

DASH Diet – Dietary Approaches To Stop Hypertension

The DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) eating plan is rich in whole grains, vegetables, fruits, and low in fat and fat-free dairy products. These foods are also naturally low in sodium and contain nutrients that may help lower blood pressure. Even if you don't have high blood pressure, eating this way can help prevent increases in blood pressure that occur as you get older.

Getting started

Start small. Make gradual changes in your eating habits.

- If you eat one or two vegetables a day, add a serving at lunch and another at dinner.
- If you don't eat fruit now or have only juice at breakfast, add a serving to your meals. Eat fruit as a snack.
- Use only half the butter, margarine, or salad dressing as you do now.
- Gradually increase dairy products to two or three a day. Choose low-fat or fat-free dairy products.

Treat meat as one part of the whole meal, instead of the focus.

- If you eat large portions of meat, cut back gradually—by a half or a third at each meal. Increase servings of vegetables, rice, pasta, and dry beans at meals.
- Include two or more vegetarian-style (meatless) meals each week.

Use fruits or low fat foods as desserts and snacks.

- Fruits and low fat foods offer great taste and variety. Use fruits canned in their own juice. Fresh fruits need little or no preparation. Dried fruits are easy to carry with you.

Food group	Servings	1 serving equals	Healthy examples and notes
whole grains and grain products	7 to 8 per day	1 slice bread 1/2 cup dry cereal 1/2 cup cooked rice, pasta, or cereal	whole wheat bread, English muffin, pita bread, whole grain cereals, grits, oatmeal, tortillas, pasta, brown rice
vegetables	4 to 5 per day	1 cup raw, leafy vegetables 1/2 cup cooked vegetable 6 oz. low sodium vegetable juice	tomatoes, potatoes, carrots, peas, broccoli, turnip greens, collard greens, kale, spinach, artichokes, green beans, sweet potatoes
fruits	4 to 5 per day	6 oz. fruit juice 1 medium fruit 1/4 cup dried fruit 1/2 cup fresh, frozen, or canned fruit	apricots, bananas, dates, grapes, oranges, orange juice, grapefruit, grapefruit juice, mangoes, melons, peaches, raisins, strawberries, tangerines
low-fat or fat-free dairy foods	2 to 3 per day	8 oz. milk 1 cup yogurt 1 1/2 oz. cheese	fat-free or 1% milk, fat-free or low-fat buttermilk, fat-free or low-fat yogurt, part skim mozzarella cheese, fat-free cheese
meats, poultry, or fish	2 or less per day	3 oz. cooked meat, poultry, or fish	lean meats, poultry, or fish. Trim away visible fat. Broil, roast, or boil instead of frying. Remove skin from poultry.
nuts, seeds, and legumes	4 to 5 per week	1 1/2 oz. (1/3 cup) nuts 2 Tbsp. seeds 1/2 cup legumes	kidney beans, garbanzo beans, lentils, almonds, filberts, peanuts, walnuts, sunflower seeds

Reduce salt and sodium.

- Read food labels to select foods lower in sodium.
- To flavor foods when cooking, use herbs and spices (like oregano, thyme, paprika, nutmeg, tumeric, and coriander) instead of salt.
- Limit or avoid high sodium foods (like smoked, cured, or processed foods; convenience foods or fast foods; high sodium condiments; highly salted snacks; and sauces, mixes and “instant” products).
- Use fruit juices or vinegar to marinate foods.



The DASH Diet – Sample Menu

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
<p>Breakfast</p> <p>Apple juice – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Bran cereal – $\frac{2}{3}$ cup Fat-free milk – 1 cup Banana – 1 small Whole wheat bread – 1 slice Soft margarine – 1 tsp.</p>	<p>Breakfast</p> <p>Orange juice – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Oatmeal – 1 cup Fat-free milk – 1 cup Melon slices – 3 medium</p>	<p>Breakfast</p> <p>Orange juice – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Whole grain cereal – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Fat-free milk – 1 cup Banana – 1 medium</p>
<p>Lunch</p> <p>Chicken sandwich: Chicken breast, no skin – 3 oz. Swiss cheese – 1 oz. Whole wheat bread – 2 slices Loose leaf lettuce – 2 leaves Tomato slices – 2 ($\frac{1}{4}$ inch slices) Carrot slices – 5 Orange juice – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup</p>	<p>Lunch</p> <p>Soft shell taco: Lean ground beef or turkey – 3 oz. Tortillas – 2 Cheese – 1 oz. Loose leaf lettuce – 2 leaves Tomato slices – 2 ($\frac{1}{4}$ inch slices) Mango slices – 4</p>	<p>Lunch</p> <p>Stir fry: Lean chicken breast – 3 oz. Broccoli – 1 cup Noodles – 1 cup Orange – 1 medium Low-fat yogurt – 1 cup</p>
<p>Snack</p> <p>Apple – 1 medium</p>	<p>Snack</p> <p>Orange – 1 medium Low salt crackers – 6</p>	<p>Snack</p> <p>Grapes – 2 cups</p>
<p>Dinner</p> <p>Vegetarian spaghetti sauce – $\frac{3}{4}$ cup Spaghetti – 1 cup Parmesan cheese – 2 Tbsp. Dinner roll (whole wheat) – 1 small Steamed broccoli and carrots – 1 cup</p>	<p>Dinner</p> <p>Baked chicken with fresh salsa – 3 oz. Steamed green beans – 1 cup Kidney beans, boiled – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Brown rice – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Green salad with sliced tomatoes – $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups Oil and vinegar dressing – 2 Tbsp.</p>	<p>Dinner</p> <p>Baked fish – 3 oz. Steamed rice – 1 cup Steamed broccoli – 1 cup Steamed spring rolls – 2</p>
<p>Snack</p> <p>Low-fat yogurt – 1 cup Strawberries – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup</p>	<p>Snack</p> <p>Low-fat ice cream – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup</p>	<p>Snack</p> <p>Low-fat yogurt – 1 cup Fresh or canned peaches – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup</p>

This information is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your physician or other medical professional. If you have persistent health problems, or if you have further questions, please consult your doctor.