



Nutrition and You

Good nutrition and regular physical activity are keys to maintaining good health for both you as a caregiver and the person for whom you're caring. A healthy eating plan may lower your risk for obesity, diabetes, heart disease, cancer and other chronic conditions and help improve depression and add a boost to your energy levels.

The Dietary Guidelines give the ABC's for nutrition and good health.

- Aim for Fitness
- Build a healthy base
- Choose Sensibly



Aim for fitness involves maintaining a healthy weight and being physically active each day. You should do 30 minutes or more of moderate activity (walking, bicycling, gardening, etc) on most days of the week.

Build a healthy base includes choosing a wide variety of foods following the food guide pyramid. Each day you should try to eat the recommended number of servings from each of the five food groups. Focus on eating more whole grain foods, fruits and vegetables.

HOW TO USE THE FOOD GUIDE PYRAMID

How many servings do you need each day?

What Counts as a Serving?

	1600 calories*	2200 calories*	2800 calories*
Bread, Cereal, Rice, and Pasta Group	6	9	11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 slice of bread, ½ bagel or ½ English muffin • About 1 cup of ready-to-eat cereal • 1/2 cup of cooked cereal, rice, or pasta 			
Vegetable Group	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 cup of raw leafy vegetables • 1/2 cup of other vegetables—cooked or raw • 3/4 cup of vegetable juice 			
Fruit Group	2	3	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 medium apple, banana, orange, pear • 1/2 cup of chopped, cooked, or canned fruit • 3/4 cup of fruit juice 			
Milk, Yogurt, and Cheese Group—preferably fat free or low fat	3	3	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 cup of milk*** or yogurt • 1 1/2 ounces of natural cheese (such as Cheddar) • 2 ounces of processed cheese (such as American) 			
Meat, Poultry, Fish, Dry Beans, Eggs, and Nuts Group—preferably lean or low fat	2, for a total of 5 ounces	2, for a total of 6 ounces	3, for a total of 7 ounces
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2–3 ounces of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish These count as 1 ounce of meat: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1/2 cup of cooked dry beans or tofu ▪ 2 1/2 ounce soy burger ▪ 1 egg ▪ 2 tablespoons of peanut butter or 1/3 cup of nuts 			

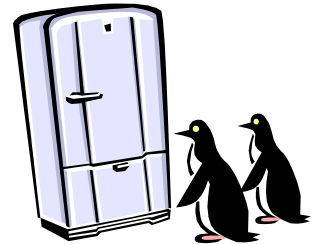
* Recommended number of servings depends on your calorie needs:

- 1600 calories is about right for children ages 2 to 6 years, many sedentary women, and some older adults.
- 2200 calories is about right for most children over 6, teen girls, active women, and many sedentary men.
- 2800 calories is about right for teen boys and active men.

*** This includes lactose free and lactose reduced milk products. Soy based beverages with added calcium are an option for those who prefer a non-dairy source of calcium.

Note: Many of the serving sizes given above are smaller than those on the Nutrition Facts food label.

Make sure to keep foods safe and prevent food borne illness by washing your hands and cleaning your cooking surfaces thoroughly. Keep raw and cooked ready-to-eat foods separate while shopping, preparing and storing. Make sure you cook foods to their safe temperatures. Follow the 2 hour rule of refrigerating perishable foods. When in doubt throw it out!



Choose sensibly. Limit the amount of fat you eat. Choose fat free or low fat milk products and lean meats and poultry. Increase the amount of fish and cooked dry beans and peas you eat. Use the Nutrition Facts label to choose foods lower in fat, cholesterol and sodium. Eat less than 65 grams of total fat per day and less than 20 grams of saturated fat per day. Limit your cholesterol intake to less than 300 milligrams per day. For sodium try and keep your sodium intake to less than 2,400 milligrams per day. *Note: a teaspoon of salt contains 2,000 milligrams of sodium.* Avoid high calorie beverages such as regular soda and sweetened iced teas and fruit drinks. Even 100% fruit juice is high in calories so limit the amount you drink to less than 6 ounces a day. Enjoy sweets as an occasional treat. Substitute fruit and other low calorie items for dessert. If you choose to drink alcohol limit your intake to no more than 1 drink a day for women and 2 drinks a day for men (1 drink is equal to 1 ½ ounces of hard alcohol, 5 ounces of wine or 12 ounces of beer).

Tips for Good Nutrition



Start your day with breakfast. We call it the most important meal of the day for good reason. It provides you with needed fuel for tackling the rest of your day. A piece of whole wheat toast with peanut butter or a low fat yogurt with granola are quick and easy meals to grab and go.

- Choose high fiber foods such as whole grain breads, brown rice, oats, beans, vegetables and fruits. Try to eat 20-30 grams of fiber a day. Select breads and crackers with 2 or more grams of fiber per serving. Use high fiber cereals with at least 5 grams of fiber per serving.

- Select lean meats such as beef, turkey breast, fish or chicken with the skin removed in order to lower the amount of fat and calories. Use beans to replace half or all the meat in recipes that call for ground beef.
- Have three servings of low-fat milk, yogurt or cheese a day. These dairy foods are high in calcium and Vitamin D, important for strong bones. Other options if you have problems digesting lactose are to try reduced lactose milk products or calcium fortified juices, soy milks and tofu. A calcium and vitamin D supplement may be recommended if you don't get enough calcium from your diet.



- Drink plenty of fluids. Your goal should be eight 8-ounce glasses a day of fluids including water, milk, herbal teas and juice. Dilute fruit juice with water or sparkling mineral water. Slice lemons or limes and add to water for a refreshing drink.

Adapted from www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/ and www.niddk.nih.gov

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