

DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS 2015-2020 EIGHTH EDITION

Summary of the 2015-2020 Dietary Guideline Recommendations:

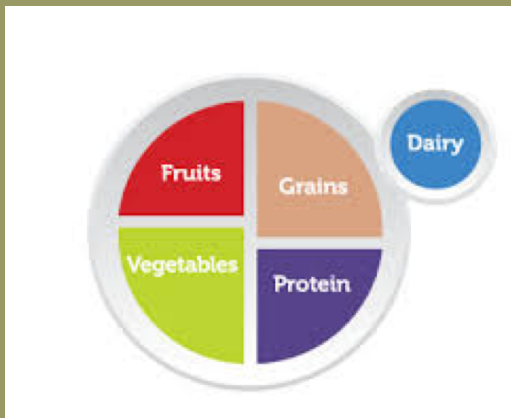
- 1) Follow a healthy eating pattern across the lifespan.
- 2) Focus on variety, nutrient density, and amount.
- 3) Limit calories from added sugars and saturated fats and reduce sodium intake.
- 4) Shift to healthier food and beverage choices.
- 5) Support healthy eating patterns for all.

Every five years, experts in nutrition, health, and medicine review the most recent research to come up with dietary advice and recommendations, also known as the Dietary Guidelines. The Dietary Guidelines' target audience is policymakers and health professionals. It is the dietitian's responsibility to translate these guidelines for public consumption, so here are the RUMC's dietitians' interpretations of the key take home points from this year's Dietary Guidelines:

A nutritious, balanced diet throughout all life stages is important for the prevention of chronic diseases including type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and blood pressure.

While it is important to choose nutrient-dense foods, it is also important to consider how much you eat. The DGAs recommend using MyPlate as a guide for portion control, along with a few additions:

- Make half the plate fruits and non-starchy vegetables, with an emphasis on non-starchy vegetables, such as broccoli, spinach, cauliflower, and bell peppers.
- Make $\frac{1}{4}$ of the plate whole grains, or a starchy vegetable which includes potatoes, corn, and peas
- Make $\frac{1}{4}$ of the plate a lean protein



Set SMART goals. A healthy lifestyle is created by a combination of small changes. When setting a goal, make sure it is specific, realistic, and has measurable outcomes that you can hold yourself accountable for.

Nutrition is individualized. Not all dietary recommendations are appropriate for everyone, and nutrition affects people on an individual level. Also, the DGAs emphasize to finding what works for you; research shows the best diet is the diet you can follow. If you have any questions, concerns, or need guidance on what foods to choose, a registered dietitian will help you find the answer and solution. After all, our job is to put the U in nutrition!

There is no "single" food or vitamin/mineral that is the key to a healthy diet; Rather it is consistently choosing nutrient-dense foods that will lead to health benefits and optimal health status. Nutrient dense-foods include:

- Vegetables, especially of dark greens, red and orange color
- Legumes, which are lentils, peanuts, and beans
- Whole-grains
- Fat-free or low-fat dairy including milk, yogurt, cheese, and fortified soy beverages
- Variety of lean protein, including seafood, poultry (no skin), nuts, legumes, and red meat in moderation
- Oils containing monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fatty acids, including canola, corn, olive, peanut, sunflower, and soybean oil

Choose water over juice and soda. The latter contain sugar as flavoring agents, which will add extra, unnecessary calories. Although "diet" or "zero" sodas have less to no sugar added, research shows better outcomes in those who drink water over diet or zero sodas. The benefits of eating real fruit instead of fruit juice (aside from less sugar) is that the real fruit has more fiber, as most fiber in fruit juice is lost due to food processing. If there is a specific fruit juice flavor you like, simply add your favorite fruit into water and place it in the fridge overnight, or pour a dash of juice into a glass of water. These ways, your favorite fruit will be infused in the water.

Specific DGA recommendations the media loved:

- Make less than 10% of your calories per day from added sugars. This is not because of the cause-effect research of added sugar, but in order to leave room for nutrient-dense foods at an adequate calorie level.
- Make less than 10% of your calories from saturated fats. The research regarding saturated fat is very controversial. The research on polyunsaturated fats, however, shows reduced risk of cardiovascular disease with the consumption of polyunsaturated fatty acids. When choosing fats, opt for foods with high amounts of polyunsaturated fatty acids, specifically omega-3 fatty acids found in seafood, fish, flax seed, and seaweed.
- Limit sodium to 2300mg a day.
- Up to 400mg of caffeine can be incorporated into a healthy diet. Coffee equivalents of this would be a grande coffee from Starbucks (330mg caffeine), or the same size equivalent from Dunkin Donuts (200mg).
- Consume as little dietary cholesterol as possible while following a healthy eating pattern. There is no longer a set "limit" on how much cholesterol you should eat, but cholesterol, like all food, should still be eaten in moderation.