

News Column for use week of October 21, 2019
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'Soups On' with MyPlate

One of my favorite things about cooler weather is the satisfaction of including more soups in my family meal plans. I like these one-pot wonders for their flexibility, nutritional value, and large quantities.

The United State Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service uses the MyPlate program to help people recognize the five basic food groups necessary to a daily healthy and nutritious diet.

MyPlate is a reminder to find your healthy eating style and build it throughout your lifetime. Everything you eat and drink matters. The right mix can help you be healthier now and in the future. This means:

- ✓ Focus on variety, amount, and nutrition.
- ✓ Choose foods and beverages with less saturated fat, sodium, and added sugars.
- ✓ Start with small changes to build healthier eating styles.
- ✓ Support healthy eating for everyone.

The MyPlate graphic (see insert) helps you recognize that half of your plate should be filled with vegetables and fruits. On the other side you will see that you also need grains and protein. Not to be overlooked, dairy products are attached to the graphic as part of a balanced diet.

Upon closer look at the MyPlate logo, you will see that you need slightly more vegetables than fruit and slightly more grains than protein. Within the grain foods, MyPlate guidelines recommend that half of your grain sources come from whole grains such as oatmeal, whole wheat bread products, or whole grain pasta. These guidelines also recommended lean protein sources such as lean beef, chicken, or beans.

Is it any wonder that soups can often include all of these food groups? Take a minute to evaluate each of the recipes below and think about the foods groups they contain to help you see how easy it is to incorporate a large number of the five food groups in a single soup entrée. Then, identify side dishes you could add to round out the meal so that all five food groups are present to complete a well-balanced meal.

Ground Beef Stew

Ingredients:

- 1/2 pound ground beef, or ground turkey, or venison (lean)
- 1/8t salt (optional)
- 1/8t pepper (optional)
- 1 can tomato soup, condensed (10 3/4 ounce)
- 10 3/4 us fluid ounce water (one soup can full)
- 6 carrots (medium, diced or sliced)
- 2 potatoes (medium, diced or sliced)
- 1 cup onion (diced)

Directions:

1. Brown meat. Drain fat, if any. Season lightly with salt and pepper (optional).
2. Add soup and 1 can of water to fry pan. Add vegetables.
3. Bring to a boil, then simmer, covered, about 25 minutes or until tender. Remove from heat, cover for another 10 minutes to thicken.
4. Serve while hot. Refrigerate leftovers.

Here is another recipe to practice your MyPlate evaluation skills:

Chicken and Wild Rice Soup

Ingredients

- 1 cup diced carrots
- 1 cup diced onions
- 1 cup diced celery
- 12 ounces boneless, skinless chicken breast, cut into bite-size pieces
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 6 cups reduced sodium chicken broth
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup raw wild rice, rinsed and drained
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 can evaporated skim milk

Directions:

In a large cooking pot, cook and stir carrot, onion, and celery in hot olive oil until tender (about 5 minutes.) Add chicken and cook until chicken is no longer pink and beginning to brown. Add broth and wild rice. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 30-45 minutes or until rice is tender. In small bowl, combine flour and softened butter to make a smooth paste. Stir flour mixture into broth (after rice is tender). Cook and stir until soup is thickened and bubbly. Add evaporated milk. Cook and stir over medium heat until heated through. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Makes 4-6 servings.

Looking through the MyPlate lens when making your meals plan is an easy way to get the jump on eating a healthy balanced meal. Soups, like the ones presented here, offer you a quick and wholesome option for a one or two dish nutritious meal. For more healthy menu ideas, contact me at the K-State Research & Extension Southwind District office at 620-365-2242 or by email at kmcewan@ksu.edu.

