

March 1, 2021

## PERSONALIZE YOUR PLATE AS WE BEGIN NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH



Health departments in the Tampa Bay region—Citrus, Hardee, Hernando, Highlands, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk and Sarasota – are inviting you to spice things up when it comes to filling your plate during *National Nutrition Month* this March. This year's theme, *Personalize Your Plate*, promotes creating nutritious meals to meet individuals' cultural and personal food preferences.

During *National Nutrition Month* everyone is encouraged to make informed food choices and develop sound eating and physical activity habits they can follow all year long. Making healthful eating habits does not require drastic lifestyle changes.

America is a cultural melting pot, and as grocery stores expand their offerings to create dishes from cuisines from around the globe, it is becoming easier to create nutritious meals that align with cultural preferences while also expanding into a world of new flavors. Variety is the spice of life and experimenting with different world cuisines can spark excitement in food choices.

Developing a healthful eating pattern is not a one-size-fits all endeavor. The key is tailoring your favorite foods to meet your individual nutrient needs. For those wondering how to get started, speaking with a registered dietitian can be an important first step. These health professionals can help fine-tune traditional recipes, provide alternatives to cooking methods and offer other helpful advice for incorporating family-favorite foods into everyday meals.

Your local health department can serve as a valuable resource as you look to expand your food horizons this month. You can reach your county's office at:

- **Citrus - (352) 527-0068**
- **Hardee - (863) 773-4161**
- **Hernando - (353) 540-6800**
- **Highlands - (863) 386-6040**
- **Hillsborough - (813) 307-8000**
- **Manatee - (941) 748-0747**
- **Pasco - (727) 619-0300**
- **Pinellas - (727) 824-6900**
- **Polk - (863) 519-7900**



- **Sarasota - (941) 861-2900**

*National Nutrition Month* was initiated in 1973 as *National Nutrition Week*, and it became a month-long observance in 1980 in response to growing interest in nutrition.

### **About the Florida Department of Health**

The Department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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