
EATING PATTERNS

It's time to adopt healthy habits!

Eating Patterns and You

Chapter 1 of the 2015-2020 edition of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans addresses 3 of the 5 main guidelines. They are...

- Follow a healthy eating pattern across the lifespan.
- Focus on variety, nutrient density, and amount.
- Limit calories from added sugars and saturated fats and reduce sodium intake.

So, what exactly is an eating pattern? The guidelines define it as “The combination of foods and beverages that constitute an individual’s complete dietary intake over time. [...] An eating pattern may describe a customary way of eating or a combination of foods recommended for consumption.”

Building a Healthy Pattern:

According to the guidelines, a healthy eating pattern includes a variety of vegetables from all 5 vegetable subgroups. These include dark green, red and orange, beans and peas, starchy, and other. A healthy pattern also features fruits, especially whole fruits. Grains are important too, and at least half of them should be whole grains. Of course, there’s also dairy. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend that people’s eating patterns include fat-free or low-fat dairy. Think milk, yogurt, cheese, and fortified soy drinks. Heart-healthy oils that are high in poly- and monounsaturated fat are important too.

A healthy eating pattern also limits certain foods. Keep your consumption of saturated fats, trans fats, added sugars, and sodium to a minimum.

