


Nutrition

Self-Care Tips

 For more information, look up the = **topics in bold** in the index of your *Healthwise Handbook*.


Ten Simple Guidelines for Eating Well

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans are aimed at improving health and reducing the risk of disease, especially high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and cancer.


1. Aim for a healthy weight.

Work toward achieving and maintaining a weight that is best for you by choosing a variety of healthy foods and getting regular physical activity.

2. Be physically active every day.

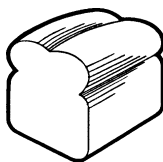
Regular physical activity that is vigorous enough to raise your heart rate has many benefits. ( **“Fitness”**)

3. Let the Pyramid guide your food choices.


The Food Guide Pyramid is a simple, flexible guide designed to help you create a balanced diet. It encourages eating a variety of foods in balance with one another so that you get the nutrients your body needs each day. ( **“Eating Well”**)

4. Choose a variety of grains daily, especially whole grains.

Foods made from grains, such as wheat, rice, and oats, are the foundations of good nutrition. They provide vitamins, minerals, starches, and fiber and are often low in fat. Whole grains may also help protect against heart disease and high blood pressure.



5. Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables daily.


Fruits and vegetables are key parts of your daily diet, but most people eat fewer than the 5 servings that are recommended. They taste great, are easy to prepare, and may protect you from some types of cancer. ( **“Fruits and Vegetables”**)




6. Keep food safe to eat.

Prevent food poisoning by keeping hot foods hot and cold foods cold. Bacteria can grow rapidly when food is not stored or handled properly.


7. Choose a diet that is low in saturated fat and cholesterol, and moderate in total fat.

Watching your fat intake can reduce your risk for heart disease, cancer, and high blood pressure. Choosing more grains, fruits, and vegetables can help you reduce the amount of total fat in your diet. ( **“Fats”**)

8. Choose beverages and foods that limit your intake of sugars.

Added **sugars** () have no other nutrients and, when consumed in excess, they crowd healthier foods out of your diet.

9. Choose and prepare foods with less salt.

You can reduce your chances of developing high blood pressure by consuming less **salt** (). Reducing your salt intake can also help you lower your blood pressure if it's currently high.

10. If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.

Alcohol supplies calories but few or no nutrients. Drinking alcohol is



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the cause of many health problems and accidents, and it can lead to addiction. Moderate alcohol consumption is defined as no more than 2 drinks a day for men and no more than 1 drink a day for women. Women who are pregnant or trying to become pregnant should avoid alcoholic beverages altogether.

Small Changes Can Make a Big Difference

You don't have to change your whole diet at once. Pick one easy change at first and stick with it. Add others once you've had success with the first change.

- Buy only whole-grain bread.
- Buy only skim or 1% milk.
- Use less oil for cooking.
- Eat fish at least twice a week.
- Eat a raw vegetable at lunch.
- Drink an extra glass of water when you wake each morning.

Simple Ways to Reduce Saturated Fat

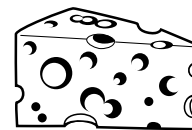
When eating meat:

- Reduce serving sizes to 2 or 3 ounces (about the size of a deck of cards), and don't eat second helpings. If you eat red meat, choose the leanest cuts, such as tenderloin, sirloin, or top and bottom round. Cut off any visible fat.
- Eat more fish and poultry (without skin). They contain less saturated fat than red meat does.
- Bake or broil red meats, poultry, and fish instead of frying them in butter or fat.
- Occasionally serve tofu, other soy



products, or a combination of legumes (dried beans, peas, lentils) and grains in place of a meat entrée.

When using dairy products:



- Use fat-free or low-fat milk.
- Choose cheeses made with fat-free or low-fat milk, or look for cheeses that have no more than 5 grams of fat per ounce (read the label).
- Try fat-free or low-fat cottage cheese or yogurt in place of cream and sour cream; or use fat-free sour cream and fat-free cream cheese.

When cooking:

- Steam vegetables. If you choose to sauté them, use 1 tablespoon of oil (or less), or try using other liquids such as wine or defatted broth.
- Use nonstick pans or add a small amount of oil to a preheated pan (less oil goes farther this way).
- Season vegetables with herbs and spices instead of butter and sauces; or try a butter substitute such as Butter Buds or Molly McButter. Dress salads with lemon juice, fat-free mayonnaise, or fat-free dressing.
- Use cooking oil that is liquid at room temperature (such as canola, olive, or corn oil) and use it sparingly (1 teaspoon at a time).



Fats in Foods

Fat, butter, lard, cream, oil, margarine, mayonnaise, and grease in foods account for 37 percent of the calories in the average American diet. Fat has more than twice as many calories per gram as carbohydrates or protein.



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For complete information on this and hundreds of other health topics, see your Healthwise Handbook.

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