

7.2: Dietary Guidelines for Americans

Every 5 years since 1980, a new edition of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* has been published. Its goal is to make recommendations about the components of a healthy and nutritionally adequate diet to help promote health and prevent chronic disease for current and future generations. Although many of its recommendations have remained relatively consistent over time, the *Dietary Guidelines* has evolved as scientific knowledge has grown. These advancements have provided a greater understanding of, and focus on, the importance of healthy eating patterns as a whole, and how foods and beverages act synergistically to affect health. Therefore, healthy eating patterns is a focus of the 2015-2020 *Dietary Guidelines*.

Key Recommendations: Components of Healthy Eating Patterns

The *Dietary Guidelines'* Key Recommendations for healthy eating patterns should be applied in their entirety, given the interconnected relationship that each dietary component can have with others.

Key Recommendations

Consume a healthy eating pattern that accounts for all foods and beverages within an appropriate calorie level.

A healthy eating pattern includes:

- A variety of vegetables from all of the subgroups—dark green, red and orange, legumes (beans and peas), starchy, and other
- Fruits, especially whole fruits
- Grains, at least half of which are whole grains
- Fat-free or low-fat dairy, including milk, yogurt, cheese, and/or fortified soy beverages
- A variety of protein foods, including seafood, lean meats and poultry, eggs, legumes (beans and peas), and nuts, seeds, and soy products
- Oils (such as olive and canola oil)

A healthy eating pattern limits:

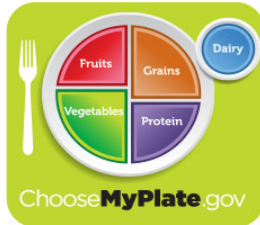
- Saturated fats and *trans* fats, added sugars, and sodium

Key Recommendations that are quantitative are provided for several components of the diet that should be limited. These components are of particular public health concern in the United States, and the specified limits can help individuals achieve healthy eating patterns within calorie limits:

- Consume less than 10 percent of calories per day from added sugars
- Consume less than 10 percent of calories per day from saturated fats
- Consume less than 2,300 milligrams (mg) per day of sodium
- If alcohol is consumed, it should be consumed in moderation—up to one drink per day for women and up to two drinks per day for men—and only by adults of

Implementation of the *Dietary Guidelines* Through MyPlate

MyPlate, MyWins



Everything you eat and drink over time matters.

The right mix can help you be healthier now and in the future.

Find your healthy eating style and maintain it for a lifetime. This means:



Start with small changes to make healthier choices you can enjoy.

Visit [ChooseMyPlate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov) for more tips, tools, and information.

[Click here to compare MyPlate to the Harvard Healthy Eating Plate.](#)

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