



Harness Pyramid Power

Climb the new Food Guide Pyramid to a healthier you. The shape is familiar and the message remains strong:

- **Make half 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 ½ cup of cooked rice or pasta. Check to make sure “whole” grain is listed in the product’s ingredients; otherwise, it’s not.
- **Vary your veggies.** Think green leafy such as broccoli. Go for color with orange veggies such as carrots, sweet potatoes, pumpkin and winter squash. Add beans and peas such as pintos, kidneys and black beans. You need 2 ½ cups (5 servings) each day.
- **Focus on fruits.** Choose fresh, frozen, canned or dried fruits (rather than fruit juices). Try for 2 cups of fruit each day (for example, 1 small banana, a large orange and ¼ cup dried apricots equals the 2-cup equivalent).
- **Limit fats, salt and sugars.** Choose and prepare foods with little salt (sodium) and added sugars (caloric sweeteners). Read the Nutrition Facts label on foods to choose foods low in saturated and trans fats.
- **Get calcium-rich foods.** Every day, get 3 cups of low- or fat-free milk or an equivalent amount of low-fat yogurt or cheese (1 ½ ounces of cheese equals 1 cup of milk).
- **Go lean with protein.** Bake, broil or grill lean meats and poultry for about 5 ½-ounce equivalents. Protein can also be found in fish, beans, peas, nuts, seeds, and peanut butter.

Drink alcohol in moderation, if you choose to drink at all. Moderation means up to one drink a day for women and two for men. A “drink” is 12 ounces of regular beer, 5 ounces of wine or 1 ½ ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits. Alcoholic beverages have calories but little nutritional value.

Balance food and physical activity. Regular physical activity helps you control body weight by balancing the calories you take in as food with the calories you burn each day. Be active at least 30 minutes on most days of the week. To control body weight, make that physical activity of 60 minutes each day to prevent weight gain. To lose weight, it’s important to reduce calories in the foods you choose and increase your physical activity.

How many calories do you need each day? The Food Guidance System tailors advice specifically for **you**, based on your age, gender, and activity level. For a personalized diet plan, go to www.MyPyramid.gov.

Source: Portions are based on a 2,000-calorie diet, appropriate for most people and the guidelines used on most Nutrition Facts (food) labels. **Finding Your Way to a Healthier You: Based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans** (2005). US Department of Health and Human Services and US Department of Agriculture, www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines.