



Nutrition for Older Adults: Dietary Guidelines—2010

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Dietary Guidelines 2010

The Dietary Guidelines 2010 can help you make food and physical activity choices so you can have a healthier life. Healthful eating and physical activity not only promotes health, but can also help to decrease the risk of chronic diseases. The Dietary Guidelines 2010 are for people 2 years of age and older, including people at increased risk of chronic disease. The Dietary Guidelines 2010 developed consumer messages around four major concepts:

- Build a healthy plate.
- Cut back on foods high in solid fats, added sugars, and salt.
- Eat the right amount of calories for you.
- Be physically active your way.

Build a Healthy Plate

Many people do not eat enough fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, and lean protein foods. These foods provide nutrients you need without too many calories. These foods can also help lower the risk of chronic diseases. The Dietary

Guidelines 2010 consumer messages are:

- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
- Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk.
- Make at least half your grains whole.
- Vary your protein food choices.
- Keep your food safe to eat.

Cut Back on Solid Fats, Added Sugars and Salt

Many people eat foods and beverages with too much solid fat, added sugar, and sodium. Solid fats and added sugars can add extra calories you do not need. Too much sodium can raise your blood pressure. The Dietary Guidelines 2010 consumer messages are:

- Choose foods and drinks with little or no added sugars.
- Look out for salt (sodium) in foods you buy.
- Eat fewer foods that are high in solid fats.

Eat the Right Amount of Calories for You

Everyone has a calorie limit. Staying in your calorie limit can help you get to or stay at a healthy weight. Finding ways to be aware of how much you eat can help you manage your weight. The Dietary Guidelines 2010 consumer messages are:

- Enjoy your food, but eat less.
- Cook more often at home, where you are in control of what's in your food.
- When eating out, choose lower calorie menu options.
- Write down what you eat to keep track of how much you eat.
- If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so sensibly. Limit intake to 1 drink a day for women or to 2 drinks a day for men.

Be Physically Active Your Way

The 2008 physical activity guidelines recommend adults engage in

150 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity per week or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity physical activity per week. Moderate intensity physical activity raises your heart rate and breathing to some extent. Vigorous intensity physical activity greatly raises your heart rate and breathing. Health benefits increase the more time you spend being physically active. You do not have to do all your activity at one time. Start by doing what you can, at least 10 minutes at a time. Engage in a variety of physical activities including endurance, strength, balance, and flexibility.

It is important to talk to your healthcare provider before increasing your physical activity, especially if you have not been active or have current health problems. Your healthcare provider can help you choose activities that are best for you and reduce any risks.

Sources

United States Department of Agriculture and Health and Human Service. Let's eat for the health of it.

USDA Publication number: Home and Garden Bulletin No. 232-CP HHS Publication number: HHS-ODPHP-2010-01-DGA-B. June 2011.

United States Department of Agriculture. Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010. Accessed at: <http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/DietaryGuidelines.htm>

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