

# USDA, HHS Released 2005 Dietary Guidelines

In its sixth edition, guidelines suggest that Americans should reduce caloric intake and increase physical activity.

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The 41 key recommendations of *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005* are the latest science-based consumer recommendations from the US Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Agriculture (USDA).<sup>1</sup>

The guidelines, authored by the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee, suggest an eating pattern for the general public that promotes health and reduces the risk of chronic diseases. Initiatives – choosing a nutritious diet, maintaining a healthy weight, achieving adequate exercise and keeping foods free from food borne illnesses – may help the over 90 million Americans who have a chronic disease and questionable quality of life.

Poor diet and a sedentary lifestyle, contributing to the risk of chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease (CVD) and hypertension, are among the major causes of morbidity and mortality in the United States. Evidence suggests that a diet complying with USDA guidelines reduces a person's risk of CVD. Individuals aged  $\geq 45$  years whose diet patterns followed the USDA guidelines had a lower risk of mortality versus those whose diets did not.<sup>1</sup>

## IMPORTANT EVERY DAY

"The more we learn about nutrition and exercise, the more we recognize their importance in everyday life," wrote Tommy G. Thompson, HHS secretary, in the

guidelines. "Americans of all ages may reduce their risk of chronic disease by adopting a nutritious diet and engaging in regular physical activity."

First published in 1980, USDA guidelines were addressed to the general public. Although still intended for use in the general public, this year's guidelines are more technical and are addressed to policy makers, nutrition educators, nutritionists and health care providers. Persons in these positions should disseminate information to the general public through educational materials, nutrition-related programs and authoritative statements, the guidelines suggest.

A set of consumer key recommendations, which are bro-

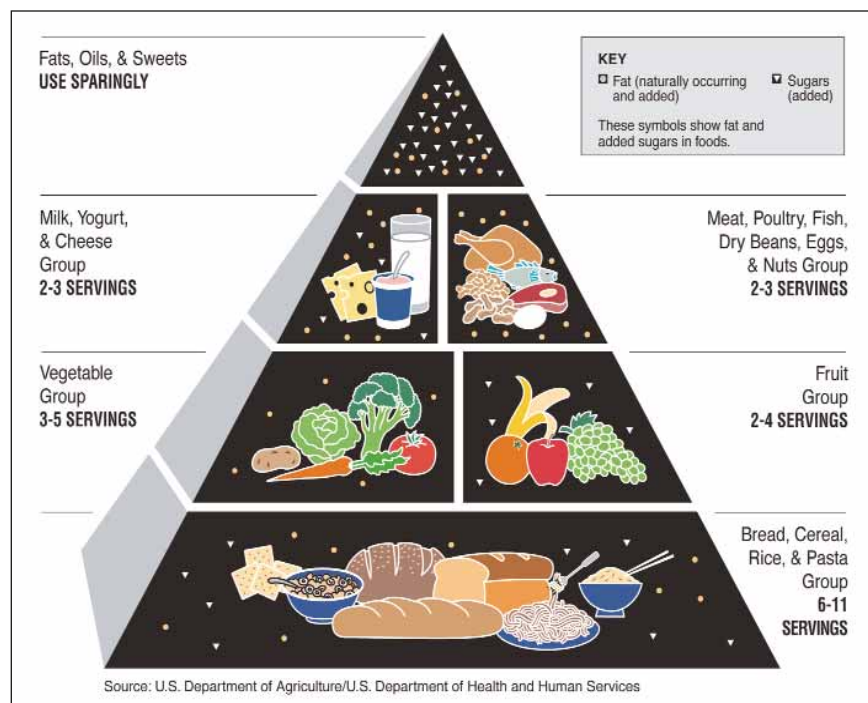


Figure 1. The Food Guide Pyramid is the food guidance system suggested by the USDA.

**TABLE 1. KEY USDA RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC**

**Adequate Nutrients Within Calorie Needs**

- Consume a variety of nutrient-dense foods and beverages within and among the basic food groups, while choosing foods that limit the intake of saturated and trans fats, cholesterol, added sugars and alcohol.
- Meet recommended intakes within energy needs by adopting a balanced eating pattern.

**Weight Management**

- To maintain body weight in a healthy range, balance calories from foods and beverages with calories expended.
- To prevent gradual weight gain, make small decreases in food and beverage calories and increase physical activity.

**Physical Activity**

- Engage in regular physical activity and reduce sedentary activities to promote a healthy body weight.
- To reduce the risk of chronic disease in adulthood: Engage in  $\geq 30$  minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity above usual activity at work or home, on most days of the week.
- Greater health benefits may be obtained by engaging in physical activity of more vigorous intensity or longer duration.
- To help manage body weight and prevent gradual weight gain in adulthood: Engage in approximately 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity activity on most days of the week while not exceeding caloric intake requirements.
- To sustain weight loss in adulthood: Participate in  $\geq 60$ - to 90 minutes of daily moderate-intensity physical activity while not exceeding caloric intake requirements.
- Include cardiovascular conditioning, stretching exercises and resistance exercises or calisthenics.

**Food Groups to Encourage**

- Consume a sufficient amount of fruits and vegetables while staying within energy needs. Two cups of fruit and 2 cups of vegetables per day are recommended for a reference 2,000-calorie intake.
- Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables each day. In particular, select from all five vegetable subgroups (dark green, orange, legumes, starchy vegetables and other vegetables) several times a week.
- Consume  $\geq 3$  ounce-equivalents of whole-grain products per day, with the rest of the recommended grains coming from enriched or whole-grain products. In general, at least half the grains should come from whole-grains.
- Consume 3 cups/day of fat-free or low-fat milk or equivalent milk products.

**Fats**

- Consume <10% of calories from saturated fatty acids and <300 mg/day of cholesterol, and keep trans fatty acid consumption as low as possible.
- Keep total fat intake between 20% to 35% of calories, with

most fats coming from sources of polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fatty acids such as fish, nuts and vegetable oils.

- Meat, poultry, dry beans and milk/milk products, choices should be lean, low-fat or fat-free.
- Limit intake of fats and oils high in saturated and/or trans fatty acids, and choose products low in such fats and oils.

**Carbohydrates**

- Choose fiber-rich fruits, vegetables and whole-grains often.
- Choose foods and beverages with little added sugars or calorie sweeteners.
- Reduce dental caries by practicing good oral hygiene.

**Sodium and Potassium**

- Consume <2,300 mg of sodium (approximately 1 teaspoon of salt) per day.
- Choose and prepare foods with little salt. At the same time, consume potassium-rich foods, such as fruits and vegetables.

**Alcoholic Beverages**

- Those who choose to drink alcoholic beverages should do so sensibly and in moderation - defined as the consumption of up to one drink per day for women and up to two drinks per day for men.
- Alcoholic beverages should not be consumed by some individuals, including those who cannot restrict their alcohol intake, women of childbearing age who may have become pregnant, pregnant and lactating women, children and adolescents, individuals taking medications that can interact with alcohol and those with specific medical conditions.
- Alcoholic beverages should be avoided by individuals engaging in activities that require attention, skill or coordination, such as driving or operating machinery.

**Food Safety**

- To avoid microbial food borne illness:
- Clean hands, food contact surfaces and fruits and vegetables. Meat and poultry should not be washed or rinsed.
- Separate raw, cooked and ready-to-eat foods while shopping, preparing or storing foods.
- Cook foods to a safe temperature to kill microorganisms.
- Chill/refrigerate perishable food promptly and defrost foods properly.
- Avoid raw/unpasteurized milk or any products made from unpasteurized milk, raw or partially cooked eggs or foods containing raw eggs, raw or undercooked meat and poultry, unpasteurized juices and raw sprouts.

\* Key recommendations for specific population groups are also made and can be found in the full Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005.

*Source: Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2005*

**TABLE 2. CALORIES/HOUR EXPENDED IN COMMON PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES**

Examples of physical activities and the average amount of calories a 154-lb person will expend in 1 hour. The expenditure value encompasses both resting metabolic rate calories and activity expenditure. Some of the activities can constitute either moderate- or vigorous-intensity physical activity, depending on the rate at which they are carried out (for walking and bicycling).

Moderate Physical Activity	Approximate Calories/Hour for a 154-lb person*
• Hiking	370
• Light gardening/yard work	330
• Dancing	330
• Golf (walking, carrying clubs)	330
• Bicycling (<10 mph)	290
• Walking (3.5 mph)	280
• Weight lifting (light workout)	220
• Stretching	180
Vigorous Physical Activity	Approximate Calories/Hour for a 154-lb person*
• Running/jogging (5 mph)	590
• Bicycling (>10 mph)	590
• Swimming (slow laps)	510
• Aerobics	480
• Walking (4.5 mph)	460
• Heavy yard work	440
• Weight lifting (vigorous)	440
• Basketball (vigorous)	440

\* Calories burned per hour will be higher for people who weigh >154 lbs and lower for those who weigh <154 lbs.

ken down into nine interrelated focuses, should be “implemented in their entirety,” authors wrote.<sup>1</sup> The categories are: adequate nutrients within caloric needs; weight management; physical activity; food groups to encourage; fats; carbohydrates; sodium and potassium; alcoholic beverages; and food safety (Table 1). These guidelines are intended for every day use in individuals aged >2 years; they should not be used as weight-loss plans.

### DIETARY MODELS

Consumers should get the majority of their nutrients from food. Use of the Food Guide Pyramid, USDA's food guidance system (Figure 1), or the DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) Eating Plan is suggested. These are models of a 2,000-calorie diet that comply with USDA guidelines. It should be noted, however, that daily caloric needs vary by individual.

The Food Guide Pyramid is currently being reviewed, and a new model will be released this spring. Major changes include the graphic presentation and USDA's suggested food intake patterns.<sup>2</sup>

Guidelines also include physical activity recommendations. Physical fitness decreases the risk of chronic disease, and therefore sedentary individuals are at increased risk.<sup>1</sup> Authors recommend that, preferably every day of the week, adults participate in  $\geq 30$  minutes of moderately intense activity. “Regular physical activity is also a key factor in achieving and maintaining a healthy body weight for adults and children,” they wrote.

Table 2 references the amount of calories expended during various common physical activities. An additional 30 minutes/day of physical activity may be necessary to further reduce the risk of chronic disease or unhealthy weight gain, and between 60 and 90 minutes of physical activity/day may be necessary to sustain weight loss in previously overweight or obese people.

A full set of the USDA guidelines can be downloaded at [www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines](http://www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines). ■

1. US Department of Health and Human Services and US Department of Agriculture. Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005. 6th Edition, Washington DC: US Government Printing Office. January 2005.  
2. Improving the Nutrition and Well-Being of Americans. Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion Web Site. Available at: <http://www.usda.gov/cnpp/pyramid-update/index.html>. Accessed January 28, 2005.