In June 2011, the MyPlate educational materials replaced the MyPyramid. MyPlate is an educational tool that was created by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to promote positive nutrition behaviors and balanced food choices. The MyPlate image highlights significant healthful messages that are based on the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. One of the major goals of the MyPlate educational tool is to teach consumers how to eat healthier foods and meals in a simple, colorful, and easy-to-understand image. It is a visual reminder that incorporates the 5 food groups using the mealtime visual of a place setting.

The food groups, including portions of fruit, vegetables, grains, protein, and dairy foods, are displayed as sections on the plate picture icon. Prescribed and recommended therapeutic nutrition plans and diets can be difficult for patients to understand and comprehend. The MyPlate image may be a useful tool to assist patients and clients in a better understanding of nutritional concepts using easy-to-understand visual cues and key nutrition messages.

Individuals with chronic kidney disease that receive some form of dialysis have very different and complex nutrient needs compared with the general public. These are not reflected in the current MyPlate education materials because the target audience for MyPlate is the general public. The diet for a patient with chronic kidney disease is highly specific and modified to individual therapeutic needs, therefore basic nutrition guidelines would not suffice. For example, the MyPlate education materials suggest “make half your grains whole.” However, it is not recommended for dialysis patients to consume whole-grain products because of the high phosphorus content. The mineral phosphorus is one that is particularly limited for patients on dialysis. The recommended therapeutic nutrition plans for dialysis patients include limitations on phosphorus, potassium, sodium, and fluid, all of which are not specifically addressed with the current MyPlate nutrition guidelines.

The inspiration to specifically create a MyPlate for patients on dialysis treatment originated from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s original MyPlate intended for the general public. The MyPlate education materials are the perfect blueprints to design and tailor many other types of therapeutic nutrition plans for patients and clients. Patients undergoing dialysis treatment may now benefit from the visually appealing and original concept of the MyPlate design. The MyPlate for chronic kidney disease provides specific nutrition information for patients and clients on dialysis. It is depicted in an easy-to-understand visual image with minimal text format (Fig. 1, Fig. 2).

References
2. 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
Figure 1. MyPlate handout for healthy eating with chronic kidney disease.
Figure 2. Spanish version of My plate handout for healthy eating with chronic kidney disease.