You’ve heard the warnings about limiting processed meat. So what should you put in its place?

“**You want to avoid replacing it with other processed foods. So anything that comes in a box or a package.”**

Internal medicine specialist Dr. Heather Fields suggests swapping out hot dogs and hamburgers for grass-fed, organic chicken breasts or black-bean burgers.

“**Or you could splurge, and get some wild Alaskan salmon and increase the content of omega 3 fatty acids, which are great for heart health and brain health.”**

And make vegetables the main focus of the meal.

“**You want to try to have half your plate filled with vegetables.”**

Dr. Fields says green, leafy vegetables and other colorful veggies offer the most vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. Add whole fruits for more of these nutrients. And include a side of whole grains or legumes, too.

And Dr. Fields says don’t worry if you can’t make every plate look like this.

“**I think it’s difficult for some people to eliminate all sources of processed meat. But every little bit counts.”**

For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I’m Jeff Olsen.