

NUTRITION GUIDLINES








Are you interested in healthy eating and having a balanced diet? If so, you'll want to learn more about food groups.

You may have grown up with the "Basic 4": dairy group, meat group, grain group, and the fruits and vegetables group. As nutrition science has changed, so have these food groups.

What are the basic food groups?

Foods are grouped together when they share similar nutritional properties. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010 has five food groups: vegetables, fruits, grains, dairy and a protein group, which includes meat, poultry, fish, legumes and nuts.

Food Groups	Examples	
Vegetables	<p>The vegetables you eat may be fresh, frozen, canned or dried and may be eaten whole, cut-up, or mashed. You should eat a variety of dark green, red and orange vegetables, as well as beans and peas (which are also considered part of the protein group). Examples include broccoli, carrots, collard greens, split peas, green beans, black-eyed peas, kale, lima beans, potatoes, spinach, squash, sweet potatoes, tomatoes and kidney beans. Any vegetable or 100% vegetable juice counts in this group.</p>	
Fruits	<p>The fruits you eat may be fresh, canned, frozen or dried and may be eaten whole, cut-up, or pureed. Examples include apples, apricots, bananas, dates, grapes, oranges, grapefruit, mangoes, melons, peaches, pineapples, raisins, strawberries, tangerines, and 100% fruit juice.</p>	

<p>Grains</p>	<p>There are two types of grains – whole grains and refined grains. At least half of the grains you eat should be whole grains, such as whole-wheat bread, whole-grain cereals and crackers, oatmeal, bulgur, and brown rice. Refined grains include white bread, white rice, enriched pasta, flour tortillas, and most noodles.</p>	
<p>Dairy</p>	<p>Most of your choices should be fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products, but all milks and calcium-containing milk products count in this category. Examples include milk, cheeses, and yogurt as well as lactose-free and lactose-reduced products and soy beverages. Foods that are made from milk but have little or no calcium are not included, such as butter, cream, sour cream, and cream cheese.</p>	
<p>Protein Foods</p>	<p>Choose a variety of lean meats and poultry, seafood, beans and peas, eggs, processed soy products, unsalted nuts, and seeds. Make sure to eat at least 8 ounces of seafood each week.</p>	

*Oils are NOT a food group, but they provide essential nutrients such as vitamin E.

How much of each food group should I eat?

The amount of food you need to eat from each group depends on your age, sex, and level of physical activity however general guidelines are listed below.

Carbohydrates: Get 45 to 65 percent of your daily calories from carbohydrates. Carbohydrates have 4 calories a gram. Based on a 2,000-calorie-a-day diet, this amounts to 900 to 1,300 calories a day, or about 225 to 325 grams. Emphasize natural, nutrient-dense carbohydrates from fruits and vegetables, beans and legumes, and whole grains. Limit less healthy sugar-sweetened beverages, desserts and refined grain products.

Protein: Get 10 to 35 percent of your total daily calories from protein. Protein has 4 calories a gram. Based on a 2,000-calorie-a-day diet, this amounts to about 200 to 700 calories a day, or about 50 to 175 grams a day. Emphasize plant sources of protein, such as beans, lentils, soy products and unsalted nuts. Include seafood twice a week. Meat, poultry and dairy products should be lean or low fat.

Fats: Limit total fat to 20 to 35 percent of your daily calories. Fat has 9 calories a gram. Based on a 2,000-calorie-a-day diet, this amounts to about 400 to 700 calories a day, or about 44 to 78 grams of total fat. Emphasize unsaturated fats from healthier sources, such

as lean poultry, fish and healthy oils, such as olive, canola and nut oils. Limit less healthy full-fat dairy products, desserts, pizza, burgers and sausage, and other fatty meats.

Sodium: Limit sodium to less than 2,300 milligrams a day — or 1,500 milligrams if you're age 51 or older, or if you are black or you have high blood pressure, diabetes or chronic kidney disease. To reduce sodium in your diet, limit processed and prepared foods, which are often high in sodium, avoid salty condiments, don't add salt at the table, and eliminate salt from recipes when possible.