



CARBOHYDRATES

- ◆ Choose fiber-rich fruits, vegetables, and whole grains often.
- ◆ Choose and prepare foods and beverages with little added sugars or caloric sweeteners, such as amounts suggested by the USDA Food Guide and the DASH Eating Plan.
- ◆ Reduce the incidence of dental caries by practicing good oral hygiene and consuming sugar- and starch-containing foods and beverages less frequently.

SODIUM AND POTASSIUM

- ◆ Consume less than 2300 milligrams per day (less than 1 tsp of salt).
- ◆ Choose and prepare foods with little salt. At the same time, consume potassium-rich foods, such as fruits and vegetables.

Key Recommendations for Specific Population Groups

- ◆ *Individuals with hypertension, blacks, and middle-aged and older adults.* Aim to consume no more than 1,500 milligrams of sodium per day, and meet the potassium recommendation (4,700 milligrams per day) with food.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

- ◆ Those who choose to drink alcoholic beverages should do so sensibly and in moderation -- defined as the consumption of up to one drink per day for women and up to two drinks per day for men.
- ◆ Alcoholic beverages should not be

consumed by some individuals, including those who cannot restrict their alcohol intake, women of child-bearing age who may become pregnant, pregnant and lactating women, children and adolescents, individuals taking medications that can interact with alcohol, and those with specific medical conditions.

- ◆ Alcoholic beverages should be avoided by individuals engaging in activities that require attention, skill, or coordination, such as driving or operating machinery.

FOOD SAFETY

To avoid microbial foodborne illness:

- ◆ Clean hands, food contact surfaces, and fruits and vegetables. Meat and poultry should not be washed or rinsed to avoid spreading bacteria to other foods.
- ◆ Separate raw, cooked, and ready-to-eat foods while shopping, preparing, or storing foods.
- ◆ Cook foods to a safe temperature to kill microorganisms.
- ◆ Chill (refrigerate) perishable food promptly and defrost foods properly.
- ◆ Avoid raw (unpasteurized) milk or any products made from unpasteurized milk, raw or partially cooked eggs or foods containing raw eggs, or raw or undercooked meat and poultry, unpasteurized juices, and raw sprouts.

Key Recommendations for Specific Population Groups

- ◆ *Infants and young children, pregnant women, older adults, and those who are immunocompromised.* Do not

eat or drink raw (unpasteurized) milk or any products made from unpasteurized milk, raw or partially cooked eggs or foods containing raw eggs, raw or undercooked meat and poultry, raw or undercooked fish or shellfish, unpasteurized juices, and raw sprouts.

- ◆ *Pregnant women, older adults, and those who are immunocompromised:* Only eat certain deli meats and frankfurters that have been reheated to steaming hot.



A basic premise of the *Dietary Guidelines* is that nutrient needs should be met primarily through consuming foods. Foods provide an array of nutrients and other compounds that may have beneficial effects on health. As noted above, in certain cases, fortified foods and dietary supplements may be useful sources of one or more nutrients that otherwise might be consumed in less than recommended amounts. These are especially important for people whose typical food choices lead to a diet that cannot meet one or more nutrient recommendations, such as for vitamin D, vitamin E or calcium. However, dietary supplements cannot replace a healthful diet.

Note also that recommended calorie intakes will differ for individuals based on age, gender, and activity level. At each intake, individuals who eat nutrient-dense foods may be able to meet their recommended nutrient intake without meeting their calorie needs. The remaining calories—called the *discretionary calorie allowance*—allow individuals flexibility to consume some foods and beverages that may contain alcohol (i.e. beer and wine), added sugars (i.e. soft drinks, candy and deserts), or added fats that are part of moderate or high fat foods (i.e. many snack foods).

Discretionary calories are estimated as follows, based on the estimated calories remaining after recommendations for nutrient-rich food choices are met (e.g. a diet based on MyPyramid or the DASH diet):