



DASH Diet: Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension

The DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) eating plan is rich in whole grains, vegetables, fruits, and dairy products which are low in fat and fat-free. 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.

Eat 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 fruit needs little or no preparation. Dried fruit is easy to carry with you.

Food group	Servings	1 serving equals	Healthy examples and notes
whole grains and grain products	6 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, turmeric, 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 juice or vinegar to marinate foods.



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The DASH Diet – Sample Menu

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Breakfast 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.	Breakfast Orange juice – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Oatmeal – 1 cup Fat-free milk – 1 cup Melon slices – 3 medium	Breakfast Orange juice – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Whole grain cereal – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Fat-free milk – 1 cup Banana – 1 medium
Lunch Chicken sandwich: Chicken breast, no skin – 3 oz. Swiss cheese – 1 oz. Whole wheat bread – 2 slices Leaf lettuce – 2 leaves Tomato slices – 2 ($\frac{1}{4}$ inch slices) Carrot sticks – 5 small Orange juice – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup	Lunch Soft shell taco: Lean ground beef or turkey – 3 oz. Tortillas – 2 Cheese – 1 oz. Leaf lettuce – 2 leaves Tomato slices – 2 ($\frac{1}{4}$ inch slices) Mango slices – 4	Lunch Stir fry: Lean chicken breast – 3 oz. Broccoli – 1 cup Noodles – 1 cup Orange – 1 medium Low-fat yogurt – 1 cup
Snack Apple – 1 medium	Snack Orange – 1 medium Low-salt crackers – 6	Snack Grapes – 2 cups
Dinner 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	Dinner 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.	Dinner Baked fish – 3 oz. Steamed rice – 1 cup Steamed broccoli – 1 cup Steamed spring rolls – 2
Snack Low-fat yogurt – 1 cup Strawberries – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup	Snack Low-fat ice cream – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup	Snack Low-fat yogurt – 1 cup Fresh or canned peaches – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup

Additional resources

- Connect to our Web site at kp.org to access health and drug encyclopedias, interactive programs, health classes, and more.
- Contact your local Kaiser Permanente Health Education Center or Department for health information, programs, and other resources.

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