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NEWS RELEASE

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THE NEW AMERICAN PLATE

The American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR) wants to help Americans rethink what's on their plate. Too often the traditional American plate fails to qualify for a healthy meal. It is planned around a large portion of meat or poultry with a green vegetable and potatoes served on the side. If your plate looks like that, you're can be taking in too many calories, especially from fat. Furthermore, you may not be getting enough of the vitamins, minerals and health-protecting phytochemicals found in plant foods. As a result, the traditional American plate may not help you maintain a healthy weight or defend yourself against chronic disease.

In contrast the New American Plate is planned around plant foods. The proportion of food on the plate is different. Vegetables, fruit, whole grains and beans cover two-thirds (or more) of the plate; animal protein covers one-third (or less).

These recommendations are based on strong scientific evidence. A panel of experts convened by AICR, evaluated 4,500 studies on the link between diet and cancer. Their conclusion were published in "Food, Nutrition and the Prevention of Cancer: a global perspective" and indicate that the diet is associated with reduced risk of cancer in 18 places in the body.

There is a strong consensus that a diet high in vegetables, fruits, whole grains and beans reduces the risk of cancer. They have concluded that if everyone ate such a diet, there would be 30 to 40 percent fewer cases of cancer in the U.S.

The same diet also reduces the risk of heart disease, stroke and adult-onset diabetes.

Even small changes can provide health benefits. Start by taking a look at your plate and gradually making changes. Begin by reducing the portion of meat to moderate four to six ounces. Increase your servings of vegetables. Try having brown rice or sweet potatoes instead of mashed potatoes.

When you've grown accustomed to this transitional plate, take the next step. Reduce the meat or poultry on your plate to three ounces – about the size of a deck of cards. Rice with sliced mushrooms might be nice, and two cancer-fighting vegetables such as broccoli and yellow squash or snow peas and carrots round out a meal that promotes good health.

The proportions two-thirds (or more) plant food and one-third (or less) animal protein will help prevent chronic disease and also assist with weight control. The proportions of the New American Plate also lend themselves to mixed dishes such as stir-fries, stews, casseroles and grain-based salads.

Source: The New American Plate One Pot Meals, American Institute for Cancer Research