What's On *Your* Plate?

Smart Food Choices for Healthy Aging

National Institute on Aging

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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It's time to make lifestyle changes so you can stay active in the coming years. Research shows that it's not too late for smart food choices and other good health habits, like being physically active, to help reduce your risk of chronic diseases like heart disease, diabetes, and osteoporosis and the disability that can result from them.

Making wise food choices as you grow older might be easier than you think. A lot of good information is available about nutrition and older people. In *What's On* Your *Plate? Smart Food Choices for Healthy Aging*, the National Institute on Aging (NIA), part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), introduces you to the basic facts for making good food choices a part of your daily life and for adjusting those choices as you grow older and your needs change.

What's On Your *Plate?* is based on the nutrition recommendations for older adults in the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010* from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The source for much of the information is evidence from research, including studies conducted and supported by the NIH.

You might want to first skim through the entire book to get a general idea of all the elements involved in healthy eating. Then you can go back to the parts of the book that you want to read in more detail. Tips sprinkled throughout the book can help you make good food choices. You can also refer to the book from time to time to adjust your eating pattern—the combination of all foods and beverages you eat and drink over time. We invite you to share your copy with friends or relatives or give them our website, *www.nia.nih.gov/health*, or our toll-free phone number (1-800-222-2225) so they can get their own. They can also learn more about NIA's free booklets and fact sheets on a variety of topics of interest to older people and their families.

What's On Your *Plate?* includes a lot of resources you can check for more information. Some of them are websites. If you have a print copy and don't have a computer or another form of Internet access, whenever possible, we have included a phone number where you can get similar information. If you are reading the book online, you can click directly on the link.

As with many things, one size does not fit all. One of the eating plans described in this book might work for you. But if, for example, your Aunt Sadie has special needs, her doctor might suggest checking with a dietitian, an expert in how diet and health go together. No matter how you move forward, we hope you find *What's On* Your *Plate?* a valuable resource for helping you choose better nutrition, an important part of health and aging.

Plans for Healthy Eating

The First Step

A FEW YEARS AGO, *Diana and Nick both turned 50. Like many of their friends, the Spencers thought that making some changes in their lives might be a good idea. They'd put on some weight, and their doctor said their cholesterol levels were going up. When they were younger, Nick and Diana were very active—they were known to dance until late at night whenever they could. They ate any food they wanted—donuts for breakfast on the weekends and lots of soda were standards. As the years went by, work, children, and errands left little time for physical activities, and the Spencers found themselves eating more fast-food meals. Now, the couple knows they should make better food choices. But how should they start? Where is information they can trust?*

Diana and Nick can find nutrition information they can trust in the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans,* which contain advice about what and how much to eat and which foods to avoid. Every 5 years, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) use the latest nutrition research to develop these *Guidelines* that encourage people to eat more vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and lean sources of protein and dairy products; to choose foods that are low in added sugars and solid fats; and to limit salt (sodium) intake.

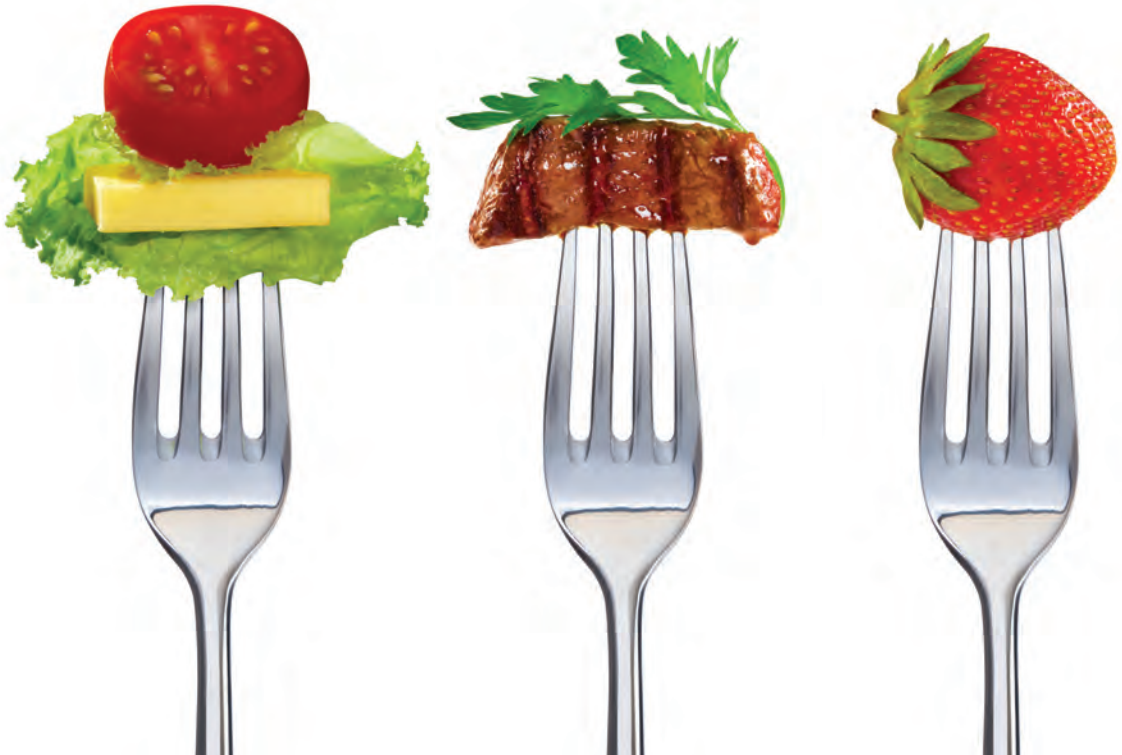
HERE'S A TIP

If your doctor suggests you follow a limited diet to manage a condition like diabetes or heart or kidney disease, you'll need to find out how to make your special diet work with one of these eating plans. A dietitian can be really helpful.

To help you create a healthy eating pattern, the *Guidelines* suggest two sensible eating plans: the USDA Food Patterns (see below) and the DASH Eating Plan (see page 22). DASH stands for Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension. Both are healthy options, whether or not you have high blood pressure (hypertension). Both are flexible so you can probably include many foods you prefer. The USDA Food Patterns even include adaptations for people on vegetarian or vegan diets.

The USDA Food Patterns

The USDA Food Patterns suggest that people over 50 keep an eye on calories while choosing a variety of healthy foods from five major food groups and limiting solid fats and added sugars. Calories are the way to measure the energy you get from food. How many calories you need depends on whether you are a man or a woman and how physically active you are each day. First, choose the calorie total that's right for you from the chart on the next page.



HOW MANY CALORIES DO YOU NEED?

If you are over age 50 and you want to stay at the weight you are now—not lose and not gain, how many calories do you need to eat each day? The *Dietary Guidelines* suggest:

For a Woman

Not physically active	Moderately active	Active lifestyle
1,600 calories	1,800 calories	2,000-2,200 calories

For a Man

Not physically active	Moderately active	Active lifestyle
2,000-2,200 calories	2,200-2,400 calories	2,400-2,800 calories

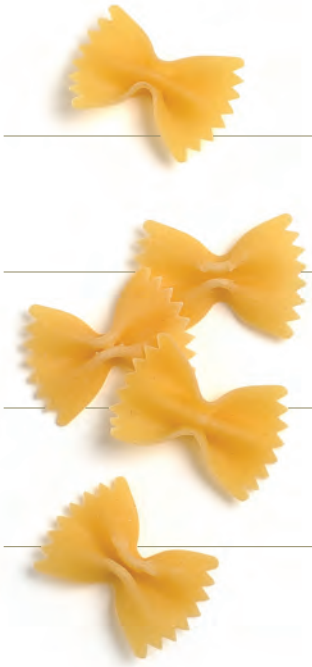
Physical activity refers to the voluntary movements you do that burn calories. Brisk walking, dancing, and swimming are examples of moderate activity. An active lifestyle might include jogging, singles tennis, or swimming laps.

The chart below shows how to reach three different daily calorie totals. Suggestions are given as daily amounts, unless shown as weekly.

DAILY CALORIE COUNT EXAMPLES FOR THE USDA FOOD PATTERNS

	1,600 calories	**2,000 calories**	**2,600 calories**
Grains	5 ounces or equivalent	6 ounces or equivalent	9 ounces or equivalent
Vegetables	2 cups	2½ cups	3½ cups
Fruits	1½ cups	2 cups	2 cups
Protein foods	5 ounces or equivalent	5½ ounces or equivalent	6½ ounces or equivalent
Seafood	8 ounces/week	8 ounces/week	10 ounces/week
Meat, poultry, eggs	24 ounces/week	26 ounces/week	31 ounces/week
Nuts, seeds, soy products	4 ounces/week	4 ounces/week	5 ounces/week
Dairy products	3 cups	3 cups	3 cups
Oils	22 grams	27 grams	34 grams
Solid fats and added sugars (SoFAS)	121 calories	258 calories	362 calories

Let's look more closely at the recommendations for the different food groups in the USDA Food Patterns. What foods are in each group? What are "protein foods?" How much of your daily fruit need is met by a medium banana? How should you count beverages? To answer these questions and more, starting on the next page, you'll find more detailed information for the five major food groups, as well as oils and solid fats and added sugars. We've also included some examples of one ounce or an ounce-equivalent (something that gives you the same amount of nutrients as an ounce). The USDA Food Patterns food groups are:



Grains

Vegetables

Fruits

Protein Foods

Dairy Products

Oils

Solid Fats and Added Sugars (SoFAS)

The USDA Food Patterns

Grains

DIANA LOVES BREAD AND PASTA. *It might be easy for her to eat too much from this food group. If she eats more than is suggested for her activity level, she'll be eating too many calories.*

Any food made from wheat, rye, rice, oats, cornmeal, barley, or another cereal grain is a grain product. In addition to bread and pasta, there are cereal, rice, grits, tortillas, even popcorn.

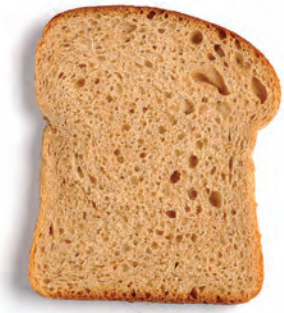
Look for grain choices that are low in saturated and *trans* fat **and** low in added sugar when possible. But be careful—low-fat baked goods can be high in added sugar.

Try to choose grain products made from whole grains. Make sure the first food on the ingredient list contains the word "whole," such as whole wheat, whole oats, or whole grain. Other whole grains include popcorn, brown rice, wild rice, buckwheat, bulgur, and quinoa. Whole grains can help you add fiber to your diet. For more on fiber, see page 32.

HERE'S A TIP

Be sure to make at least half your grains whole grains. Try whole wheat pasta, whole-grain English muffins, or a whole-grain bread, rather than basic white.

ONE OUNCE OR AN OUNCE-EQUIVALENT:



Slice of bread

Half an English muffin

Mini-bagel

Small (2½-inch) muffin

Cup flaked cereal

Half cup cooked rice, pasta, or cooked cereal

Two 3-inch pancakes

Three cups popcorn

6-inch corn or flour tortilla

The USDA Food Patterns

Vegetables

WHEN DIANA WAS GROWING UP, *she never wanted to eat vegetables. Maybe that was because her mother used to cook vegetables until they were very soft and sometimes tasteless. But now, Diana has learned to steam her vegetables until they are just crisp, and there are several she is happy to eat.*

Sometimes, vegetables get a bum rap. That's a shame because delicious vegetables come in a wide variety of colors and flavors. Dark green vegetables include broccoli, collard greens, spinach, and kale. Some red and orange vegetables are acorn squash, carrots, pumpkin, tomato, and sweet potato. Starchy vegetables are foods like corn, green peas, and white potatoes. Other vegetables include eggplant, beets, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, celery, artichokes, and onions. Beans and peas (not green peas) include black beans, garbanzo beans (chickpeas), lima beans, soybeans, and tofu. These can also be counted in the protein foods group. (See the tip on page 16.)

HERE'S A TIP

Vary your veggies. Brighten your plate with vegetables that are red, orange, and dark green. They taste great and are good for you too.

ONE HALF CUP OF VEGETABLES EQUALS:

Cup uncooked leafy vegetables

Six baby carrots or one medium carrot

Half a large baked sweet potato

Small (6-inch) ear of corn

Small baked potato

Five broccoli florets

Large stalk celery

Half large (3 x 4-inch) red pepper

Half cup cooked green beans

The USDA Food Patterns

Fruits

OTHER THAN ORANGE JUICE *in the morning, the Spencers rarely ate fruit. When they bought fruit from the grocery store, they often forgot it was in the drawer in their fridge. When they had lunch in the cafeteria, fruit was not usually offered.*

Nick and Diana are not alone. Older Americans generally do not eat enough fruit. Yet, there are so many choices—citrus fruits like oranges and grapefruits; different kinds of berries; fruits that grow on trees such as apricots, cherries, peaches, and mangoes; and others like figs, raisins, and pineapple. Try some that you haven't eaten before. Fruits with skins like apples and pears provide extra fiber that promotes regularity.

HERE'S A TIP

Do you wonder how many vegetables and fruits you should eat at a meal? Look at your plate. Vegetables and fruits should fill up half the dish.

ONE HALF CUP OF FRUIT EQUALS:

Small piece of fruit, such as a 2-inch peach or large plum

Half an 8-inch banana or half an orange

Quarter cup dried fruit

Four ounces of 100% fruit juice

Half a medium grapefruit

One-eighth of a medium cantaloupe

Half inch wedge of watermelon

Sixteen grapes

Four strawberries

The USDA Food Patterns

Protein Foods

NICK WAS SURPRISED *at how easy it was to eat more than the suggested amount of protein each day. His favorite lunch spot serves a burger that weighs a half pound—eight ounces. That's more protein than Nick needs to eat in a whole day. He still has to count the egg he had for breakfast and what he has for dinner!*

You might have a similar problem. But, simply cutting back on other food groups to keep your calories in line won't solve the problem because you'll be missing out on the nutrients those food groups give you. In addition to watching how much food with protein you eat, try to choose lean or low-fat foods. Higher fat choices count as added fats and oils. Try to eat seafood instead of meat at least twice a week to balance your proteins.

HERE'S A TIP

Are you confused about whether beans, peas, and foods made from soybeans should be counted as vegetables or protein foods? It's up to you. Here's an example: if you eat ½ cup of baked beans with dinner, you get to choose whether to count the beans as ½ cup of vegetables *or* 2 ounces of protein foods, depending on what else you've eaten during the day.

ONE OUNCE SERVING EQUALS:

12 almonds, 24 pistachios, or 7 walnut halves

Half ounce seeds such as hulled and roasted pumpkin, sunflower, or squash seeds

Tablespoon peanut butter

Half cup split pea, lentil, or bean soup

Quarter cup cooked beans

Quarter cup tofu

One egg

Falafel patty (2¼ inches, 4 ounces)

Two tablespoons hummus

The USDA Food Patterns

Dairy Products

NICK LOVES DRINKING MILK, *so it is not a problem for him to get 3 cups a day. But, Diana is not a milk drinker. There are lots of other ways for her to meet her daily dairy goal.*

Most adults do not get enough dairy products. For your heart health, always try to pick from the many low-fat or fat-free choices in the dairy products food group. Choosing fat-free or low-fat milk and yogurt, rather than cheese, gives you important vitamins and minerals and less sodium and fat.

ONE CUP OF MILK IS THE SAME AS:

Cup or 8 ounces yogurt

1½ ounces hard cheese, such as cheddar, mozzarella, Swiss, or Parmesan

Third cup shredded cheese

Cup calcium-fortified soy beverage

Two cups cottage cheese

Cup pudding made with milk

The USDA Food Patterns

Oils

Oils are high in calories, but they are also an important source of nutrients like vitamin E. If possible, use oils instead of solid fats, like butter, when cooking. Measuring your daily oils can be tricky—knowing what you add while cooking or baking is one thing. But oil is naturally part of some foods.

HERE'S A TIP

The suggested amounts of oils are usually given in grams—how would you measure that? A teaspoon of oil has about 4.5 grams of fat.

HOW MUCH OIL IS IN:

Half a medium avocado has 3 teaspoons of oil

Four large ripe olives have ½ teaspoon of oil

Tablespoon of peanut butter has 2 teaspoons of oil

Ounce of dry-roasted nuts has 3 teaspoons of oil

Ounce of sunflower seeds has 3 teaspoons of oil

Tablespoon of mayonnaise (not mayonnaise-type salad dressing) has 2½ teaspoons of oil

The USDA Food Patterns

Solid Fats and Added Sugars (SoFAS)

CAN NICK FOLLOW HIS CALORIE PLAN *and still have a glazed donut on Sunday morning?*

Maybe Nick can still enjoy a Sunday treat. For most people, the USDA Food Patterns allow extra calories every day for solid fats and added sugars in the processed foods they eat. If Nick can meet his goals in each food group, choosing foods that are low in fat and without added sugar whenever possible, he might just have some calories left over each day. These extra calories can be used as he likes. On Sunday mornings, Nick could have a glazed donut—as long as he counts it as a grain and doesn't go over his suggested limits for SoFAS.

HERE'S A TIP

Eating meats that are not lean, milk products that are not low-fat or fat-free, or foods with added fats and/or sugars count toward your daily SoFAS limit. That's why you should always try to make low-fat or fat-free choices in all food groups.

MYPLATE FOR OLDER ADULTS

The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010* present a general outline for a healthy diet. But, as you age, some foods may be better than others for staying healthy and reducing your chance of illness. In 2011, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging at Tufts University created MyPlate for Older Adults as a companion to MyPlate, the federal government's food group symbol.

MyPlate for Older Adults highlights the unique nutritional and physical activity needs of people as they age. It gives examples of foods that have high levels of vitamins and minerals in each serving. Like the federal government's *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010*, MyPlate recommends limiting foods that are high in *trans* fats and saturated fats, limiting salt and added sugars, and eating plenty of whole grains.

MyPlate for Older Adults

Copyright 2011 Tufts University. For details about the MyPlate for Older Adults, please see http://nutrition.tufts.edu/research/myplate-older-adults.

The DASH Eating Plan

THE SPENCERS' NEIGHBOR, CARLOS, *just learned that his blood pressure is a little high. This news makes him especially curious about the DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) Plan. His parents already have high blood pressure (hypertension), so this approach to eating might be a good way for him to reduce his chance of getting high blood pressure. And he wants to be able to tell his parents more about DASH.*

The DASH Plan presents a slightly different way to look at how you eat. A number of major research studies have shown that following the DASH Plan can lower blood pressure. It emphasizes whole grains, fruits, vegetables, fat-free or low-fat dairy, seafood, poultry, beans, seeds, and nuts. It contains less salt and sodium, sweets, added sugars, fats, and red meats than the typical American eats.

DASH recommendations are spread over eight food groups. If you need to, refer back to the "How many calories do you need?" box on page 7. Then see below for the amounts you should eat each day, unless given as weekly amounts:

DASH PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SEVERAL DAILY CALORIE COUNT EXAMPLES

	1,600 calories	2,000 calories	2,600 calories
Grains	6 servings	6-8 servings	10-11 servings
Fruits	4 servings	4-5 servings	5-6 servings
Vegetables	3-4 servings	4-5 servings	5-6 servings
Fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products	2-3 servings	2-3 servings	3 servings
Lean meat, poultry, and fish	3-4 ounces or less	6 ounces or less	6 ounces or less
Nuts, seeds, and legumes	3-4 servings per week	4-5 servings per week	1 serving per day
Fats and oils	2 servings	2-3 servings	3 servings
Sweets and added sugars	3 servings or less per week	5 servings or less per week	less than 2 servings per day

DASH is organized by servings for most food groups. A DASH serving equals:

Grains. One ounce or equivalent

Fruits. Half cup cut-up fruit or equivalent

Vegetables. Half cup cooked vegetables or equivalent

Meats, poultry, and fish. One ounce cooked meats, poultry, or fish or one egg

Nuts, seeds, and legumes. Foods like two tablespoons peanut butter, third cup or 1½ ounces of nuts, half cup cooked beans, or one cup bean soup

Fats and oils. One teaspoon soft margarine or vegetable oil, one tablespoon mayonnaise, and one tablespoon regular salad dressing or two tablespoons low-fat dressing

Sugars. One tablespoon jam or jelly, half cup regular jello, or one cup regular lemonade

ADDED SUGARS

With both eating plans, added sugars mean more calories without more nutrients. For some people, added sugars can lead to higher levels of fats in the blood, raising their risk of heart disease. Read the ingredients label to see if the processed food you are eating has added sugar. Key words on the label to look for: brown sugar, corn sweetener, corn syrup, dextrose, fructose, fruit juice concentrate, glucose, high-fructose corn syrup, honey, invert sugar, lactose, maltose, malt syrup, molasses, raw sugar, sucrose, sugar, and maple syrup.

More Help with Healthy Eating

CARLOS IS 63. *When he was growing up, he loved his mother Rosa's homemade frijoles refritos. But now he is trying to make wiser food choices, and he knows that those refried beans were high in fat. After learning about the* Dietary Guidelines, *Carlos is trying to decide which eating plan to follow. He has some questions. Can he have snacks? Does he have to measure everything he eats? And where can he get information about those Nutrition Facts labels?*

Snacking

Snacks are okay, as long as they are smart food choices. If you want an afternoon pick-me-up or after-dinner snack, have a piece of fruit, or spread peanut butter or low-fat cream cheese on whole wheat toast. Don't forget to include snacks in your daily food count. For example, one tablespoon of peanut butter spread on a slice of whole wheat toast counts toward the grains group and the protein foods group. Some ideas for healthy snacking include:

- Have an ounce of cheese with some whole-grain crackers, a container of low-fat or fat-free yogurt, or some low-fat popcorn.
- Put fruit instead of candy in the bowl on your coffee table.
- Keep a container of cleaned, raw vegetables in the fridge.
- If you want some chips or nuts, don't eat from the bag. Count out a serving, and put the bag away.

HERE'S A TIP

When you are out and need a snack, don't be tempted by a candy bar. Instead, take along some fruit or raw vegetables in a plastic bag when you go out.

HERE'S A TIP

Portion size can be a very real problem when eating out. To keep your portion sizes under control, try ordering one or two small appetizers instead of a large entrée. Or, you could share an entrée with a friend, or eat just half, and ask for a take-out container for the rest. Put the leftovers in the fridge as soon as possible. Then enjoy them the next day for lunch or dinner.

Servings and Portions

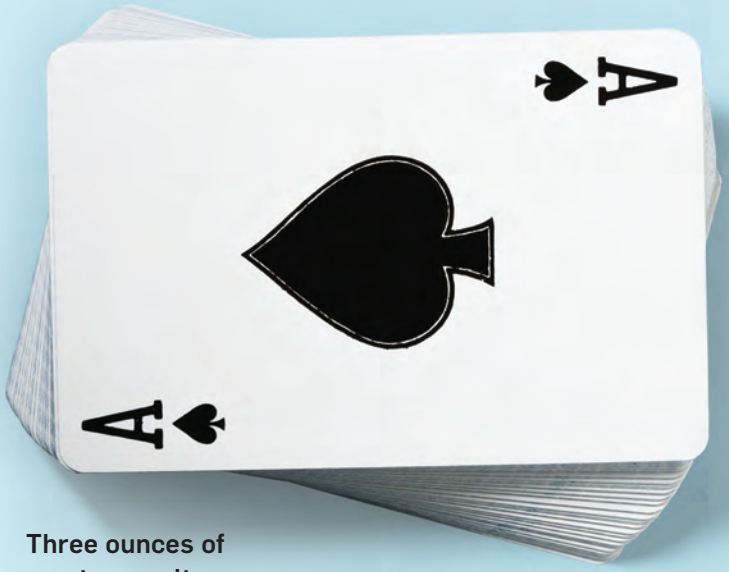
Do you have to measure or weigh everything you eat? Not really. Some people find it helps to measure things carefully at first, but once you get used to your new eating plan, strict measuring probably won't be necessary. But, what exactly is a serving? And is that different from a portion?

The word "serving" can have different meanings depending on how it is used. A DASH Plan serving is how much of each food you should eat to meet the plan's daily recommendation. (See page 29 to learn more about serving sizes on the Nutrition Facts label).

The term "portion" means how much of a single food is actually on your dish—a portion size can vary from meal to meal. For example, one restaurant might serve larger portions than another.

Here are some pictures to help you understand about how much you are eating.

Two tablespoons cream cheese = GOLF BALL



Three ounces of meat or poultry = DECK OF CARDS

1-1½ ounces cheese =
FOUR DICE

Three ounces grilled/baked fish =
CHECKBOOK

One cup cooked vegetables, salad, or baked potato =
BASEBALL

Here are some more examples:

Half cup fruit, beans, rice, noodles, or ice cream =
CUPCAKE WRAPPER, HALF OF A BASEBALL

One teaspoon margarine or oil =
TIP OF FIRST FINGER

One pancake or tortilla =
COMPACT DISC OR DVD

Quarter cup raisins =
LARGE EGG

3 ounces of meat or poultry =
PALM OF HAND

Reading the Label

Reading labels can help you make good food choices. Processed and packaged foods and drinks—you'll find them in cans, boxes, bottles, jars, and bags—have a lot of nutrition and food safety information on their labels or packaging. Look for:

Product dates. You might see one of three types of product dates on some foods you buy:

- "Sell by" tells how long the store can sell foods like meat, poultry, eggs, or milk products—buy it before this date
- "Use by" tells how long the food will be at peak quality—if you buy or use it after that date, some foods might not be safe any longer
- "Best if used by" (or "best if used before") tells how long the food has the best flavor or quality—it is not a purchase or safety date

Ingredients list. This tells you everything that a processed food contains. Did you know that the items are presented from largest to smallest ingredient? That is, there is more of the first ingredient listed on the label than any other ingredient. The last ingredient on the list is found in the smallest amount.

Nutrition Facts label. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requires a Nutrition Facts label on all processed food. You can find nutrition information for fresh vegetables and fruits from sources like *www.nutrition.gov*. Click on "Look up calories or nutrients in food." Or you can call the USDA's Food and Nutrition Information Center at 1-301-504-5414.

The Nutrition Facts label is all white with black letters. You can see a sample label on the following page, along with a few key things to know about it. To learn more about the information on this label, go to *www.fda.gov*, search "labeling and nutrition," and choose "Nutrition Facts Label Programs & Materials."

At the top, you will find the FDA definition of a serving of that food or drink and the number of servings in the container. The rest of the nutrition information on the label is for one serving, not for the whole package or bottle. If a can or package holds two servings and you eat the whole thing, you have eaten double all the numbers on the Nutrition Facts label—twice the calories, twice the fat, twice the protein, twice the %DV, and so on.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup (228g)
Serving Per Container 2

Amount Per Serving

Calories 250	Calories from Fat 120
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 13g	**20%**
Saturated Fat 5g	**25%**
Trans Fat 2g	
Cholesterol 30mg	**10%**
Sodium 680mg	**28%**
Total Carbohydrate 31g	**10%**
Dietary Fiber 0g	**0%**
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	

Vitamin A 4%	•	Vitamin C 2%
Calcium 15%	•	Iron 4%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	85g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		350g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Daily Value (DV) is how much of each nutrient most people need each day. The %DV says what part (as a percent) of the total daily recommendation for a nutrient is in a serving. The Daily Value is based on eating 2,000 calories each day, so if you are eating fewer calories and eat a serving of this food, your %DV will be higher than you see on the label.

HERE'S A TIP

If a food has 5% of the Daily Value or less, it is *low* in that nutrient. If it has 20% or more, it is *high* in that nutrient. Low or high can be either good or bad—it depends on whether you need more of a nutrient (like fiber) or less (like fat).

CARLOS'S SISTER SOFIA *was surprised last week. She had been drinking a bottle of iced tea every day with her lunch. But when she read the label, she discovered that each bottle was 2½ servings!*

That's right. Manufacturers might put more than one serving in a container that looks like it is for one person. That soft drink or frozen pot pie dinner you were planning on having all by yourself might contain two or more servings. And that's not just for packaged foods. Some bagels are so large they can equal two or more grains group servings. Pay attention to the measured size—you can't assume these servings match those in the USDA Food Patterns or DASH plan.

Important Nutrients to Know

ESTHER AND STEVEN *both go to Dr. Wang for their general medical care. Recently, she told Esther that her blood sugar is in the prediabetic range and suggested Esther lose a few pounds and start exercising regularly. Dr. Wang also talked to her about changing the amount of protein and carbohydrates she eats. Then it was Steven's turn. His cholesterol has gone up recently. Dr. Wang wanted him to start reducing the fat in his diet. That was going to be especially hard for Steven who loved the chips and buffalo wings with blue cheese dressing that were served when he and his friends played cards on Thursday nights. Dr. Wang surprised them both when she said Steven's bone density was a little low. They didn't know older men could have problems with bone strength. Dr. Wang suggested they both exercise and get extra calcium and vitamin D to protect bone strength.*

Your body needs nutrients to survive and stay healthy. There are five main types—proteins, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins and minerals, and water. What does each of these nutrients do in your body? What foods are they found in?

Proteins

Proteins are often called the body's building blocks. They are used to build and repair tissues. They help you fight infection. Your body uses extra protein for energy. Good sources of protein are seafood, lean meat and poultry, eggs, beans and peas, soy products, and unsalted nuts and seeds. Protein is also found in dairy products. Protein from plant sources tends to be lower in fat and cholesterol and provides fiber and other health-promoting nutrients.

HERE'S A TIP

Foods in each group have different nutrients. Picking an assortment from every food group throughout the week will help you get many nutrients. And the variety of foods will make your meals more interesting.

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are the body's main source of energy. There are two types of carbohydrates: simple and complex. *Simple carbohydrates* are found in fruits, vegetables, and milk products, as well as in sweeteners like sugar, honey, and syrup and foods like candy, soft drinks, and frosting or icing. *Complex carbohydrates* are found in breads, cereals, pasta, rice, beans and peas, and starchy vegetables such as potatoes, green peas, and corn.

Many carbohydrates also supply fiber. *Fiber* is a type of complex carbohydrate found in foods that come from plants—fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, beans, and whole grains. Eating food with fiber can prevent stomach or intestinal problems, such as constipation. It might also help lower cholesterol and blood sugar.

HERE'S A TIP

Cholesterol is a fat-like substance found in some foods. Your body needs some cholesterol.

Fats

Fats also give you energy and help you feel satisfied after eating. Oils, shortening, butter, and margarine are types of fats, and mayonnaise, salad dressings, table cream, and sour cream are high in fat. Foods from animal sources and certain foods like seeds, nuts, avocado, and coconut also contain fat. There are different categories of fats—some are healthier than others:

Monounsaturated. These include canola oil, olive oil, peanut oil, and safflower oil. They are found in avocados, peanut butter, and some nuts and seeds.

Polyunsaturated. Some are corn oil, soybean oil, and flaxseed oil. They are also found in fatty fish, walnuts, and some seeds.

Saturated. These fats are found in red meat, milk products including butter, and palm and coconut oils. Regular cheese, pizza, and grain-based and dairy desserts are common sources of saturated fat in our meals.

***Trans* fats (*trans* fatty acids).** Processed *trans* fats are found in stick margarine and vegetable shortening. *Trans* fats are often used in store-bought baked goods and fried foods at some fast-food restaurants.

You can tell monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats because they are liquid at room temperature. These types of fat seem to lower your chance of heart disease. But that doesn't mean you can eat more than the *Dietary Guidelines* suggest. *Trans* fats and saturated fats are usually solid at room temperature. *Trans* fat and saturated fat can put you at greater risk for heart disease and should be limited.

Vitamins and Minerals

Vitamins. Vitamins help your body grow and work the way it should. There are 13 vitamins—vitamins C, A, D, E, K, and the B vitamins (thiamine, riboflavin, niacin, pantothenic acid, biotin, B_6, B_{12}, and folate). Vitamins have different jobs—helping you resist infections, keeping your nerves healthy, and helping your body get energy from food or your blood to clot properly. By following the *Dietary Guidelines*, you will get enough of most of these vitamins from food.

Vitamins and minerals are measured in a variety of ways. The most common are:

- mg – milligram
- mcg – microgram
- IU – international unit

Micrograms are used to measure very small amounts—there are 1,000 micrograms in a milligram. The size of an international unit varies depending on the vitamin or drug it is used to measure.

Your doctor might suggest that, like some older adults, you need extra of a few vitamins, as well as the mineral calcium. It is usually better to get the nutrients you need from food, rather than a pill. That's because nutrient-dense foods contain other things that are good for you like fiber. Look for foods fortified with certain vitamins and minerals, like some B vitamins, calcium, and vitamin D. That means those nutrients are added to the foods to help you meet your needs.

Most older people don't need a complete multivitamin supplement. But if you don't think you are making the best food choices, look for a supplement sold as a complete vitamin and mineral supplement. It should be well balanced and contain 100% of most recommended vitamins and minerals. Read the label to make sure the dose is not too large. Avoid supplements with mega-doses. Too much of some

vitamins and minerals can be harmful, and you might be paying for supplements you don't need.

Minerals. Minerals also help your body function. Some minerals, like iodine and fluoride, are only needed in very small quantities. Others, such as calcium, magnesium, and potassium, are needed in larger amounts. As with vitamins, if you eat a varied diet, you will probably get enough of most minerals.

VITAMIN/MINERAL SUPPLEMENTS FOR PEOPLE OVER AGE 50

Vitamin D	If you are age 50–70, you need at least 600 IU, but not more than 4,000 IU. If you are age 70 and older, you need at least 800 IU, but not more than 4,000 IU. You can get vitamin D from fatty fish, fish liver oils, fortified milk and milk products, and fortified cereals.
Vitamin B_6	Men need 1.7 mg every day. Women need 1.5 mg every day. You can get vitamin B_6 from fortified cereals, whole grains, organ meats like liver, and fortified soy-based meat substitutes.
Vitamin B_{12}	You need 2.4 mcg every day. Some people over age 50 have trouble absorbing the vitamin B_{12} found naturally in foods, so make sure you get enough of the supplement form of this vitamin, such as from fortified foods. You can get vitamin B_{12} from meat, fish, poultry, milk, and fortified cereals.
Folate	You need 400 mcg each day. Folic acid is the form used to fortify grain products or added to dietary supplements. You can get folate from dark-green leafy vegetables like spinach, beans and peas, fruit like oranges and orange juice, and folic acid from fortified flour and fortified cereals.

Calcium is a mineral that is important for strong bones and teeth, so there are special recommendations for older people who are at risk for bone loss. You can get calcium from milk and milk products (remember to choose fat-free or low-fat whenever possible), some forms of tofu, dark-green leafy vegetables (like collard greens and kale), soybeans, canned sardines and salmon with bones, and calcium-fortified foods.

There are several types of calcium supplements. Calcium citrate and calcium carbonate tend to be the least expensive.

CALCIUM FOR PEOPLE OVER 50

Women age 51 and older	Men age 51 to 70	Men age 71 and older
1,200 mg each day	1,000 mg each day	1,200 mg each day

Women and men age 51 and older: Don't take more than 2,000 mg of calcium in a day.

Sodium is another mineral. In most Americans' diets, sodium primarily comes from salt (sodium chloride), though it is naturally found in some foods. Sodium is also added to others during processing, often in the form of salt. We all need some sodium, but too much over time can contribute to raising your blood pressure or put you at risk for heart disease, stroke, or kidney disease.

How much sodium is okay? People 51 and older should reduce their sodium to 1,500 mg each day—that includes sodium added during manufacturing or cooking as well as at the table when eating. That is about ⅔ teaspoon of salt. Preparing your own meals at home without using a lot of processed foods or adding salt will allow you to control how much sodium you get. Look for grocery products marked "low sodium," "unsalted," "no salt added," "sodium free," or "salt free." To limit sodium to 1,500 mg daily, try using less salt when cooking, and don't add salt

HERE'S A TIP

In the case of sodium, don't be confused by the Nutrition Facts label. It uses the recommended level for people 50 and younger, 2,400 mg. Just check the actual milligrams of sodium on the label and keep to the amount recommended for people 51 and older—1,500 mg.

before you take the first bite. If you make this change slowly, you will get used to the difference in taste. Eating more vegetables and fruit also helps—they are naturally low in sodium and provide more potassium.

Water

It's important for your body to have plenty of fluids each day. Water helps you digest food, absorb nutrients from food, and then get rid of the unused waste. Water is found in foods—both solids and liquids, as well as in its natural state.

"BUT I DON'T FEEL THIRSTY"

With age, you might lose some of your sense of thirst. To further complicate matters, some medicines might make it even more important for you to have plenty of fluids. Take sips from a glass of water, milk, or juice between bites during meals. But don't wait for mealtime—try to add liquids throughout the day. For example, have a cup of low-fat soup as an afternoon snack. Drink a full glass of water if you need to take a pill. Have a glass of water before you exercise or go outside to garden or walk, especially on a hot day. Remember, water is a good way to add fluids to your daily routine without adding calories.

Healthy Lifestyle

The Next Step

NICK'S COWORKER MARVIN *fondly thought back to his early 20s when he was the skinny kid on the block and tried so hard to put on weight. His mom had told him the pounds would come. Now he knew she was right. In the 15 years since he turned 40, Marvin has gained more than 15 pounds. What happened? And what should he do about it now?*

As you grow older, if you continue eating the same types and amounts of food but do not become more active, you will probably gain weight. That's because your metabolism (how your body gets energy from food) slows with age. Your body uses less energy, and that means it needs less food to make the energy it needs. The energy your body gets from the nutrients in the food you eat is measured as calories.

You may have heard the phrase "calories in, calories out" or maybe "energy in, energy out." It's true—as a rule of thumb, the more calories you eat, the more active you have to be. Likewise, the reverse is also true—the more active you are, the more calories you need. If you eat more calories than your body uses, you could gain weight. As you age, your body might need less food for energy, but it still needs the same amount of the nutrients we just described. What should you do?

HERE'S A TIP

To learn more about calories, go to *www.fda.gov*, and put "Make Your Calories Count" in the search window. To check how many calories are in a food, go to *www.supertracker.usda.gov/foodapedia.aspx*.

Taking in Calories

Writing down what and how much you eat each day will help you keep track of your total daily calories and also help you see if you are making the best choices. If you and your healthcare provider are worried about weight gain, you should choose *nutrient-dense foods*. These foods give you lots of nutrients without a lot of extra calories. On the other hand, foods that are high in calories for the amount of food are called *calorie dense*. They may or may not have nutrients. High-calorie foods with little nutritional value, like potato chips, sugar-sweetened drinks, candy, baked goods, and alcoholic beverages, are sometimes called "empty calories."

Can choosing a nutrient-dense food instead of a calorie-dense food really make a difference? Below are some examples of nutrient-dense choices side by side with similar foods that are not nutrient-dense, have more calories, or both (from *www.supertracker.usda.gov/foodapedia.aspx*.

Hamburger patty, 4 oz., precooked, extra lean ground beef 167 calories	*or*	**Hamburger patty, 4 oz., precooked, regular ground beef** 235 calories
Large apple, 8 oz. 110 calories	*or*	**Apple pie, eighth of a 2-crust 9" pie** 356 calories
Two slices of 100% whole wheat bread (1 oz. each) 138 calories	*or*	**Medium croissant (2 oz.)** 231 calories
Medium baked potato with peel, 2 tablespoons low-fat sour cream 203 calories	*or*	**French fries, one medium fast-food order** 457 calories
Roasted chicken breast, skinless (3 oz.) 141 calories	*or*	**Fried chicken wings with skin and batter (3 oz.)** 479 calories

Another way to think about the idea of nutrient-dense and calorie-dense foods is to look at a variety of foods that all provide the same calories. Let's say that you wanted to have a snack that contained about 100 calories. You might choose one of these:

- 7- or 8-inch banana
- two ounces baked chicken breast with no skin
- three cups low-fat popcorn
- two regular chocolate-sandwich cookies
- half cup low-fat ice cream
- one scrambled large egg cooked with fat
- 20 peanuts
- half of the average-size candy bar

Which would make a better snack for you? Although these examples all have about 100 calories, there are some big differences:

- banana, chicken, peanuts, or egg are more nutrient dense
- popcorn or chicken are likely to help you feel more satisfied
- chicken, peanuts, or egg have more protein
- cookies, candy, and ice cream have more added sugars

WHAT IS BMI—BODY MASS INDEX?

Your doctor might mention BMI when talking about your weight. Your BMI—body mass index—is a number based on your height and weight that can be compared to a chart to see if you are considered overweight or underweight.

Obesity is a growing problem for all age groups in the United States. In older adults who are overweight, the decision whether to lose some or all of that extra weight is complicated, and BMI is just one factor. Body changes that come with age and health problems may mean that an older person's desired weight is higher than for someone younger. The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, part of NIH, has information on obesity and physical activity at *www.nhlbi.nih.gov* and on BMI at *www.nhlbi.nih.gov/guidelines/obesity/bmi_tbl.htm*. Or you can call NHLBI at 1-301-592-8573 to order publications.

HERE'S A TIP

From time to time, you could keep a food diary. By keeping track of what you are eating for a few days, you might be able to see if you need to be more active to burn off all the calories you are eating.

Burning Calories

We all need to burn off calories to help maintain a healthy body weight for our size and age. You use some calories simply without thinking about it in your day-to-day activities. How active do you have to be beyond that? There is no simple answer. The important thing to remember is that many people need to become more active than they are now, and you might be one of them.

Each person uses different amounts of calories doing the same type of activity. In general, heavier people use more calories. Those who weigh less use fewer. Women also probably use fewer. Experts do not know how the number of calories used during an activity differs for older people compared to those who are younger. As an example, if an average younger man—around 5'10", 154 pounds—eats a wedge of apple pie for dessert (about 356 calories), how long would he have to ride a bicycle to burn off the calories? More than an hour based on some estimates. We don't know if it's the same for you, but whether you would have to ride even longer or a little less, that's still a long time on a bike. And what if you ate an apple (about 110 calories) instead of that pie? You'd have to spend less time on the bike to burn the calories.

Balancing the calories you eat and drink with the calories burned by being physically active helps to maintain a healthy weight. Check your weight once a week. Then you'll know whether you are balancing the calories in and calories out or whether you need to be more active.

How much physical activity? Although any amount of regular physical activity is good for you, aim for at least 150 minutes of physical activity each week. Unless you are already that active, you won't do that much all at once—10-minute sessions several times a day on most days are fine. People over age 65 should be as physically active as their abilities and conditions will allow. Doing anything is better than doing nothing at all.

BALANCING CALORIES (ENERGY) IN AND CALORIES OUT

ENERGY IN = ENERGY OUT	**Maintaining Weight** Your weight will stay the same when the calories you eat and drink equal the calories you burn.
ENERGY IN < ENERGY OUT	**Losing Weight** You will lose weight when the calories you eat and drink are less than the calories you burn.
ENERGY IN > ENERGY OUT	**Gaining Weight** You will gain weight when the calories you eat and drink are greater than the calories you burn.

Most older people can be moderately active. But you might want to talk to your doctor if you aren't used to energetic activity and you want to start a vigorous exercise program or significantly increase your physical activity. You should also check with your doctor if you have health concerns like dizziness, shortness of breath, chest pain or pressure, an irregular heartbeat, blood clots, joint swelling, a hernia, or recent hip or back surgery. Your doctor might have some safety tips or suggest certain types of exercise for you.

You don't have to spend a lot of money joining a gym or hiring a personal trainer. Think about the kinds of physical activities that you enjoy—for example, walking, running, bicycling, gardening, housecleaning, swimming, or dancing. Try to make time to do what you enjoy on most days of the week. And then increase how long you do it, or add another fun activity.

Go4Life®

The National Institute on Aging (NIA) wants you to be more physically active. To help you fit exercise and physical activity into your daily life, NIA created the ***Go4Life*** campaign. ***Go4Life*** offers a variety of free, evidence-based resources for older adults in one convenient spot—*www.nia.nih.gov/Go4Life*.

On the ***Go4Life*** website, you will find:

- sample endurance, strength, balance, and flexibility exercises with print and video demonstrations
- ***My Go4Life***, an interactive tool you can use to set personal exercise goals and track your progress
- motivational tip sheets
- personal success stories
- and much more!

You can also order ***Go4Life*** materials in English and Spanish by calling NIA at 1-800-222-2225 (toll-free).

Go4Life is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Food Shopping

Making the Trip Easier, Saving on the Cost

MARVIN'S NEIGHBOR, SHARISE, *is so busy she often picks up dinner at a fast-food restaurant or the shopping mall. She only stops at the grocery for milk, bread, and snacks or to pick up a prepared meal. Sharise is not sure how to start shopping for healthy food choices and wonders about the cost. Some grocery stores have designed shelf tags or food labels that show which foods are healthier—for example, high fiber, low in sugar, low-fat, or whole grain. If the grocery store Sharise uses has such a program, it will be easier to find healthy foods.*

Shopping for Food That's Good for You

If you have a choice of where to get your groceries, pick a store that is clean and well-supplied. If it is also busy, the stock is probably more likely to turn over quickly and items won't be near their sell-by or use-by date. But don't depend on that—always check the dates.

Many people say a successful trip to the grocery store starts with a shopping list. Throughout the week, try to keep a list of food and supplies you need. Keeping to a list helps you follow a budget because you will be less likely to buy on impulse. You can find a prepared grocery list that will help you choose healthy types of foods on page 68 in Appendix 1.

When making your shopping list, check your staples. These include items like cereal; flour; sugar; cans of low-sodium soup, fruit, and tuna fish; bags of frozen vegetables or fruit; frozen or bottled 100% juice; powdered, dry milk or ultra-pasteurized milk in a shelf carton; pasta; and low-sodium spaghetti sauce in a jar. Staples are nice to have around if you can't go grocery shopping.

HERE'S A TIP

If you live alone and still enjoy cooking, talk to a friend who might not enjoy cooking as much as you do. Offer to cook a meal or two if he or she will grocery shop for you.

SHARISE STOPPED BY *her parents' house recently and was surprised to see so little food in the fridge. When she was growing up, the fridge was always packed. Her parents explained they just hadn't felt like going to the store.*

HERE'S A TIP

The USDA Cooperative Extension Service has dollar-stretching recipes. You can find your local office at *www.csrees.usda.gov/Extension* or by calling a local library or county government for the phone number.

A trip to the grocery store can be a chore for anyone, but as you get older, you might have some new reasons for not going. For example, getting around a big food store might be difficult. What can you do? Some stores have motorized carts, which you can use. Ask if there is an employee who can help you reach things or push your cart. If your store has a pharmacy department, you might find a seat there if you get tired. Plan to shop at a time of day when you are rested. And if it's a busy store, try to pick a time when it might not be so crowded; that way you won't have to stand in a long check-out line. Check with your local Area Agency on Aging to see if there are volunteers in your area who can help.

Some people think a grocery delivery service is helpful. You'll want to ask about fees and other charges before deciding if this service would work for you. Many require access to a computer for ordering.

Shopping for healthy foods, especially fresh fruits and vegetables, might be hard where you live. People who live in rural areas or some city neighborhoods often have trouble finding larger supermarkets. Instead, they have to shop at convenience stores and small neighborhood markets. Sometimes smaller stores have limited selections of fresh foods. You might try talking to the managers or owners. Let them know that you and others are interested in buying more fresh fruits and vegetables, whole-grain products, and low-fat milk products.

Try to find a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) group. CSAs are membership or

subscription groups that allow you to buy in-season fruits and vegetables directly from farmers. You agree to buy produce from a participating local farmer, and each week you receive a box, bag, or basket of a variety of the food being harvested at that time. LocalHarvest is one organization that can help you find a CSA in your area. You can go to their website, *www.localharvest.org*, or call 1-831-515-5602.

If you can find a farmers' market or vegetable stand nearby during the growing season, fruits and vegetables might cost less than in the grocery store. LocalHarvest can also direct you to farmers' markets in your area. Your local government might have a listing of farmers' markets. Or you can search online at *http://search.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets*. You might also be able to get some help from the federal government to pay for vegetables and fruits from farmers' markets through the Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, *www.fns.usda.gov/wic/SeniorFMNP/SFMNPmenu.htm*. They provide coupons you can use at farmers' markets and roadside stands.

Help with Food Costs

Even when you know which foods you should choose for your health, being able to pay for those foods might be hard, especially if you are on a fixed income. Start by deciding how much you can afford to spend on food. There are websites that can help you plan a food budget. For example, the USDA supports such a website through Iowa State University, *www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsavings*. This website also has inexpensive recipes based on the *Dietary Guidelines*. If you don't have access to the Internet, you can call the Iowa State University Extension offices at 1-515-296-5883. Their staff will help you develop a food budget.

Once you have a budget, read the store ads in the newspaper to see what is on sale. Try to plan some meals around featured items, and pick up some extra canned goods or staples that are on sale. But, stocking up on sale items only makes good sense if they are foods you would buy anyway. And check the expiration or use-by date. A product might be on sale because it is almost out of date. Choose items with dates farthest in the future.

Some ways to save money when grocery shopping are:

- Ask your local grocery stores if they have a senior discount or a loyalty or discount card. Besides getting items at a lower price, you may also get store coupons.

- Use coupons to help you save money. Remember that coupons only help if they are for things you would buy anyway. Sometimes, another brand costs less even after you use the coupon.
- Consider store brands—they usually cost less. These products are made under a special label, sometimes with the store name. You might have to look on shelves that are higher or lower than eye level to find them.
- Be aware that convenience costs more. You can often save money if you are willing to do a little work. For example, buy whole chickens and cut them into parts; shred or grate your own cheese; make your own yogurt smoothie; and avoid instant rice or instant oatmeal. Bagged salad mixes cost more and might not stay fresh as long as a head of lettuce.
- Look at unit prices. Those small stickers on the shelves tell you the price, but also the unit price—how much the item costs per ounce, per pound, or for a standard number. Compare unit prices to see which brand is the best value.
- Try to buy in bulk, but only buy a size you can use before it goes bad. If you buy meat in bulk, decide what you need to use that day and freeze the rest in portion-sized packages right away.
- Focus on economical fruits and vegetables like bananas, apples, oranges, cabbage, sweet potatoes, dark-green leafy vegetables, green peppers, and regular carrots.
- Think about the foods you throw away. For less waste, buy or cook only what you need.
- Resist temptations at the checkout. Those snack foods and candy are put there for impulse buying. Save money *and* avoid empty calories!
- Choose less red meat, processed foods, baked goods, and snacks. You'll save money and make smart food choices too.

No matter how careful you are, the cost of food can still eat up a big part of your budget. There may be additional help. Here are some federal government programs:

SNAP, *www.fns.usda.gov/snap*. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (the program in your state may have a different name), 1-800-221-5689. This used to be called Food Stamps. A special debit card can be used to buy most types of food, as well as seeds and plants to grow food.

Child and Adult Care Food Program, *www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/child-and-adult-care-food-program*. Provides meals and snacks to eligible older adults taking part in adult day care programs.

Commodity Supplemental Food Program, *www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/csfp*. Provides some vegetables, fruits, grain products, dry beans, and canned meats to eligible older people to supplement their own food.

Emergency Food Assistance Program, *www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/tefap*. Provides food needed by low-income older adults who might not have enough to eat.

There are also private groups working with older people to help them get enough food:

Feeding America, *www.feedingamerica.org*. 1-800-771-2303. Runs food pantries, soup kitchens, and community kitchens.

Food Bank Locator, *www.feedingamerica.org/foodbank-results.aspx*.

National Hunger Hotline, *www.whyhunger.org*. 1-866-348-6479. The Hotline can help people in need find emergency food supplies and government assistance programs.

While some older people have trouble finding enough money to buy food, others need help preparing meals. There are a variety of groups around the country that deliver meals to people who have trouble getting out of their homes. These groups usually offer one hot meal a day. One of the largest is the Meals on Wheels Association of America.

NATIONAL RESOURCES FOR LOCATING HELP WITH FOOD COSTS

There are several ways to learn more about programs that offer help with meals or food costs. You could contact each program listed above separately, or you could use one of these services:

- **Eldercare Locator,** *www.eldercare.gov* or call 1-800-677-1116 (toll-free)
- **Federal and state benefit information,** *www.benefits.gov* or call 1-800-333-4636 (toll-free)
- **National Council on Aging,** *www.benefitscheckup.org*

Making Sure Your Food is Safe

ED'S MOM *recently spent several days in the hospital because she got very sick after eating a hamburger that had not been cooked to the recommended temperature. She recovered, but now the whole family is more concerned about the safety of the foods they eat.*

Food can be unsafe for many reasons. It might be contaminated by germs—microbes such as bacteria, viruses, or fungi-like molds. These microbes might have been present before the food was harvested or collected, or they could have been introduced during handling or preparation. In either case, the food might look fine but could make you very sick. Food can also be unsafe because it has "gone bad." Sometimes you may see mold growing on the surface.

HERE'S A TIP

For more free information on food safety, visit www.fsis.usda.gov. Under "Topics," click "Fact Sheets," or you can call the USDA Meat & Poultry Hotline at 1-888-674-6854.

Avoid Getting Sick from Your Food

For an older person, a food-related illness can be life threatening. As you age, you have more trouble fighting off microbes. Health problems, like diabetes or kidney disease, also make you more likely to get sick from eating foods that are unsafe. So if you are over age 65, be very careful about how food is prepared and stored.

Foods that might make you sick. There are some foods that can be dangerous for an older person no matter what—so, if you are over 65, the USDA recommends you avoid:

- raw or undercooked fish, shellfish, meat, and poultry
- refrigerated smoked fish (for example, lox)
- hot dogs, deli meats, and luncheon meats (unless these are reheated to 165° F)
- raw or unpasteurized milk and milk products
- soft cheeses made from unpasteurized milk, including feta, brie, camembert, blue, and queso fresco
- raw or undercooked eggs or egg product, as found in cookie dough, eggnog, and some salad dressings
- raw sprouts
- unwashed fresh vegetables including lettuce
- unpasteurized juice from fruits and vegetables

Taste and smell. As you grow older, your senses of taste and smell might change. Or medicines might make things taste different. If you can't rely on your sense of taste or smell to tell that food is spoiled, be extra careful about how you handle your food. If something might not look, smell, or taste right, throw it out—don't take a chance with your health.

Storage. Food safety starts with storing your food properly. Sometimes that's as simple as following directions on the container. For example, if the label says "refrigerate after opening," do that! It's also a good idea to keep any canned and packaged items in a cool place.

When you are ready to use a packaged food, check the date on the label. That bottle of juice might have been in your cabinet so long it is now out of date. (See page 28 to learn more about understanding the date on the food label.)

Try to use refrigerated leftovers within 3 or 4 days to reduce your risk of food poisoning. Throw away foods older than that or those that show moldy areas.

Food Safety When Cooking

When preparing foods, follow four basic steps—clean, separate, cook, and chill.

Clean. Wash your hands and the counter with hot, soapy water, and make sure your utensils are clean before you start to prepare food. Clean the lids of cans before opening. Rinse fruits and vegetables under running water, but do not use soap or detergent. Do not rinse raw meat or poultry before cooking—you might contaminate other things by splashing disease-causing microbes around without realizing it.

Keep your refrigerator clean, especially the vegetable and meat bins. When there is a spill, use hot soapy water to clean it up.

Separate. Keep raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs (and their juices and shells) away from foods that won't be cooked. That begins in your grocery cart—put raw vegetables and fruit in one part of the cart, maybe the top part. Things like meat should be put in the plastic bags the store offers and placed in a separate part of the cart. At check-out, make sure the raw meat and seafood aren't mixed with other items in your bags. When you get home, keep things like raw meat separate from fresh fruit and vegetables (even in your refrigerator). Don't let the raw meat juices drip on foods that won't be cooked before they are eaten.

When you are cooking, it is also important to keep ready-to-eat foods like fresh produce or bread apart from food that will be cooked. Make sure your hands, counter, and cutting boards are clean before you begin. Use a different knife and cutting board for fresh produce than you use for raw meat, poultry, and seafood. Or, use one set, and cut all the fresh produce before handling

HERE'S A TIP

Remember to rinse all fruits and vegetables under running water, even if you plan to peel them before eating. That's because it's easy to transfer bacteria from the peel or rind to the inside of your fruits and veggies when you're cutting.

HERE'S A TIP

Why is it safe for my steak to be pink in the middle, but not my hamburger? When meat is ground to make hamburger, bacteria can be spread throughout the meat. A higher cooking temperature is needed to kill the bacteria inside. But, in a solid piece of meat, any possible bacteria remain on the outer surface where they are killed more quickly.

foods that will be cooked. Wash your utensils and cutting board in hot soapy water or the dishwasher, and clean the counter and your hands afterwards. If you put raw meat, poultry, or seafood on a plate, wash the plate in hot soapy water before reusing it for cooked food.

Cook. Use a food thermometer, put in the thickest part of the food you are cooking, to check that the inside has reached the right temperature. The chart below shows what the temperature inside food should be before you stop cooking it. No more runny fried eggs or hamburgers that are pink in the middle.

Bring sauces, marinades, soups, and gravy to a boil when reheating.

USDA-RECOMMENDED SAFE MINIMUM INTERNAL TEMPERATURES

All meats and seafood	145 °F (with a 3-minute rest time)
All ground meats	160 °F
Egg dishes	160 °F
All poultry	165 °F
Hot dogs and luncheon meats	165 °F

No matter what temperature you set your oven at, the temperature inside your food needs to reach the level shown here to be safe.

Chill. Keeping foods cold slows the growth of microbes, so your refrigerator should always be at 40 °F or below. The freezer should be at 0 °F or below. But just because you set the thermostat for 40 °F doesn't mean it actually reaches that temperature. Use refrigerator/freezer thermometers to check.

Put food in the refrigerator within 2 hours of buying or cooking it. If the outside temperature is over 90 °F, refrigerate within 1 hour. Put leftovers in a clean, shallow container that is covered and dated. Use or freeze leftovers within 3 to 4 days. You can find refrigerator and freezer storage times for common foods in Appendix 3 on page 76.

HERE'S A TIP

You may have always thought you should let hot foods cool before putting them in the refrigerator. Not true. Putting hot food items in the fridge as soon as possible will keep bacteria from growing in your food. Divide food into smaller portions, place in shallow containers, and refrigerate.

Eating Out

It's nice to take a break from cooking or get together with others for a meal at a restaurant. But, do you think about food safety when you eat out? You should. Pick a place that looks clean. If your city or state requires restaurants to post a cleanliness rating near the front door, check it out. Don't be afraid to ask the waiter or waitress how items on the menu are prepared. For example, could you have the tuna cooked well instead of seared? Or, if you find out the Caesar salad dressing is made with raw eggs, ask for another salad dressing. Consider avoiding buffets. Sometimes food in buffets sits out for a while and might not be kept at the proper temperature—whether hot or cold. If you take leftovers home, get them into the refrigerator within 2 hours—sooner if the temperature outside is above 90 °F.

Everyday Healthy Eating

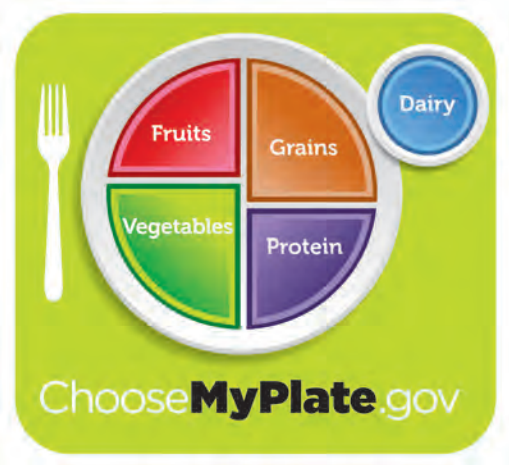
Sample Menus and Recipes

NICK AND DIANA NOW REALIZE *that they were right about making changes to their lifestyle. They did some research and now have a much better idea of the types and amounts of foods they should be choosing every meal and have already started increasing their daily physical activity. But they haven't been cooking a lot in recent years and aren't so sure about how to put healthy meals together. Where can they find ideas?*

Still not exactly sure what to eat? To get you started, here are resources with some sample menus, many of which provide about 2,000 calories a day. Of course, the exact calorie count can vary, depending on preparation and ingredients. Nevertheless, these should give you an idea of how to plan meals around the *Dietary Guidelines* suggestions.

Sample menus and exchange lists for 1,200- and 1,600-calorie menus are available at *www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/lose_wt/sampmenu.htm*. This website offers examples of traditional American cuisine, Asian-American cuisine, southern cuisine, Mexican-American cuisine, and lacto-ovo vegetarian cuisine.

You can also get personalized menu planning help based on the *Dietary Guidelines* at *www.choosemyplate.gov*—your own Daily Food Plan. At this website, you'll also find a lot more information about the food groups and how to follow the 2010 *Dietary Guidelines*. We've included four of their 2,000-calorie sample menus in Appendix 2, starting on page 72.



Economical and tasty recipes that follow the *Dietary Guidelines* and include nutrition facts label information are available online in English and Spanish at *http://recipefinder.nal.usda.gov*.

Sample menus and some recipes for the DASH eating plan are available from NIH's National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI). *Your Guide to Lowering Your Blood Pressure with DASH* is available online at *www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/hbp/dash/new_dash.pdf*, or see *For More Information* to learn how to contact NHLBI.

Some federal government websites with recipes for healthy dishes, including nutrition information, are:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
www.nutrition.gov/recipes

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy_eating/recipes.html

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
https://healthyeating.nhlbi.nih.gov

Roadblocks to Healthy Eating

SHARISE WANTS TO HELP *her parents make smart food choices, but each parent has special needs. How can she make it a little easier for her mom and dad to have a healthier lifestyle too?*

There are some common problems that can make it harder for older people to follow through on smart food choices. Here are some problem-solving suggestions:

Are you tired of cooking or eating alone? Maybe you are tired of planning and cooking dinners every night. Have you considered some potluck meals? If everyone brings one part of the meal, cooking is a lot easier, and there might be leftovers to share. Or try cooking with a friend to make a meal you can enjoy together. Also look into having some meals at a nearby senior center, community center, or religious facility. Not only will you enjoy a free or low-cost meal, but you will have some company while you eat.

Do you have problems chewing food? Do you avoid some foods because they are hard to chew? People who have problems with their teeth or dentures often avoid eating meat, fruits, or vegetables and might miss out on important nutrients. If you are having trouble chewing, see your dentist to check for problems. If you wear dentures, the dentist can check how they fit.

Is it sometimes hard to swallow your food? If food seems to get stuck in your throat, it might be that less saliva in your mouth is making it hard for you to swallow your food. Drinking plenty of liquids with your meal might help. Talk to your doctor about what might be causing your dry mouth and the problem swallowing.

Does food taste different? Are foods not as tasty as they used to be? It might not be the cook's fault! Maybe your sense of taste, smell, or both has changed. Growing older can cause your senses to change, but so can a variety of other things such as dental problems or medication side effects. Taste and smell are important for healthy appetite and eating.

Do you feel sad and don't want to eat? Feeling blue now and then is normal, but if you continue to feel sad, ask your doctor for help. Being unhappy can cause a loss of appetite. Help might be available. For example, you might need to talk with someone trained to work with people who are depressed.

Are you just not hungry? Maybe you are not sad, but just can't eat very much. Changes to your body as you age can cause some people to feel full sooner than they did when younger. Or lack of appetite might be the side effect of a medicine you are taking—your doctor might be able to suggest a different drug.

Try being more physically active. In addition to all the other benefits of exercise and physical activity, it may make you hungrier.

If you aren't hungry because food just isn't appealing, there are ways to make it more interesting. Make sure your foods are seasoned well, but not with extra salt. Try using lemon juice, vinegar, or herbs to boost the flavor of your food.

Vary the shape, color, and texture of foods you eat. When you go shopping, look for a new vegetable, fruit, or seafood you haven't tried before or one you haven't eaten in a while. Sometimes grocery stores have recipe cards near items. Or ask the produce staff or meat or seafood department staff for suggestions about preparing the new food. Find recipes online. Type the name of a food and the word "recipes" into a search window to look for ideas.

Foods that are overcooked tend to have less flavor. Try cooking or steaming your vegetables for a shorter time, and see if that gives them a crunch that will help spark your interest.

HERE'S A TIP

It's never too late to learn some cooking skills—or refresh those you might not have used in a while. You can go online to find information on basic cooking techniques and recipes for one person. Borrow simple cookbooks from your local library, or try an adult education cooking course. TV cooking shows might be helpful—they often show you step-by-step how to prepare and cook foods. Some grocery stores are even beginning to have cooking coaches available to answer your cooking questions.

Do you have trouble getting enough calories? If you aren't eating enough, add snacks throughout the day to help you get more nutrients and calories. Snacks can be healthy—for example, raw vegetables with a low-fat dip or hummus, low-fat cheese and whole-grain crackers, or a piece of fruit. Unsalted nuts or nut butters are nutrient-dense snacks that give you added protein. You could try putting shredded low-fat cheese on your soup or popcorn or sprinkling nuts or wheat germ on yogurt or cereal.

If you are eating so little that you are losing weight but don't need to, your doctor might suggest protein and energy supplements. Sometimes these help undernourished people gain a little weight. If so, they should be used as snacks between meals or after dinner, not in place of a meal and not right before one. Ask your doctor how to choose a supplement.

Do your physical problems make it hard to eat? Sometimes illnesses like Parkinson's disease, stroke, or arthritis can make it harder for you to cook or feed yourself. Your doctor might recommend an occupational therapist. He or she might suggest rearranging things in your kitchen, make a custom splint for your hand, or give you special exercises to strengthen your muscles.

Devices like special utensils and plates might make meal time easier or help with food preparation. You can search the U.S. Department of Education's website, *www.abledata.com*, for information on products designed to make it easier for people to do things on their own. Or call 1-800-227-0216 (toll-free) to learn more.

Can foods and medicines interact? Medicines can change how food tastes, make your mouth dry, or take away your appetite. In turn, some foods can change how certain medicines work. You might have heard that grapefruit juice is a common culprit when used with any of several drugs. Chocolate, licorice, and alcohol are some of the others. Whenever your doctor prescribes a new drug for you, be sure to ask about any food/drug interactions.

Do you think you are lactose intolerant? Some older people believe they are lactose intolerant because they have uncomfortable stomach and intestinal symptoms when they have dairy products. Your doctor can do tests to learn whether or not you do indeed need to limit or avoid dairy foods when you eat. If so, talk to

your healthcare practitioner about how to meet your calcium and vitamin D needs. Even lactose-intolerant people might be able to have small amounts of milk when taken with food. There are non-dairy food sources of calcium, lactose-free milk and milk products, calcium- and vitamin D-fortified foods, and supplements.

Did you know that weight issues can add to frailty? Older people who don't get enough of the right nutrients can be too thin or too heavy. Some may be too thin because they don't get enough food. But others might be overweight partly because they get too much of the wrong types of foods. Keeping track of what you are eating could help you see which foods you should eat less of, more of, or not at all.

Obesity is a growing problem in the United States, and the number of older people who are overweight or obese is also increasing. But frailty is also a problem, and not just in thin people. As you grow older, you can lose muscle strength, but you also get more fat tissue. This can make you frail, and in time, you might have problems getting around and taking care of yourself. Being overweight puts you more at risk for frailty and disability.

But, just losing weight is not necessarily the answer. That's because sometimes when older people lose weight, they lose even more muscle than they already have lost. That puts them at greater risk for becoming frail and falling. They also might lose bone strength and be at more risk for a broken bone after a fall. Exercise helps you keep muscle and bone. Also, for some people, a few extra pounds late in life can act as a safety net should they get a serious illness that limits how much they can eat for a while.

The 2010 *Dietary Guidelines* encourage people 65 and older who are overweight to try to avoid gaining more weight. But, those who are very overweight (obese) might be helped by intentional weight loss, especially if they are at risk for heart disease, suggest the *Guidelines*. So, if you think you weigh too much, check with your doctor before starting a diet. He or she can decide whether or not losing a few pounds will be good for you and how you can safely lose weight.

A Healthier Future

THE SPENCERS HAVE CHANGED THEIR DIETS, *and so far, their cholesterol levels are a little lower. They are dancing again on Saturday nights at the nearby community center. Nick still has a donut on Sunday morning, but he walks to the bakery. They're always on the lookout for recipes for healthy meals that they can cook together.*

Turns out the DASH Eating Plan was just right for Carlos. He lowered his blood pressure and found healthy snacks to have at work. In fact, his coworkers enjoy sharing his microwave popcorn with him!

Steven still plays poker with his friends but gave up the buffalo wings. Instead, he brings baked wings with fat-free dressing, and most of his poker mates seem to prefer those. Esther's blood sugar is almost back to a normal level—she watches what she eats and, along with Steven, has joined a group of mall walkers.

Marvin is still struggling with his mid-life weight gain, but he's following a ***Go4Life*** *exercise routine. When he rakes leaves, he can tell his endurance has improved.*

Fast food became a thing of the past for Sharise, once she learned how to find healthy foods in the grocery store. Now she shares with others her tips for cooking quick and healthy meals at home. She arranged for her parents to eat at the senior center once a week, and that helped take a weight off her shoulders as well.

When Ed's family eats out, they always pepper the waiter with questions about how food is prepared. But they also leave a nice tip!

The Spencers and their friends, neighbors, and coworkers are all thinking about what's on their plate, and now it's your turn. Changing how you think about food might not be easy at first, but keeping your goal of a healthier lifestyle in mind will help you make better choices about the kinds of food you eat and how much. With a little practice, those choices will become easier and more natural—more a part of your everyday life, so in time you will make them without even thinking.

Keep this book handy and refer to it when you are unsure or need more information. With good nutrition and increased physical activity a part of your daily life, you will be taking charge of your health—maybe even making it better with age.

APPENDIX 1

My Shopping List

Making a shopping list will help you in two ways. It will remind you to look for the nutritious foods you should be eating, and it will make it easier to stick to your food budget. Be sure to include the items you need for your menus and any low-calorie basics you need to restock in your kitchen. This sample shopping list from *www.health.gov* includes a variety of healthy foods for you to look for. You can make a blank copy of these pages to use when you shop, or use this list as a basis for making your own shopping list. Of course, you won't need everything listed here every time you shop, but this will help you remember what you need to buy.

DAIRY CASE

- ❑ Fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk
- ❑ Low-fat or reduced-fat cottage cheese
- ❑ Fat-free cottage cheese
- ❑ Low-fat or reduced-fat cheeses
- ❑ Fat-free or low-fat yogurt
- ❑ Light or diet margarine (tub, squeeze, or spray)
- ❑ Fat-free or reduced-fat sour cream
- ❑ Fat-free cream cheese
- ❑ Eggs/egg substitute
- ❑ _____

BREADS, MUFFINS, AND ROLLS

- ❑ Bread, bagels, or pita bread
- ❑ English muffins
- ❑ Yeast breads (whole wheat, rye, pumpernickel, multi-grain, or raisin)
- ❑ Corn tortillas (not fried)
- ❑ Low-fat flour tortillas
- ❑ Rice crackers
- ❑ _____

CEREALS, CRACKERS, RICE, NOODLES, AND PASTA

- ❑ Plain cereal, dry or cooked
- ❑ Saltines, soda crackers (low-sodium or unsalted tops)
- ❑ Graham crackers
- ❑ Other low-fat crackers
- ❑ Rice (brown, white, etc.)
- ❑ Pasta (noodles, spaghetti)
- ❑ Bulgur, couscous, or kasha
- ❑ Wheat mixes
- ❑ Tabouli grain salad
- ❑ Hominy
- ❑ Polenta
- ❑ Polvillo
- ❑ Hominy grits
- ❑ Quinoa
- ❑ Millet
- ❑ Aramanth
- ❑ Oatmeal
- ❑ _____

VEGETABLES (FRESH, CANNED, AND FROZEN)

Fresh vegetables:

- ❑ Broccoli
- ❑ Peas
- ❑ Corn
- ❑ Cauliflower
- ❑ Squash
- ❑ Green beans
- ❑ Green leafy vegetables
- ❑ Spinach
- ❑ Lettuce
- ❑ Cabbage
- ❑ Artichokes
- ❑ Cucumber
- ❑ Asparagus
- ❑ Mushrooms
- ❑ Carrots or celery
- ❑ Onions
- ❑ Potatoes
- ❑ Tomatoes
- ❑ Green peppers
- ❑ Chiles
- ❑ _____

Canned vegetables (low-sodium or no-salt-added):

- ❑ Canned tomatoes
- ❑ Tomato sauce or pasta
- ❑ Other canned vegetables
- ❑ Canned vegetable soup, reduced sodium
- ❑ _____

Frozen vegetables (without added fats):

- ❑ Broccoli
- ❑ Spinach
- ❑ Mixed medley, etc.
- ❑ _____

Other fresh vegetables:

- ❑ Okra
- ❑ Eggplant
- ❑ Grape leaves
- ❑ Mustard greens
- ❑ Kale
- ❑ Leeks
- ❑ Bamboo shoots
- ❑ Chinese celery
- ❑ Bok choy
- ❑ Napa cabbage
- ❑ Seaweed
- ❑ Rhubarb
- ❑ _____

MEAT CASE

- ❑ White meat chicken and turkey (skin off)
- ❑ Fish (not battered)
- ❑ Beef, round or sirloin
- ❑ Extra lean ground beef such as ground round
- ❑ Pork tenderloin
- ❑ _____

Meat equivalents:

- ❑ Tofu (or bean curd)
- ❑ Beans (see bean list)
- ❑ Eggs/egg substitutes (see dairy list)
- ❑ _____

FRUIT (FRESH, CANNED, AND FROZEN)

Fresh fruit:

- ❑ Apples
- ❑ Bananas
- ❑ Peaches
- ❑ Oranges
- ❑ Pears
- ❑ Grapes
- ❑ Grapefruit
- ❑ Apricots
- ❑ Dried Fruits
- ❑ Cherries
- ❑ Plums
- ❑ Melons
- ❑ Lemons
- ❑ Limes
- ❑ Plantains
- ❑ Mangoes
- ❑ _____

Other fresh fruit:

- ❑ Kiwi
- ❑ Olives
- ❑ Figs
- ❑ Quinces
- ❑ Currants
- ❑ Persimmons
- ❑ Pomegranates
- ❑ Papaya
- ❑ Zapote
- ❑ Guava
- ❑ Starfruit
- ❑ Litchi (lychee) nuts
- ❑ Winter melons
- ❑ _____

Canned fruit (in juice or water):

- ❑ Canned pineapple
- ❑ Applesauce
- ❑ Other canned fruits (mixed or plain)
- ❑ _____

Frozen fruits (without added sugar):

- ❑ Blueberries
- ❑ Raspberries
- ❑ 100% fruit juice
- ❑ _____

Dried fruits:

- ❑ Raisins/dried fruit (these tend to be higher in calories than fresh fruit)
- ❑ _____

BEANS AND LEGUMES (IF CANNED, NO SALT ADDED)

- ❑ Lentils
- ❑ Black beans
- ❑ Red beans (kidney beans)
- ❑ Navy beans
- ❑ Pinto beans
- ❑ Black-eyed peas
- ❑ Fava beans
- ❑ Italian white beans
- ❑ Great white northern beans
- ❑ Chickpeas (garbanzo beans)
- ❑ Dried beans, peas, and lentils (without flavoring packets)
- ❑ _____

BAKING ITEMS

- ❑ Flour
- ❑ Sugar
- ❑ Imitation butter (flakes or buds)
- ❑ Non-stick cooking spray
- ❑ Canned evaporated milk—fat-free (skim) or reduced fat (2%)
- ❑ Non-fat dry milk powder
- ❑ Cocoa powder, unsweetened
- ❑ Baking powder
- ❑ Baking soda
- ❑ Cornstarch
- ❑ Unflavored gelatin
- ❑ Gelatin, any flavor (reduced calorie)
- ❑ Pudding mixes (reduced calorie)
- ❑ Angel food cake mix
- ❑ _____

FROZEN FOODS

- ❑ Fish fillets—unbreaded
- ❑ Egg substitute
- ❑ 100% fruit juices (no sugar added)
- ❑ Fruits (no sugar added)
- ❑ Vegetables (plain)
- ❑ _____

BEVERAGES

- ❑ No-calorie drink mixes
- ❑ Reduced-calorie juices
- ❑ Unsweetened iced tea
- ❑ Carbonated water
- ❑ Water
- ❑ _____

CONDIMENTS, SAUCES, SEASONINGS, AND SPREADS

- ❑ Fat-free or low-fat salad dressings
- ❑ Mustard (Dijon, etc.)
- ❑ Ketchup
- ❑ Barbecue sauce
- ❑ Jam, jelly, or honey
- ❑ Spices
- ❑ Flavored vinegars
- ❑ Hoisin sauce and plum sauce
- ❑ Salsa or picante sauce
- ❑ Canned green chiles
- ❑ Soy sauce (low-sodium)
- ❑ Bouillon cubes/granules (low-sodium)
- ❑ _____

NUTS AND SEEDS

- ❑ Almonds, unsalted
- ❑ Mixed nuts, unsalted
- ❑ Peanuts, unsalted
- ❑ Walnuts
- ❑ Sesame seeds
- ❑ Pumpkin seeds, unsalted
- ❑ Sunflower seeds, unsalted
- ❑ Cashews, unsalted
- ❑ Pecans, unsalted
- ❑ _____

FATS AND OILS

- ❑ Soft (tub) margarine
- ❑ Mayonnaise, low-fat
- ❑ Canola oil
- ❑ Corn oil
- ❑ Olive oil
- ❑ Safflower oil
- ❑ _____

APPENDIX 2

Sample Menus

Planning a day's worth of meals using smart food choices might seem overwhelming at first. Here are some sample menus to show you how easy it can be. These menus provide 2,000 calories a day. You might need to eat fewer or more calories, depending on your activity level and whether you are a man or a woman. You'll find sample menus for a week at *www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/Sample_Menus-2000Cals-DG2010.pdf*. Although it might look like the recommended amounts for a food group are not met, or are exceeded, in a single day, the average over a week meets recommendations.

SAMPLE MENU #1

Breakfast

Breakfast burrito

- 1 flour tortilla (8-inch diameter)
- 1 scrambled egg
- ⅓ cup black beans
- 2 tablespoons salsa

½ large grapefruit

1 cup water, coffee, or tea

SNACK

Snack

1 cup cantaloupe balls

Lunch

Roast beef sandwich

- 1 small whole-grain hoagie bun
- 2 ounces lean roast beef
- 1 slice part-skim mozzarella cheese
- 2 slices tomato
- ¼ cup mushrooms (cooked in 1 teaspoon corn/canola oil)
- 1 teaspoon mustard

Baked potato wedges

- 1 cup potato wedges (cooked in 1 teaspoon canola oil)
- 1 tablespoon ketchup

1 cup fat-free milk

Dinner

Baked salmon on beet greens

- 4 ounce salmon filet
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- ⅓ cup cooked beet greens (cooked in 2 teaspoons canola oil)

Quinoa with almonds

- ½ cup quinoa
- ½ ounce slivered almonds

1 cup fat-free milk

SAMPLE MENU #2

Breakfast

Whole wheat French toast

- 2 slices whole wheat bread
- 3 tablespoons fat-free milk
- ⅔ egg
- 2 teaspoons tub margarine
- 1 tablespoon pancake syrup

½ large grapefruit

1 cup fat-free milk

SNACK

Snack

3 tablespoon hummus

5 whole wheat crackers

Lunch

3-bean vegetarian chili on baked potato

- ¼ cup each cooked kidney beans, navy beans, and black beans
- ½ cup tomato sauce
- ¼ cup chopped onion
- 2 tablespoons chopped jalapeno peppers
- 1 teaspoon corn/canola oil (to cook onion and peppers)
- ¼ cup cheese sauce
- 1 large baked potato

½ cup cantaloupe

1 cup water, coffee, or tea

Dinner

Hawaiian pizza

- 2 slices cheese pizza, thin crust
- 1 ounce lean ham
- ¼ cup pineapple
- ¼ cup mushrooms, cooked in 1 teaspoon safflower oil

Green salad

- 1 cup mixed salad greens
- 4 teaspoons oil and vinegar dressing

1 cup fat-free milk

SAMPLE MENU #3

Breakfast

Cold cereal

- 1 cup shredded wheat
- ½ cup sliced banana
- ½ cup fat-free milk

1 slice whole wheat toast

- 2 teaspoons all-fruit preserves

1 cup fat-free chocolate milk

Snacks

1 cup frozen yogurt (chocolate)

Lunch

Tuna salad sandwich

- 2 slices rye bread
- 2 ounces tuna
- 1 tablespoon mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon chopped celery
- ½ cup shredded lettuce

1 medium peach

1 cup fat-free milk

Dinner

Roasted chicken

- 3 ounces cooked chicken breast

1 large sweet potato, roasted

½ cup succotash (lima beans and corn)

- 1 teaspoon tub margarine

1 ounce whole wheat roll

- 1 teaspoon tub margarine

1 cup water, coffee, or tea

SAMPLE MENU #4

Breakfast

Creamy oatmeal (cooked in milk)

- ½ cup uncooked oatmeal
- 1 cup fat-free milk
- 2 tablespoons raisins
- 2 teaspoons brown sugar

1 cup orange juice

SNACK

Snacks

2 tablespoons raisins

1 ounce unsalted almonds

Lunch

Taco salad

- 2 ounces tortilla chips
- 2 ounces cooked ground turkey (cooked in 2 teaspoons corn oil)
- ¼ cup kidney beans
- ½ ounce low-fat cheddar cheese
- ½ cup chopped lettuce
- ½ cup avocado
- 1 teaspoon lime juice (on avocado)
- 2 tablespoons salsa

1 cup water, coffee, or tea

Dinner

Spinach lasagna roll-ups

- 1 cup lasagna noodles (2 ounces dry)
- ½ cup cooked spinach
- ½ cup ricotta cheese
- 1 ounce part-skim mozzarella cheese
- ½ cup tomato sauce

1 ounce whole wheat roll

- 1 teaspoon tub margarine

1 cup fat-free milk

APPENDIX 3

Storing Cold Food

Product	Refrigerator (40 °F or below)	Freezer (0 °F or below)
EGGS*		
Raw eggs in shell	3 to 5 weeks	Do not freeze. Instead, beat yolks and whites together; then freeze.
Hard-cooked eggs	1 week	Do not freeze.
SALADS		
Egg, chicken, ham, tuna & macaroni salads	3 to 5 days	Does not freeze well.
HOT DOGS		
Opened package	1 week	1 to 2 months
Unopened package	2 weeks	1 to 2 months
LUNCHEON MEATS		
Opened package or deli sliced	3 to 5 days	1 to 2 months
Unopened package	2 weeks	1 to 2 months
BACON & SAUSAGE		
Bacon	7 days	1 month
Sausage, raw — from chicken, turkey, pork, beef	1 to 2 days	1 to 2 months
HAMBURGER & OTHER GROUND MEATS		
Hamburger, ground beef, turkey, veal, pork, lamb, & mixtures of them	1 to 2 days	3 to 4 months
FRESH BEEF, VEAL, LAMB & PORK		
Steaks	3 to 5 days	6 to 12 months
Chops	3 to 5 days	4 to 6 months
Roasts	3 to 5 days	4 to 12 months
FRESH POULTRY		
Chicken or turkey, whole	1 to 2 days	1 year
Chicken or turkey, pieces	1 to 2 days	9 months
SOUPS & STEWS		
Vegetable or meat added	3 to 4 days	2 to 3 months
LEFTOVERS		
Cooked meat or poultry	3 to 4 days	2 to 6 months
Chicken nuggets or patties	3 to 4 days	1 to 3 months

*For more detailed information, visit *www.foodsafety.gov/keep/charts/eggstorage.html.*

For More Information

The National Institute on Aging offers free information about health and aging in English and Spanish.

National Institute on Aging
Information Center, NIH
P.O. Box 8057
Gaithersburg, MD 20898-8057
1-800-222-2225 (toll-free)
1-800-222-4225 (TTY/toll-free)
www.nia.nih.gov
www.nia.nih.gov/espanol

To order publications (in English or Spanish) or sign up for regular email alerts, go to: *www.nia.nih.gov/health.*

Visit *www.nihseniorhealth.gov*, a senior-friendly website from the National Institute on Aging and the National Library of Medicine. This website has health and wellness information for older adults. Special features make it simple to use. For example, you can click on a button to make the type larger.

The National Institute on Aging's ADEAR Center offers free information (in English and Spanish) about Alzheimer's disease, including related eating problems.

Alzheimer's Disease Education and Referral (ADEAR) Center
P.O. Box 8250
Silver Spring, MD 20907-8250
1-800-438-4380 (toll-free)
www.nia.nih.gov/alzheimers

Here is an alphabetical list of some resources for information on nutrition. Each resource has more detailed information on topics like the *Dietary Guidelines,* food safety, meal planning, and physical activity. Federal government resources are listed first.

Federal Government Resources:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
1600 Clifton Road
Atlanta, GA 30333
1-800-232-4636 (toll-free)
1-888-232-6348 (TTY/toll-free)
www.cdc.gov

ChooseMyPlate
www.choosemyplate.gov

Dietary Guidelines for Americans
www.dietaryguidelines.gov

Food and Drug Administration
10903 New Hampshire Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20993
1-888-463-6332 (toll-free)
www.fda.gov

Food Safety Information
www.fsis.usda.gov
1-888-674-6854 (toll-free)—
meat, poultry, and eggs
www.foodsafety.gov
www.befoodsafe.gov
www.isitdoneyet.gov
www.askkaren.gov

Go4Life®
1-800-222-2225 (toll-free)
www.nia.nih.gov/Go4Life

MedlinePlus
www.medlineplus.gov

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, NIH
P.O. Box 30105
Bethesda, MD 20824-0105
1-301-592-8573
www.nhlbi.nih.gov

National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, NIH
National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse
1 Information Way
Bethesda, MD 20892–3560
1–800–860–8747 (toll-free)
1–866–569–1162 (TTY/toll-free)
www.niddk.nih.gov

Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans
www.health.gov/paguidelines

SuperTracker
www.choosemyplate.gov/SuperTracker

USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion
3101 Park Center Drive, 10th Floor
Alexandria, VA 22302-1594
1-703-305-7600
www.cnpp.usda.gov

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250
1-202-720-2791
www.usda.gov

Non-Federal Resources:

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000
Chicago, IL 60606-6995
1-800-877-1600 (toll-free)
www.eatright.org

American Heart Association
7272 Greenville Avenue
Dallas, TX 75231
1-800-242-8721 (toll-free)
www.heart.org

American Occupational Therapy Association
4720 Montgomery Lane, Suite 200
Bethesda, MD 20814-3449
1-301-652-6611
1-800-377-8555 (TDD/toll-free)
www.aota.org

Food Insight
International Food Information Council Foundation
1100 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Suite 430
Washington, DC 20036
1-202-296-6540
www.foodinsight.org

LocalHarvest
P.O. Box 1292
Santa Cruz, CA 95061
1-831-515-5602
www.localharvest.org/csa

Mayo Clinic
www.mayoclinic.com

Meals on Wheels
413 North Lee Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
1-888-998-6325 (toll-free)
www.mowaa.org

National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs
1612 K Street, NW
Suite 400
Washington, DC 20006
1-202-682-6899
www.nanasp.org

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