

Dietary Guidelines

www.MyPyramid.gov

Eating healthily is an important aspect of overall health. Balance is the key. It is important to balance the daily calories ingested with exercise to burn them off. In January of 2005, the United States Department of Health & Human Services released new dietary guidelines that are aimed at helping Americans make better food choices and live healthier lives, that information is located at www.MyPyramid.gov. They advocate balance and variety in food choices while staying within the calorie requirements. The food and physical activity choices you make today affect your health and well-being far into the future.

Eat a variety of nutrient-rich foods and beverages every day while staying within your daily calorie needs. Choose foods that limit the intake of saturated and trans fats, cholesterol, added sugars, salt, and alcohol. Strive to have a balanced day rather than a balanced meal, which means eating from all the different food groups on a daily basis rather than trying to eat from all of the groups at every meal. For example, you could select foods from three food groups at each meal, rather than one from each of the six. Also, vary your foods daily. Variety in what you eat will give you as many nutrients as possible.

To maintain body weight in a healthy range, balance calories from foods and beverages with calories expended. To prevent gradual weight gain over time, make small decreases in food and beverage calories and increase physical activity. You can print a nutrition plan based on your age, gender, and height at www.MyPyramid.gov.

GRAINS – Make half your grains whole.

Check the ingredients and look for the word "whole grain" to make sure you are getting the most from your grains.

- Whole grains are great sources of dietary fiber, several B vitamins, and minerals. B vitamins play a role in metabolism and are essential for the nervous system; they are found in almost all grain products. Iron is an important mineral used to transport oxygen in the blood. It is important for woman and teenage girls to get enough iron during their child bearing years. Whole grains are sources of magnesium and selenium. Magnesium is used in bone maintenance and releasing energy from muscles, and selenium is essential for a healthy immune system.
- College age women are encouraged to eat 3 ounce equivalents per day, while men should consume 4. One serving of a grain product is typically 1-2 ounce equivalents.
- Brown rice, oatmeal, popcorn, whole wheat bread and cereals, wheat pasta, and wild rice are all packed with whole grains.
- Cornbread, grits, noodles, pretzels and white rice are examples on foods that are non-whole grains.

VEGETABLES - Vary your vegetables.

- Choose more dark green and orange vegetables, as well as beans and peas.
- Vegetables are great sources of potassium, dietary fiber, vitamin A, vitamin E, and vitamin C. See the fruit section for the benefits of potassium, fiber and vitamin C. Sweet potatoes, white potatoes, tomato products, beans, spinach and peas are rich in potassium. Almost all vegetables contain good amounts of fiber and folic acid. Vitamin A keeps eyes and skin healthy. Vitamin E helps protect

essential fatty acids from oxidizing. Almost all vegetables contain these important vitamins.

- College-aged women and men should consume 2 ½ to 3 cups of vegetables a day.
- Leafy greens, broccoli, sweet potatoes, carrots, squash, beans, peas and tomatoes are among the best vegetables.

FRUITS – Focus on fruits.

- Eat all kinds of fruits, including fresh, frozen, or dried.
- Fruits are sources of many nutrients, including potassium, dietary fiber, vitamin C, and folic acid. Potassium is important to maintain a healthy blood pressure. Sources of fruit rich in potassium are bananas, prunes and prune juice, dried peaches and apricots, melons and orange juice. Dietary fiber from fruits helps to reduce blood cholesterol, maintain bowel function and also help provide a feeling of being full while not ingesting too many calories. Whole or cut-up fruits are great sources of dietary fiber.
- Vitamin C is important for growth and repair of all body tissues, and most fruits are rich in vitamin C. Folic acid is essential for making red blood cells and is also important for pregnant women. It is found in most fruits.
- Both men and women are encouraged to eat at least 2 cups of fruit every day.
- Variety is key! Try to stay away from just consuming fruit juices. Mix it up by eating whole fruit, dried fruit, canned fruit (with 100% fruit juice), and fruit cocktail.

MILK PRODUCTS – Have enough calcium rich foods.

- Make sure you have 3 cups milk or the equivalent dairy product each day. Stick to the low-fat or fat-free variety.
- Calcium is used in building and maintaining bone mass. Milk products also contain potassium. Good sources of calcium are yogurt and milk.
- Vitamin D is found in milk-products and is important in helping the body maintain proper levels of calcium and phosphorous. Also, milk products which are low-fat or fat-free provide little or no solid fat.
- Consume 3 cups per day of fat-free or low-fat milk or equivalent milk products.
- Soy milk, fortified orange juice, almonds, and hazelnuts are dairy-free options for calcium. If you do not consume milk, go for the lactose-free milk products or calcium fortified foods and beverages to meet your calcium requirements.

MEATS & BEANS – Go lean with protein.

- Select lean cuts of meat and poultry. When preparing meat, bake, broil or grill it. Mix up your protein choices by selecting from fish, beans, peas, nuts, and seeds.
- Proteins function as building blocks for bones, muscles, cartilage, skin, and blood. They also serve as building blocks for enzymes, hormones, and vitamins. Proteins also contain B vitamins, vitamin E, iron, zinc and magnesium. Zinc helps the immune system function properly and is necessary for biochemical reactions.
- It is important to choose lean protein because non-lean cuts of meat are often high in saturated fat, which raise the LDL (low-density lipoprotein). High amounts of LDL's can increase the risk for coronary heart disease.

Dietary Guidelines

www.MyPyramid.gov

- College-age women need between 2-3 servings of protein while males require 3-4 servings every day.
- Besides lean cuts of meat, protein is also found in eggs; nuts (almonds, pistachios and walnuts), seeds, dry beans (black beans, kidney or pinto beans), and peas.
- A serving of meat counts as one protein serving, while nuts are measured in an ounce per serving and peas are ½ cup for a serving.
- *Especially for Vegetarians.* If you are a vegetarian, be sure to consume enough protein sources. Each day, focus on eating eggs, beans, nuts, nut butters, peas, and soy products. You need approximately 5-6 servings of these products every day to reach your protein requirements.

OILS – Okay in Moderation.

- Oils are fats that are liquid at room temperature, most of which are high in monounsaturated or polyunsaturated fats, so they will not raise your LDLs. A small amount of these oils daily are necessary to maintain a healthy diet.
- Oils contain "essential fatty acids" that are essential in maintaining a healthy diet.
- While making sure to consume some oils every day, it is important to remember that oils do contain calories. College age women should consume the equivalent of 5 teaspoons and men should consume 6 teaspoons.
- Oils are also found in olives, peanut butter, nuts, seeds, vegetable oil, mayonnaise, and salad dressings.

RESOURCES

Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005

<http://www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines/>

MyPyramid.gov

<http://www.mypyramid.gov/>

National Institute of Mental Health – Offers reliable information on mental health, especially eating disorders.

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/eatingdisorders.cfm>

Vegetarian Resource Group – A reliable vegetarian source that includes recipes, games and information on nutrients such as protein, calcium and iron.

<http://www.vrg.org/>

Centers for Disease Control

<http://www.cdc.gov/node.do/id/0900f3ec80059b1a>

Sources for this site:

[MyPyramid.gov/](http://www.MyPyramid.gov/) and [Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005](http://www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines/)

EXERCISE – Regular physical activity is important.

Being physically active is a major element in living a healthy, happy, and long life. Regular physical activity is important and helps to control weight by balancing the calories you consume with the calories you expend each day. Achieve physical fitness by including cardiovascular conditioning, stretching exercises for flexibility, and resistance exercises or calisthenics for muscle strength and endurance.

- *To reduce the risk of chronic disease in adulthood,* engage in at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity, above usual activity, at work or home on most days of the week. For most people, greater health benefits can be obtained by engaging in physical activity of more vigorous intensity or longer duration.
- *To help manage body weight and prevent gradual, unhealthy body weight gain in adulthood,* engage in approximately 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity activity on most days of the week while not exceeding caloric intake requirements.
- *To sustain weight loss in adulthood,* participate in at least 60 to 90 minutes of daily moderate intensity physical activity while not exceeding caloric intake requirements. Some people may need to consult with a healthcare provider before participating in this level of activity.

Making exercise part of your routine.

- Pick a time every day that works well with your schedule. Write it down in your calendar and stick to it!
- Sign a contract to yourself, committing yourself to exercise.
- Pick a partner and encourage each other to exercise.
- Vary your routine. Mix it up a little, so you do not get bored doing the same thing every day. Choose something you like to do (e.g., Pilates, swimming, 2-on-2 basketball).
- Do not get discouraged. It may take weeks or even months before you see the changes your body is undergoing.
- Be active for at least 30 minutes every day. Exercise is not limited to the gym. Try walking, dancing, bicycling, golfing, jogging, swimming, or throwing the ball around.
- Choose a routine that works for you. Increase the time or intensity of your work-out to have greater health benefits.

SET GOALS FOR HEALTHY EATING AND EXERCISING

Be realistic. Make incremental changes to your diet and exercise plan. Setting unrealistic goals can lead to failure.

Be adventurous. Expand your palate and try new foods to encourage variety. For exercise, do not just run on the treadmill or lift weights. Try a Pilates or kick-boxing class, so your routine does not get boring.

Be flexible. Do not worry about just one meal or being sure to exercise at least once a day. If you want a bowl of ice cream, have it and enjoy every second of it! If you cannot make it to the gym one afternoon, do not sweat it! It is okay to balance calories and exercise over a number of days.

Be sensible. Just as it is not healthy to overdo what you eat, it is unhealthy to not eat enough and exercise too much. Remember, the key word is balance!

Be active. Almost everything you do that gets you off the couch counts as exercise, so get up and go for a walk between classes, kick a ball around, or go dancing at night.