

THE NEW DIETARY GUIDELINES 2005

The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005* provide science-based advice to promote health and reduce risk of chronic diseases through nutrition and physical activity. This sixth edition of *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* places stronger emphasis than such reports in the past on reducing one's calorie intake and increasing one's physical activity, especially since more Americans each year are becoming overweight. The *Dietary Guidelines* provides advice for people two years and older on proper dietary habits that can promote health and reduce risk for major chronic diseases.

The report identifies 41 key recommendations, of which 23 are for the general public and 18 are for special populations. They are grouped into nine general topics:

- Adequate Nutrients Within Calorie Needs
- Weight Management
- Physical Activity
- Food Groups to Encourage
- Fats
- Carbohydrates
- Sodium and Potassium
- Alcoholic Beverages
- Food Safety

Following is a list of key recommendations from the *Dietary Guidelines 2005*.

ADEQUATE NUTRIENTS WITHIN CALORIE NEEDS

- Consume a variety of nutrient-dense foods and beverages within and among the basic food groups while choosing foods that limit the intake of saturated and *trans* fats, cholesterol, added sugars, salt, and alcohol.
- Meet recommended intakes within calorie needs by adopting a balanced eating pattern, such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Guide (currently in a pyramid form) or the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) Eating Plan

Key Recommendations for Specific Population Groups

- *People over age 50*. Consume vitamin B12 in its crystalline form (i.e., fortified foods or supplements).
- *Women of childbearing age who may become pregnant*. Eat foods high in heme-iron and/or consume iron-rich plant foods or iron-fortified foods with an enhancer of iron absorption, such as vitamin C-rich foods.
- *Women of childbearing age who may become pregnant and those in the first trimester of pregnancy*. Consume adequate synthetic folic acid daily (from fortified foods or supplements) in addition to food forms of folate from a varied diet.

- *Older adults, people with dark skin, and people exposed to insufficient ultraviolet band radiation (i.e., sunlight).* Consume extra vitamin D from vitamin D-fortified foods and/or supplements.

WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

- To maintain body weight in a healthy range, balance calorie intake from foods and beverages with calories expended.
- To prevent gradual weight gain over time, make small decreases in calorie intake from food and beverages and increase physical activity.

Key Recommendations for Specific Population Groups

- *Those who need to lose weight.* Aim for a slow, steady weight loss by decreasing calorie intake while maintaining an adequate nutrient intake and increasing physical activity.
- *Overweight children.* Reduce the rate of body weight gain while allowing growth and development. Consult a healthcare provider before placing a child on a weight-reduction diet.
- *Pregnant women.* Ensure appropriate weight gain as specified by a healthcare provider.
- *Breastfeeding women.* Moderate weight reduction is safe and does not compromise weight gain of the nursing infant.
- *Overweight adults and overweight children with chronic diseases and/or on medication.* Consult a healthcare provider about weight loss strategies prior to starting a weight-reduction program to ensure appropriate management of other health conditions.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- Engage in regular physical activity and reduce sedentary activities to promote health, psychological well-being, and a healthy body weight.
- 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 calorie needs.
- To sustain weight loss in adulthood: Participate in at least 60 to 90 minutes of daily moderate-intensity physical activity while not exceeding calorie needs. Some people (men over 40 years of age and women over 50 years of age) may need to consult with a healthcare provider before participating in this level of activity.
- Achieve physical fitness by including cardiovascular conditioning, stretching exercises for flexibility, and resistance exercises or calisthenics for muscle strength and endurance.

Key Recommendations for Specific Population Groups

- *Children and adolescents.* Engage in at least 60 minutes of physical activity on most, preferably all, days of the week.
- *Pregnant women.* In the absence of medical or obstetric complications, incorporate 30 minutes or more of moderate-intensity physical activity on most, if not all, days of the week. Avoid activities with a high risk of falling or abdominal trauma.
- *Breastfeeding women.* Be aware that neither acute nor regular exercise adversely affects the mother's ability to successfully breastfeed.
- *Older adults.* Participate in regular physical activity to reduce functional declines associated with aging and to achieve the other benefits of physical activity identified for all adults.

FOOD GROUPS TO ENCOURAGE

- Consume a sufficient amount of fruits and vegetables while staying within calorie needs. Two cups of fruit and 2½ cups of vegetables per day are recommended for a reference 2000 kcal intake, with higher or lower amounts depending on one's calorie needs.
- Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables each day. In particular, select from all five vegetable subgroups (dark green, orange, legumes, starchy vegetables, and other vegetables) several times a week.
- Consume 3 or more ounce-equivalents of whole-grain products per day, with the rest of the recommended grains coming from enriched or whole-grain products. In general, at least half the grains should come from whole grains.
- Consume 3 cups per day of fat-free or low-fat milk or equivalent milk products.

Key Recommendations for Specific Population Groups

- *Children and adolescents.* Consume whole-grain products often; at least half the grains should be whole grains. Children 2 to 8 years should consume 2 cups per day of fat-free or low-fat milk or equivalent milk products. Children 9 years of age and older should consume 3 cups per day of fat-free or low-fat milk or equivalent milk products.

FATS

- Consume less than 10 percent of calorie intake from saturated fatty acids and less than 300 milligrams per day of cholesterol, and keep *trans* fatty acid consumption as low as possible.
- Keep total fat intake between 20 to 35 percent of calorie intake, with most fats coming from sources of polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fatty acids, such as fish, nuts, and vegetable oils.
- When selecting and preparing meat, poultry, dry beans, and milk or milk products, make choices that are lean, low-fat, or fat-free.
- Limit intake of fats and oils high in saturated and/or *trans* fatty acids, and choose products low in such fats and oils.

Key Recommendations for Specific Population Groups

- *Children and adolescents.* Keep total fat intake between 30 to 35 percent of calorie intake for children 2 to 3 years of age and between 25 to 35 percent of calorie intake for children and adolescents 4 to 18 years of age, with most fats coming from sources of polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fatty acids, such as fish, nuts, and vegetable oils.

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 (approximately 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 childbearing 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 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 the USDA Food Guide or the DASH diet):

Calorie Intake (kcal)	Discretionary Calories (kcal)
1000	165*
1200	171*
1400	171*
1600	132
1800	195
2000	267
2200	290
2400	362
2600	410
2800	426
3000	512
3200	648

* These amounts are higher than for a 1600 kcal diet because these lower calorie diets refer to the needs of children 2-8 years of age. Adult recommendations typically start at 1600 kcal.

The intent is to not exceed this discretionary calorie allowance from the combination of foods and beverages with alcohol, added sugars, or added fats.

“Finding Your Way to a Healthier You”

The brochure designed for the public based on the *2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* is entitled “*Finding Your Way to a Healthier You.*” It incorporates the major themes of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, but provides a simpler message. The three main themes are:

- Make smart choices from every food group.
- Find your balance between food and physical activity.
- Get the most nutrition out of your calories.

Make smart choices from every food group.

- Emphasize fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products.
- Include lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts.
- Make sure ones diet is low in saturated fat, trans-fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars.

Find your balance between food and physical activity.

- Be physically active for at least 30 minutes most days of the week.
- Increasing the intensity or amount of time that you are physically active can have even greater health benefits and may be needed to control body weight. About 60 minutes a day may be needed to prevent weight gain.
- Children and teenagers should be physically active every day, or most every day.

Get the most nutrition out of your calories.

- Choose the most nutritionally-rich foods you can from each food group each day—those packed with vitamins, minerals, fiber, and other nutrients, but lower in calories.
- Pick foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk products more often.

Other recommendations refer to safe food-handling practices and moderation in alcohol consumption (if used).

Safe food handling encompasses the following advice:

- 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.

Moderate drinking refers to:

- Up to one drink a day for women and up to two drinks for men.
- 12 ounces of a regular beer, 5 ounces of wine or 1-1/2 ounces of 80 proof distilled spirits count as a drink for purposes of explaining moderation.

The 2005 Dietary Guidelines and consumer brochure are available at www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines.