

## Dietary Guidelines for Americans

### Suggestions for Use in Training

Use this handout for group training on nutrition education.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture are responsible for the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. The guidelines encourage us to make smart choices from every food group. The best way to give your body the balanced nutrition it needs is to eat a variety of nutrient-packed foods every day. Be sure to stay within your daily calorie needs.

### A healthy eating plan is one that

- Emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or lowfat milk products.
- Includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts.
- Is low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars.

### Find your balance between food and physical activity.

Becoming a healthier you isn't just about eating healthy. It's also about physical activity. Regular physical activity is important for your overall health and fitness. It also helps you control body weight by balancing the calories you take in as food with the calories you expend each day.

- Be physically active for at least 30 minutes most days of the week.
- Increasing the intensity or the amount of time that you are physically active can have even greater health benefits and may be needed to control body weight.
- Children and teenagers should be physically active for 60 minutes every day, or most every day.
- If you eat 100 more calories a day than you burn, you'll gain about 1 pound in a month. That's about 10 pounds in a year.

### Mix Up Your Choices Within Each Food Group

#### Focus on Fruits

Eat a variety of fruits whether fresh, frozen, canned, or dried, rather than fruit juice for most of your fruit choices. For a 2,000 calorie diet, you will need 2 cups of fruit each day (i.e., 1 small banana, 1 large orange, and 1/2 cup of dried apricots or peaches).

#### Vary Your Vegetables

Eat more dark green vegetables, such as broccoli, kale, and other dark leafy greens; orange vegetables, such as carrots, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, and winter squash; and beans and peas, such as pinto beans, kidney beans, black beans, garbanzo beans, split peas, and lentils.

#### Get Your Calcium-Rich Foods

Get 3 cups of lowfat or fat-free milk or an equivalent amount of lowfat yogurt and/or calcium-fortified cheese (1 1/2 ounces of cheese equals 1 cup of milk) every day. For kids aged 2–8, it is 2 cups of milk. If you don't or can't consume milk, choose lactose-free milk products and/or calcium-fortified food and beverages.

### Make Half of Your Grains Whole

Eat at least 3 ounces of whole-grain cereals, breads, crackers, rice, or pasta every day. One ounce is about 1 slice of bread, 1 cup of breakfast cereal, or 1/2 cup of cooked rice or pasta. Look to see that grains such as wheat, rice, oats, or corn are referred to as “whole” in the list of ingredients.

### Go Lean With Protein

Choose lean meats and poultry. Bake it, broil it, or grill it. Vary your protein choices with more fish, beans, peas, nuts, and seeds.



## Dietary Guidelines for Americans *continued*

This project has been funded at least in part with Federal funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service through an agreement with the Institute of Child Nutrition at The University of Mississippi. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. government.

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01/2017

