



# Healthy Bites

*Information to Improve the Selection and use of Foods In Your Home*

## Dietary Guidelines for Americans

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The U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recently released the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010. The new Dietary Guidelines focus on promoting healthy eating patterns and regular physical activity to improve the health status of the American population.

Key recommendations for older adults:

- Consume foods fortified with vitamin B12, such as fortified cereals.
- Choose foods that provide more potassium, dietary fiber, calcium and vitamin D
- Daily sodium intake of **1,500 mg/day**



Overweight older adults are encouraged to not gain additional weight. Weight loss can help obese older adults decrease their risk for chronic diseases including cardiovascular disease and diabetes. Maintain an appropriate calorie balance.

### **Suggestions for Coping with Change: Sensory changes**

Loss of smell and taste affect the nutritional intake and status of many seniors. If food does not smell or taste appetizing, it will not be eaten.



Suggestions:

- Try a variety of new food flavors. Experiment with low sodium seasonings such as lemon juice, dill, curry and herbs of all types. Sometimes the problem is not dulled senses, but rather a drab, soft diet. Don't cook vegetables until they are mushy. Instead, reawaken the senses to fresh, flavorful foods and new textures.

[North Dakota State University  
NDSU Extension Service](#)



***Nutrition Classes: Learn how to stretch your food dollars, shopping basics, label reading and more. Qualified clients can sign up for free nutrition education classes with the Expanded Food Nutrition Education program (EFNEP) offered through MSUE in Macomb County.***

***For more information call: 586-469-6432.***

## Habits of Highly Effective Fruit & Vegetable Eaters

Small changes in your eating patterns can make big differences in your health over time. A serving of fruits and vegetables may be smaller than you think. All of the following count as one serving on your way to 5-A-Day:

1/2 cup fresh, frozen or canned fruits or vegetables

1 cup raw leafy greens

3/4 cup fruit or vegetable juice

1 medium-size piece of fruit

1/2 cup peas or cooked dry beans

1/4 cup dried fruit



### Cook at home frequently

Have breakfast at home and include fruit, whole grains and skim milk daily. Prepare a heavy-on-the-vegetables dinner at home most days. Prepare extra portions and freeze in meal-size containers labeled with the content and date.

### Know how to eat out

When eating in a restaurant, order a salad with the dressing on the side. Dip the fork in the dressing before taking a bite of salad. Order the entrée with the vegetable side dish. If eating Italian, choose pasta with marinara sauce. When eating Chinese food, opt for steamed rice, vegetables and meats instead of fried options.

### Memorize healthy recipes

Have healthy ingredients on hand and have a healthy dinner on the table in short order. Here are some ideas: Add canned beans to chili and tomatoes or extra vegetables to soups or casseroles. Sauté leftover vegetables, add a can of beans, spices and a jar of prepared spaghetti sauce. Saute fresh, frozen or leftover vegetables in a small amount of oil, add sauce of your choice, serve with brown rice

### Know how to snack

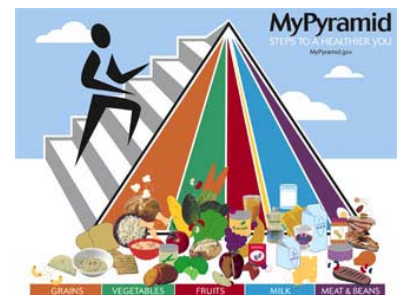
Opt for carrots or vegetables in low-fat dressing, rather than chips. Choose fruit over candy. Munch on almonds and raisins instead of crackers. Keep in mind that canned and frozen fruits and veggies are good snacks too. Try plain low-fat yogurt mixed with berries, bananas or peaches instead of ice cream. For a heavier snack, try natural peanut butter or low-fat cheese on a banana, apple or celery.

## Variety of Foods

People of all ages need more than 40 nutrients to stay healthy. With age, it becomes more important that diets contain enough calcium, fiber, iron, protein, and the vitamins A, C, D and Folicin. Reduce calories, select nutrient-dense foods, and enjoy smaller portions of foods high in fat, sugar and sodium. Because no one food or pill provides all of the nutrients, eat a variety of foods to get the full spectrum of nutrients.

Variety often is lacking in the diets of seniors, who often eat the same foods over and over again. Get out of this food rut by trying some of these suggestions:

- Eat breakfast foods for lunch or lunch foods for dinner.
- Use color as a guide for variety in a meal. A good meal should provide three distinct colors on the plate.
- Increase the variety of texture in meals. Add whole grain breads, whole grain cereals, and cooked legumes (beans of all types, lentils, dried peas).
- Eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables each day.



### Be a role model!

You'd be surprised how your food choices can affect friends, family and children.