

# HEALTHY LIVING *dietary guidelines*

## DIETARY GUIDELINES

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DAILY FOOD CHOICES

A balanced diet of nutrient-rich foods is a key component of overall health. Follow the food group recommendations to help you eat better every day. Each of these food groups provides some, but not all, of the nutrients you need.

A healthy diet is one that emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains and fat-free or low-fat milk products; includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs and nuts; and is low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium) and added sugars.

Daily recommendations vary depending on age, weight, calorie intake and exercise patterns. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has developed a website, [ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov), to help you figure out the foods and portions that are right for you.



### GRAINS

Make half your grains whole

Eat grains, especially whole-grains, like brown rice, oatmeal or popcorn.

Other grain choices include bread, crackers, cereal or pasta.

### VEGETABLES

Vary your veggies

Eat more dark-green vegetables like broccoli, spinach.

Eat more orange vegetables like carrots and sweet potatoes.

Eat more dry beans and peas like pinto beans, kidney beans and lentils.

Limit starchy vegetables

### FRUITS

Focus on fruits

Eat a variety of fruits

Choose fresh, frozen, canned or dried fruit.

Go easy on fruit juices.

### DAIRY

Get your calcium-rich foods

Go for fat-free or low-fat dairy products if you choose milk, yogurt and other milk products.

If you don't consume milk, choose lactose-free products or other calcium sources such as fortified foods.

### PROTEIN

Go lean with protein

Choose low-fat or lean meats and poultry.

Bake it, broil it or grill it.

Vary your protein routine — choose more fish, beans, peas, nuts and seeds.

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School Datebooks

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Your food and physical activity choices each day affect your health — how you feel today, tomorrow and in the future.

To find the foods and portions that are right for you, go to [ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov).

### Find your balance between food and physical activity

- Be sure to stay within your daily calorie needs.
- Be physically active for at least 30 minutes most days of the week.
- About 60 minutes a day of physical activity may be needed to prevent weight gain.
- For sustaining weight loss, at least 60 to 90 minutes a day of physical activity may be required.
- Teenagers should be physically active for 60 minutes every day, on most days.



### Know the limits on fats, sugars and salt (sodium)

- Make most of your fat sources from fish, nuts and vegetable oils.
- Limit solid fats like butter, margarine, shortening and lard, as well as foods that contain these.
- Check the Nutrition Facts label to keep saturated fats, *trans* fats and sodium low.
- Choose food and beverages low in added sugars. Added sugars contribute calories with few, if any, nutrients.