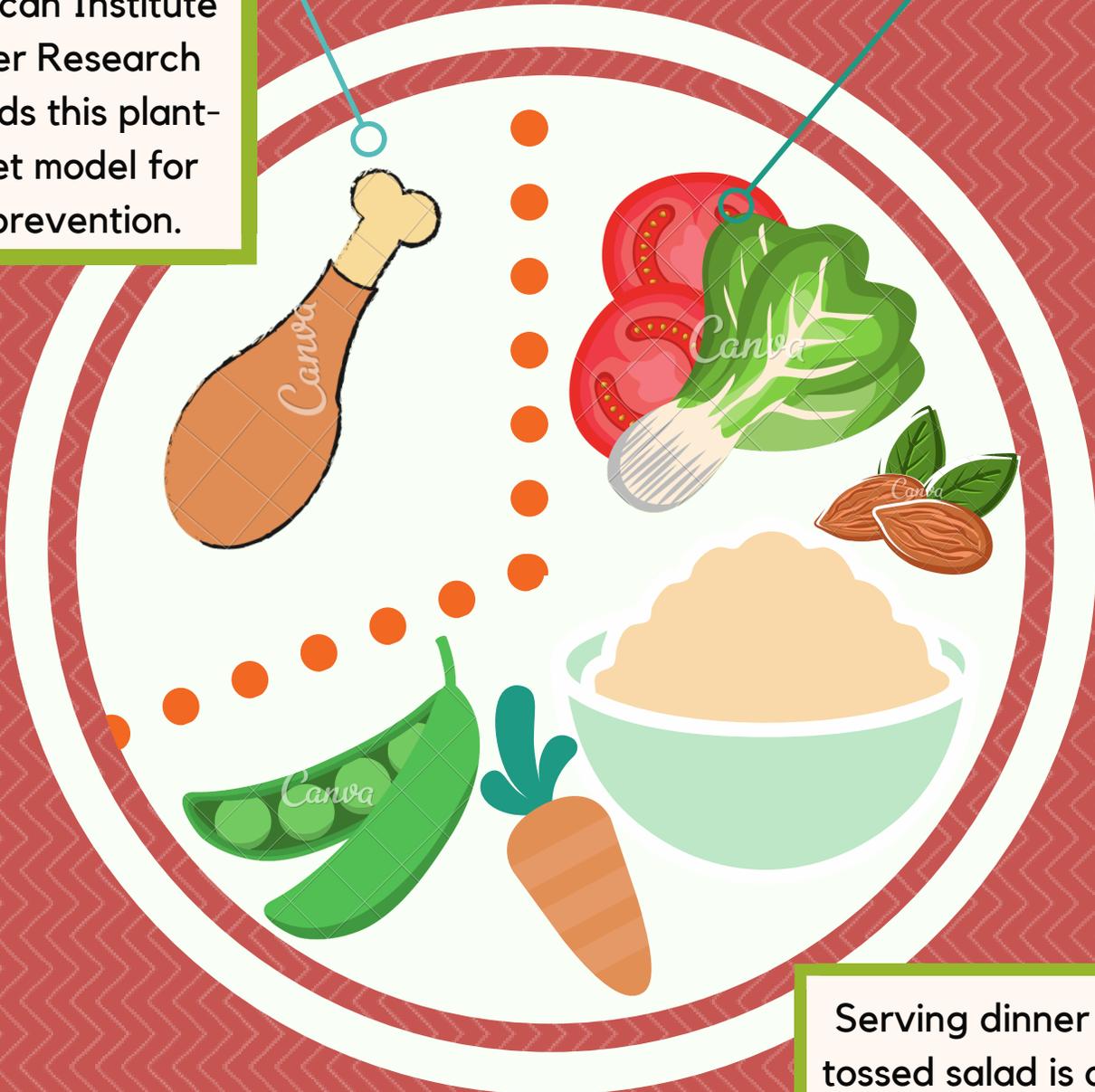
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Animal protein

Fruits, veggies, legumes, nuts, seeds, & grains

The American Institute for Cancer Research recommends this plant-based diet model for cancer prevention.



Serving dinner with a tossed salad is an easy way to include more vegetables in your diet!

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# Paint Your Plate with Plant-Based

## Protein

Protein helps your cells transport nutrients, and plays many other important roles in maintaining health. Many plants add both color and protein to your plate.

### Peas

- 8 g protein per cooked cup
- High-quality source of plant protein

### Beans

- 15 g protein per cooked cup
- Source of folate and fiber
- Inexpensive



### Lentils & Split Peas

- 16-18 g protein per cooked cup
- Good sources of iron and potassium
- 5 g of fiber per serving

### Nuts

- 6 g protein per 1/4 cup serving
- Source of Magnesium and Phosphorus
- Contain healthy mono- and poly-unsaturated fats

# Resources

Michigan produce seasonality guide:

[https://www.michigan.gov/documents/osa/MI\\_Availability\\_Guide\\_523604\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/osa/MI_Availability_Guide_523604_7.pdf)

Fruit/vegetable nutrient guides:

<https://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/fruit-nutrition-database>

<https://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/vegetable-nutrition-database>

Phytochemical glossary:

<https://pbhfoundation.org/about/res/pic/glossary>

AICR H.E.A.L. Well Guide:

<http://www.aicr.org/assets/docs/pdf/education/heal-well-guide.pdf>



Thanks for reading!  
We hope you learned something about the benefits of eating colorfully and that we inspired you to include more plants in your diet!

# References

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**COMPREHENSIVE  
CANCER CENTER**  
MICHIGAN MEDICINE

Annalisa Creger, Dietetic Intern  
Patient Food and Nutrition Services  
300 N. Ingalls Street  
NIB N18E20  
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-5407  
(734) 936-5197