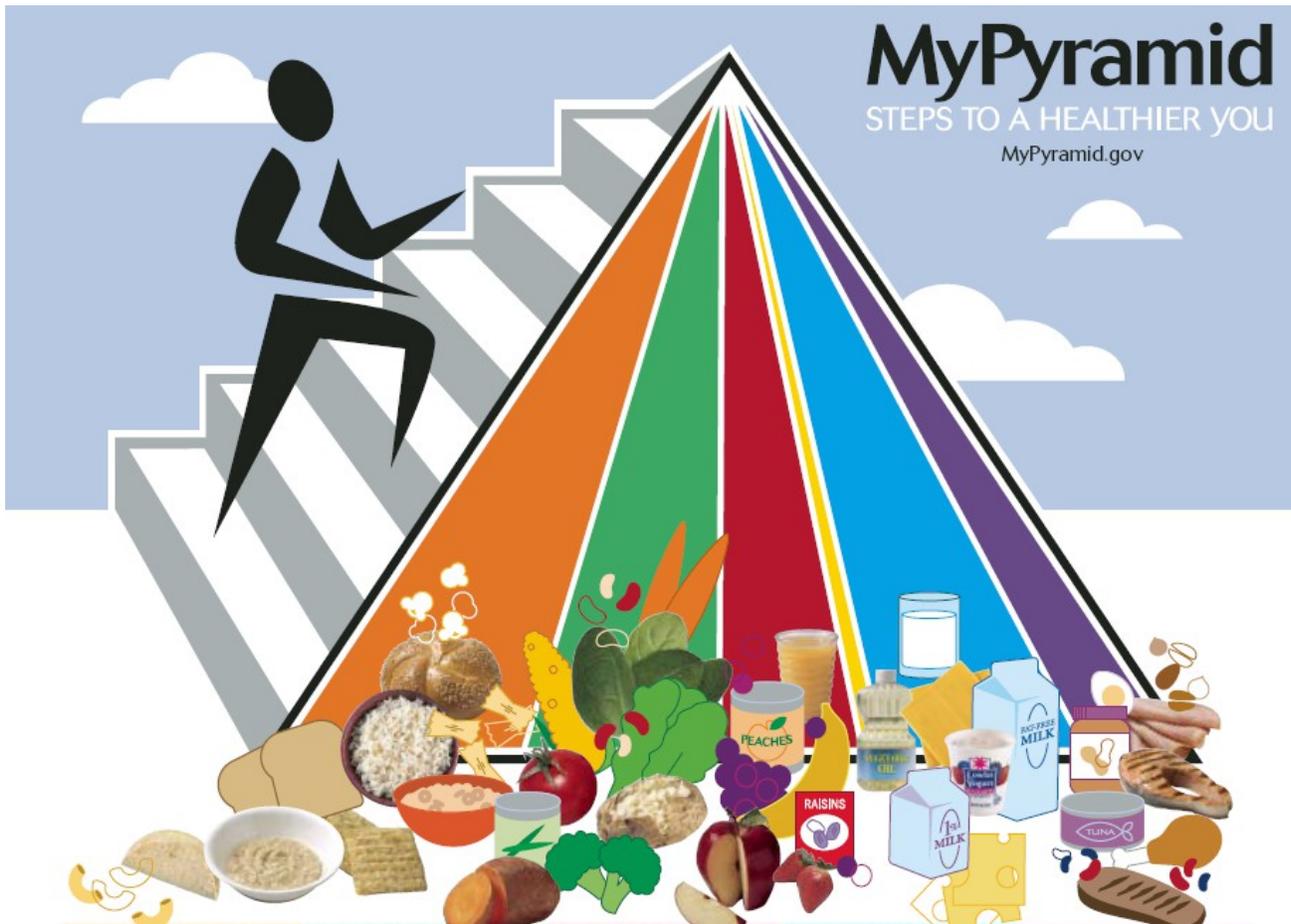


# MyPyramid

STEPS TO A HEALTHIER YOU

MyPyramid.gov



GRAINS	VEGETABLES	FRUITS	MILK	MEAT & BEANS
<p>Eat at least 3 oz. of whole-grain cereals, breads, crackers, rice, or pasta every day</p> <p>1 oz. is about 1 slice of bread, about 1 cup of breakfast cereal, or 1/2 cup of cooked rice, cereal, or pasta</p>	<p>Eat more dark-green veggies like broccoli, spinach, and other dark leafy greens</p> <p>Eat more orange vegetables like carrots and sweetpotatoes</p> <p>Eat more dry beans and peas like pinto beans, kidney beans, and lentils</p>	<p>Eat a variety of fruit</p> <p>Choose fresh, frozen, canned, or dried fruit</p> <p>Go easy on fruit juices</p>	<p>Go low-fat or fat-free when you choose milk, yogurt, and other milk products</p> <p>If you don't or can't consume milk, choose lactose-free products or other calcium sources such as fortified foods and beverages</p>	<p>Choose low-fat or lean meats and poultry</p> <p>Bake it, broil it, or grill it</p> <p>Vary your protein routine – choose more fish, beans, peas, nuts, and seeds</p>

For a 2,000-calorie diet, you need the amounts below from each food group. To find the amounts that are right for you, go to MyPyramid.gov.

Eat 6 oz. every day	Eat 2 1/2 cups every day	Eat 2 cups every day	Get 3 cups every day; for kids aged 2 to 8, it's 2	Eat 5 1/2 oz. every day
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### Find your balance between food and physical activity

- Be sure to stay within your daily calorie needs.
- Be physically active for at least 30 minutes most days of the week.
- About 60 minutes a day of physical activity may be needed to prevent weight gain.
- For sustaining weight loss, at least 60 to 90 minutes a day of physical activity may be required.
- Children and teenagers should be physically active for 60 minutes every day, or most days.



### Know the limits on fats, sugars, and salt (sodium)

- Make most of your fat sources from fish, nuts, and vegetable oils.
- Limit solid fats like butter, stick margarine, shortening, and lard, as well as foods that contain these.
- Check the Nutrition Facts label to keep saturated fats, trans fats, and sodium low.
- Choose food and beverages low in added sugars. Added sugars contribute calories with few, if any, nutrients.



- ❑ **Sound nutrition enhances performance, recovery and adaptation.** The metabolic effect of food is even more potent than training – which is why neither training nor supplementation can offset poor nutrition.
- ❑ **Never get hungry.** Eat 4-6 meals/snacks per day. Maintain a high metabolic rate and nutrient intake by eating every 4 hours. Plan this in advance so good food is available throughout the day. Mornings, as well as during/after exercise, are key windows of opportunity. Breakfast should be the first order of business every day; it literally breaks the fasting state that occurs overnight.
- ❑ **Never get thirsty.** Your goal should be to prevent, not quench, thirst. Keep a water bottle with you constantly, drink from it regularly, and refill it before it gets empty. Water is the foundation of the *food pyramid* and most important nutrient, comprising more than  $\frac{2}{3}$  of body mass. Optimal performance is only achieved when you are fully hydrated, but intense activity depletes fluid balance faster than it can be replaced. Thirst lags behind need; by the time you feel thirsty, dehydration is already impairing your athleticism. A carb-protein-electrolyte drink during/after exercise helps minimize fatigue and catabolism.
- ❑ **Eat a variety of foods at each meal or snack.** Emphasize complex, unrefined, fiber-rich carbs; lean proteins; and essential unsaturated fats. Each food group provides bioactive compounds that can't be obtained from supplements. Build every meal and snack on the “1-2-3 rule”:
  - *3 parts carbohydrate* ... Carbs provide fuel for the neuromuscular system, spare proteins, and prime fat metabolism. High carb intake, coupled with training, will maximize your energy stores and work capacity. Carbs supply 4 cal/g and should comprise 55-65% of diet. Grain, vegetable and fruit sources should be emphasized because they have a low glycemic index, and are high in nutrients and fiber. Processed or refined carbs/sugars should be minimized.
  - *2 parts protein* ... Amino acids are used for structural building blocks (for tissue growth/repair), energy, as well as regulation of acid-base balance, fluid balance and blood volume. They supply 4 cal/g and should comprise 15-25% of diet.
  - *1 part fat* ... Fats provide energy, nutrient transport/storage, hormone/cell structure, cushioning, protection and insulation. They supply more than twice the energy of carbs or proteins [9 cal/g] and should comprise 15-20% of diet, most of which are unsaturated oils from vegetable-nut-seed sources. Even when saturated fats are minimized, intake of omega-3 [ $\alpha$ -linolenic] fatty acids in our diets is usually too low relative to omega-6 [linoleic]. This can be corrected by regularly eating cold-water fish (e.g. albacore tuna, bluefish, halibut, herring, mackerel, salmon, trout) or flax supplements. Monounsaturated fats are also beneficial (e.g. olive oil, canola oil).
- ❑ **Think *color* and *variety* when selecting fruits and vegetables.** Get the daily nutrients and phytochemicals needed for health and fitness by eating natural foods that are:
  - Blue/purple
  - Green
  - Red
  - Yellow/orange
  - White
- ❑ **Food *preparation* is as important as *selection*.** You can't go wrong if it's baked, boiled, broiled, raw or steamed. Avoid fried, processed, refined or enriched foods. Never microwave your food.