

The Food Guide Pyramid and Dietary Guidelines

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How can you stay healthy?

Healthy eating and food preparation habits can greatly affect the growth, development, and health of children and adults. The Food Guide Pyramid and Dietary Guidelines for Americans can help you and your family develop good eating habits.

■ **Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables daily.**

■ **Keep food safe to eat**

● **CHOOSE SENSIBLY**

● **Choose a diet that is low in saturated fat and cholesterol and moderate in total fat.**

This means eating fewer fried foods and less meat, especially those high in saturated fat. Saturated fats are those that are solid at room temperature. Consider eating dried beans and peas or soy-based foods as the main dish for several meals each week.

● **Choose beverages and foods to moderate your intake of sugars.**

For desserts, eat naturally sweet foods such as fruits, as these foods contain more nutrients and fiber.

● **Choose and prepare foods with less salt.**

Check food labels to select foods with lower sodium content. Add little or no salt at the table.

● **If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.**

Drinking in moderation means:

For women, no more than 1 drink each day.
For men, no more than 2 drinks each day.

A drink is:

- 12 ounces of regular beer
- 5 ounces of wine
- 1 1/2 ounces of hard liquor – 80 proof (whiskey, brandy, rum, vodka)

• about 12 ounces (one bottle) of wine cooler

If you are pregnant or think you are pregnant, do not drink alcohol. Babies may be born with health problems if mothers drink alcohol during pregnancy.

When choosing foods and beverages, keep these ideas in mind:

• **Eat a wide variety of foods each day.**

Be sure to include dark green, leafy and deep yellow vegetables, as these have higher amounts of Vitamin A and the carotenoids. Eat a good source of Vitamin C everyday, such as citrus fruits, melons, and raw cabbage. Tomato products also give benefits for cancer prevention.

• **Eat at least the minimum number of servings from each food group.**

You may choose to eat more servings, if you need more calories or are very active.

• **Drink Enough Fluids.**

Water is needed to regulate body temperature, carry out chemical reactions in the body, remove body waste, and prevent constipation. Drink six to eight (8-ounce) glasses of fluid every day-- water or other liquids (juices, milk, beverages, or soup). Limit the amount of caffeinated drinks (coffee, tea, and soft drinks). Be sure to drink at least 2 glasses of plain water.

Dietary Guidelines for Americans:

▲ AIM FOR FITNESS

▲ Aim for a healthy weight.

If you are only a few pounds above your recommended weight, take steps to prevent further weight gain. If you are 20% or more above the recommended weight, keep in mind that a modest loss of only 5% of current weight can improve health.

▲ Be physically active every day.

You need at least 30 minutes of physical activity throughout the day.

■ BUILD A HEALTHY BASE

■ Let the Pyramid guide your food choices.

Eat at least the minimum number of servings recommended for each food group, as shown on the next page.

■ Choose a variety of grains daily, especially whole grains.

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THE FOOD GUIDE PYRAMID

These symbols show fats (●), oils (●), and added sugars (▼) in foods. They are found mostly in the Fats, Oils, and Sweets Group. Foods in other groups – such as cheese, ice cream, whole milk, French fries and other fried vegetables – also contain fat. Added sugar may be hidden in many foods, especially processed and ready-to-eat foods.

The Milk, Yogurt, and Cheese Group

Eat 2 to 3 servings each day

A serving is:

- 1 cup of milk or yogurt
- 1 1/2 ounces of natural cheese like Swiss, cheddar, and mozzarella
- 2 ounces processed cheese like American cheese (1 1/2 - 2 slices)
- 1 cup tofu
- 2 cups cottage cheese

For a healthy diet, use skim or low-fat (1% or 2%) milk, non-fat or low-fat yogurt, and low-fat cheeses.

The Vegetable Group

Eat 3 to 5 servings each day

A serving is:

- 1 cup of raw leafy vegetables such as lettuce or spinach
- 1/2 cup fresh, cooked, or canned vegetables
- 3/4 cup vegetable juice

Choose a variety of vegetables: spinach, romaine lettuce, broccoli, carrots, squash, sweet potatoes, potatoes, corn, peas, and tomatoes.

The Bread, Cereal, Rice, and Pasta Group

Eat 6 to 11 servings each day

A serving is:

- 1 slice of bread
- 1/2 hamburger bun, bagel, or English muffin
- 1 ounce of dry, ready-to-eat cereal (usually 2/3 to 3/4 cup of cereal)
- 1/2 cup of cooked cereal, rice, or pasta
- 4 small crackers
- 1 large tortilla or 2 small ones

Include whole grain foods like whole-wheat bread, brown rice, barley, oatmeal, and whole-grain cereals.

2-3 SERVING

3-5 SERVING



Fats, Oils, and Sweets

Eat very little of these foods

Foods such as margarine, butter, oil, mayonnaise, sour cream, cream cheese, and salad dressing are mostly fat. The following foods also have a lot of fat in them:

- cakes, doughnuts, pies, cookies
- chips, buttered popcorn
- French fries or other fried foods
- batter-dipped fried foods

Choose snack foods with the smallest amounts of fat or sugar. Some examples are: fig bars, ginger snaps, graham crackers, vanilla wafers, angel food cake, cakes made from low-fat cake mixes, ice milk, sherbet, and frozen fruit bars.

The Meat, Poultry, Fish, Dry Beans, Eggs, and Nuts Group

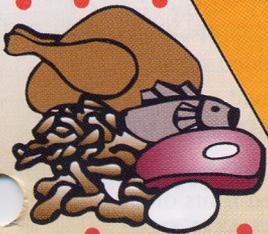
Eat 2 to 3 servings each day

A serving is:

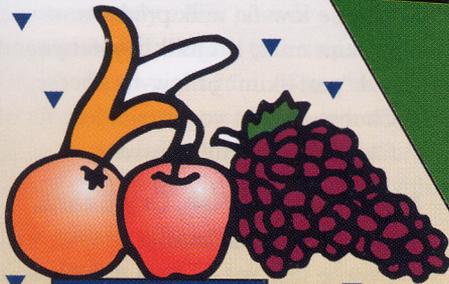
- About 2-3 ounces of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish (about the size of a deck of cards)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked dry beans (pintos, navy, kidney, etc.), or 1 egg, or 2 tablespoons of peanut butter count as 1 ounce of lean meat (about $\frac{1}{3}$ serving).

Trim the fat from meat before cooking. Include cooked dry beans often as the main dish in meals.

SPARINGLY



2-3 SERVINGS



2-4 SERVINGS

The Fruit Group

Eat 2 to 4 servings each day

A serving is:

- 1 medium-sized apple, orange, or banana
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fresh, cooked, or canned fruit cut into pieces
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of 100% fruit juice
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup dried fruit (raisins, dates, prunes, apricots or peaches)

Choose a variety of fruits: oranges, grapefruits, juices, cantaloupe, watermelon, and strawberries. Choose fresh fruit salad, baked apples, or other fruits for desserts or snacks.

SERVINGS



How to make the Food Guide Pyramid work for you

Determine the number of servings you need each day.

	Many women, older adults about 1,600*	Children, teen girls, active women, most men about 2,200*	Teen boys, active men about 2,800*
Calorie level*			
Bread Group Servings	6	9	11
Vegetable Group Servings	3	4	5
Fruit Group Servings	2	3	4
Milk Group Servings	2-3**	2-3**	2-3**
Meat Group Servings	2, for a total of 5 ounces	2, for a total of 6 ounces	3, for a total of 7 ounces
Total Fat (grams)	53	73	93

* These are the calorie levels if you choose low fat, lean foods from the 5 major food groups and use foods sparingly that are from the Fats, Oils, and Sweets Group.

** Women who are pregnant or breastfeeding, teenagers and young adults up to age 24 need 3 servings.

Modified Food Guide Pyramid for Older Adults, Age 70+

1. Eat at least the minimum number of servings for each food group in the Food Guide Pyramid. Eat a variety of foods that are good sources of protein, vitamins, minerals, and fiber. It is important to eat nutrient dense foods with calories. Eating less food or calories may be due to poor appetite, less activity, or medical conditions, and may result in weight loss.
2. Eat at least three servings of calcium-rich foods. Calcium and vitamin D are important to maintain bone health.
3. Drink eight cups of water as the base of the 70+ Pyramid. This is needed because of higher intake of medications and to prevent dehydration and constipation in older adults.
4. Eat fiber-rich foods from grain, fruit, and vegetable groups.
5. Eat fortified foods with vitamin B12, calcium, and vitamin D. Consult a doctor or dietitian, if you need a dietary supplement.

Reference:

Konikoff, R. A modified food guide for people over 70 years. Nutrition Commentator, Tufts University, March 3, 1999.

Pyramid Pointers - to reduce your intake of fat, sugar, and calories:

Fats, Oils, and Sweets Group

- Go easy on adding fats at the table or when cooking --- such as butter, margarine, fatback, gravy, salad dressings, and mayonnaise.
- Choose fewer high-sugar foods --- such as candy, cakes, pies, cookies, regular soft drinks, sugar, and jelly.

Bread, Cereal, Rice, and Pasta Group

- To get enough fiber, eat several servings per day of foods containing whole grains. A high fiber intake may help reduce storage of fat in the body.
- Choose foods made with little fat or sugar.
- Limit use of high-fat or high-sugar spreads and toppings.
- Use half the butter, margarine or oil called for in recipes. Use low-fat milk instead of whole milk or cream.

Vegetable Group

- Add little or no fat to vegetables during cooking or at the table.
- Go easy on high-fat sauces, toppings, and regular salad dressings.
- Use herbs and spices to flavor vegetables.

Fruit Group

- Choose fresh fruits, 100% fruit juices, canned fruits in natural juices, and dried fruits with no added sugar.
- Limit fruits canned or frozen in heavy syrup, sweetened fruit juices, fruit punches, and drinks.
- Eat raw unpeeled fruits often, as they are higher in fiber than juice.

Milk, Yogurt, and Cheese Group

- Choose low-fat milk products --- such as skim milk, 1% milk, nonfat yogurt, and "part-skim" or low-fat cheese.
- Choose low-fat yogurt and low-fat or fat-free frozen milk desserts.

Meat, Poultry, Fish, Dry Beans, Eggs, and Nuts Group

- Choose lean meats, fish, dried beans and peas, and poultry without the skin.
- Prepare meats in low-fat ways:
 - Trim away all the fat you can see.
 - Discard skin from chicken and turkey and fatty drippings from meats.
 - Broil, bake, or stew meats instead of frying.
 - Nuts and seeds are high in fat so eat them in moderation.

Reference:

Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion
USDA. Dietary Guidelines for Americans,
2000, 5th edition.

Available at: <http://www.usda.gov/cnpp/>