

New guidelines on how to eat right

When it comes to eating right, it's easy to get frustrated. It seems there's always a new diet in the news, telling you to avoid certain foods or only eat certain things. How do you know what works and what's just a fad?

Every five years, the U.S. Department of Agriculture issues new eating tips for Americans to help them make healthy food choices. These guidelines aim to help you eat a wide variety of healthy foods and minimize unhealthy choices. The latest guidelines were recently released, and they recommend that you eat the following:

- Vegetables in a variety of colors - dark green, yellow, red, and orange
- Legumes (beans and peas), starchy foods like potatoes, and other fresh produce
- Plenty of whole fruits
- A variety of grains like bread and pasta, making sure at least half of them are whole grains
- Fat-free or low-fat dairy, including milk, yogurt, cheese, and/or fortified non-dairy beverages
- Protein foods, including seafood, lean meats and poultry, eggs, nuts, seeds, and soy products
- Healthy oils, such as olive and canola



What not to eat

The guidelines say you should limit saturated fats to less than 10 percent of your daily calories. Do the same for added sugars – no more than 10 percent of total calories. Avoid *trans* fats altogether. Limit daily sodium intake to 2,300 mg. You can find all of these nutrients on the nutrition facts panel.

Activity and your health

Finally, the USDA recommends adults get at least 30 minutes of exercise, five days a week. Walking is a great choice for most people. This can be broken up into smaller, 10-minute increments if needed. The main point is to avoid being inactive. Exercise has numerous benefits for your health, including reduced risks of heart disease, obesity, type 2 diabetes, and even some types of cancers.

The guidelines are meant to be a helpful resource. If you're not meeting all of them now, don't give up. Each day that you work toward these healthy guidelines is a step in the right direction.

