An Eating Plan for You – Advice for Adults

MyPyramid will help you build an eating plan that works for you. You will find out the right amount of foods to eat to meet your calorie needs and promote a healthy weight. Your eating plan will also give you the nutrients you need for good health!

Step 1: Estimate Your Daily Calorie Needs

Use the **Estimated Daily Calorie Needs** chart on page 2 to find a calorie level that's right for you. Find your gender and age, then select the activity level that best describes your lifestyle (sedentary, moderately active or active – see definitions on page 2).

The calorie levels in each gender and age group are based on persons of average height and at a healthy weight. If you are overweight, your calorie needs may be higher to maintain your weight. To lose weight, you can follow the calorie level in the chart. Or you may need more calories, depending on your body weight. When losing weight, try to lose no more than a pound a week, and be sure that you are not hungry a lot of the time. You need to eat enough to get the nutrients you need.

Source: The University of Florida, IFAS Extension, Dept. of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, 2005, *http://fycs.ifas.ufl.edu /pyramid/index.htm.* Revised by Kansas State University, Extension Human Nutrition. 2005. *www.oznet.ksu.edu*
For more information, visit *www.MyPyramid.gov*

ESTIMATED DAILY CALORIE NEEDS			
Activity Level:	Sedentary	Moderate	Active
Females			
19-30	1,800 – 2,000	2,000 – 2,200	2,400
31-50	1,800	2,000	2,200
51-60	1,600	1,800	2,200
61+	1,600	1,800	2,000
Males			
19-30	2,400 - 2,600	2,600 – 2,800	3,000
31-50	2,200 – 2,400	2,400 – 2,600	2,800 – 3,000
51+	2,000 – 2,200	2,200 – 2,400	2,400 – 2,800

Sedentary – less than 30 minutes a day of moderate physical activity in addition to daily activities

Moderate – at least 30 minutes up to 60 minutes a day of moderate physical activity in addition to daily activities

Active – 60 or more minutes a day of moderate physical activity in addition to daily activities.

My Estimated Daily Calorie Needs are _____ calories. This calorie level is right for a person of average height, who is at a healthy weight.

The calorie level I want to aim for in my eating plan is _____ calories. (Use this number to build your eating plan, using the chart on the next page.)

Step 2: Build Your Eating Plan

How much food to eat each day depends on your calorie needs.
Find your calorie level at the top of the chart shown below.
The amounts in that column are how much food you should try to get from each food group every day.
(Note: **"oz-eq"** in the chart means ounce-equivalent. Read more about this phrase in information about the Grains group and the Meat and Beans group.)

Calorie Level:	**1,600**	**1,800**	**2,000**	**2,200**	**2,400**	**2,600**	**2,800**	**3,000**	**3,200**
Grains	5 oz-eq (3 oz-eq as whole grains)	6 oz-eq (3 oz-eq as whole grains)	6 oz-eq (3 oz-eq as whole grains)	7 oz-eq (4 oz-eq as whole grains)	8 oz-eq (4 oz-eq as whole grains)	9 oz-eq (5 oz-eq as whole grains)	10 oz-eq (5 oz-eq as whole grains)	10 oz-eq (5 oz-eq as whole grains)	10 oz-eq (5 oz-eq as whole grains)
Vegetables	2 cups	2 1/2 cups	2 1/2 cups	3 cups	3 cups	3 1/2 cups	3 1/2 cups	4 cups	4 cups
Fruits	1 1/2 cups	1 1/2 cups	2 cups	2 cups	2 cups	2 cups	2 1/2 cups	2 1/2 cups	2 1/2 cups
Milk	3 cups	3 cups	3 cups	3 cups	3 cups	3 cups	3 cups	3 cups	3 cups
Meat and Beans	5 oz-eq	5 oz-eq	5 1/2 oz-eq	6 oz-eq	6 1/2 oz-eq	6 1/2 oz-eq	7 oz-eq	7 oz-eq	7 oz-eq
Oils	5 tsp	5 tsp	6 tsp	6 tsp	7 tsp	8 tsp	8 tsp	10 tsp	11 tsp
"Extra" Calories Discretionary Calories	132	195	267	290	362	410	426	512	648

"Extra" (Discretionary) Calories can be used for nonessential foods, including solid fats, added sugars and alcohol; for foods containing higher amounts of fat and added sugars; or for more food from any food group. To increase your discretionary calorie allowance, increase physical activity. A medium order of French fries = 325 "extra" calories, 20 ounces of regular soda = 260 "extra" calories, a medium glazed doughnut = 165 "extra" calories, an ounce of chocolate = 150 "extra" calories, 12 ounces of regular beer = 145 "extra" calories.

Step 2a: Determine your recommended daily allowance of fat grams

How many grams of total fat you should aim to eat each day depends on your calorie needs.

Find your calorie level along the top of the chart shown below.

Pick one of the three percentages of total calories that you want to get from fat along the side of the chart. Many nutrition experts recommend eating not more than 30% of total calories as fat. Ask your health care provider what percentage of fat is right for you. You may need to eat less fat if you are overweight, need to lower your cholesterol, or have another medical concern. Or, for your health condition, you may need more fat.

The amounts shown are how many grams of fat you should get from foods and beverages each day.

Percentage of Total Calories from Fat	Daily Calorie Level:							
	1,600	1,800	2,000	2,200	2,400	2,600	2,800	3,000
20% Fat	35 grams	39 grams	44 grams	49 grams	53 grams	58 grams	62 grams	67 grams
25% Fat	44 grams	50 grams	56 grams	61 grams	67 grams	72 grams	78 grams	83 grams
30% Fat	53 grams	60 grams	67 grams	73 grams	80 grams	87 grams	93 grams	100 grams

My daily allowance of fat is _____ grams.

Source: Mary Meck Higgins, Ph.D., R.D., L.D., CDE; Kansas State University, Extension Human Nutrition. 2008.
www.oznet.ksu.edu

Step 3: Vary Your Veggies

Each week, aim to eat the amounts shown for the different kinds of vegetables.

(Note: "**c/wk**" in the chart means cups per week.)

Calorie Level:	1,600	1,800	2,000	2,200	2,400	2,600	2,800	3,000	3,200
Dark green veggies	2 c/wk	3 c/wk	3 c/wk	3 c/wk	3 c/wk	3 c/wk	3 c/wk	3 c/wk	3 c/wk
Orange veggies	1 1/2 c/wk	2 c/wk	2 c/wk	2 c/wk	2 c/wk	2 1/2 c/wk	2 1/2 c/wk	2 1/2 c/wk	2 1/2 c/wk
Cooked dry beans	2 1/2 c/wk	3 c/wk	3 c/wk	3 c/wk	3 c/wk	3 1/2 c/wk	3 1/2 c/wk	3 1/2 c/wk	3 1/2 c/wk
Starchy veggies	2 1/2 c/wk	3 c/wk	3 c/wk	6 c/wk	6 c/wk	7 c/wk	7 c/wk	9 c/wk	9 c/wk
Other vegetables	5 1/2 c/wk	6 1/2 c/wk	6 1/2 c/wk	7 c/wk	7 c/wk	8 1/2 c/wk	8 1/2 c/wk	10 c/wk	10 c/wk

Step 4: Find Your Balance between Food and Physical Activity

- Be physically active for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week. "**Active**" means a lifestyle that includes physical activity such as walking 3 or more miles per day at 3 to 4 miles per hour, in addition to the light physical activity of typical day-to-day life. For greater health benefits and to help prevent unhealthy body weight gain, do more vigorous activity or increase the amount to 60 minutes a day.
- To lose weight, decrease discretionary calories eaten and increase physical activity. For example, eating 125 fewer calories and using 125 extra calories by doing more physical activity each day will lead to a weight loss of 1/2 pound per week.
- To help sustain weight loss, do moderately intense physical activity at least 60 to 90 minutes every day.

Name:_____

Your results are based on a _____calorie pattern.

Grains ____ ounce-equivalents	Vegetables ____cup(s)	Fruits ____cup(s)	Milk ____ cup(s)	Meat & Beans ____ ounce-equivalents
Make half your grains whole Aim for at least ____ **ounces** of whole grains a day	**Vary your veggies** Aim for these amounts **each week:** **Dark green veggies** = ____ **cups** **Orange Veggies** = ____ **cups** **Cooked Dry Beans & Peas** = ____ **cups** **Starchy veggies** = ____**cups** **Other Veggies** = ____**cups**	**Focus on fruits** Eat a variety of fruit Go easy on fruit juices	**Get your calcium-rich food** Go low-fat or fat-free when you choose milk, yogurt, or cheese	**Go lean with protein** Choose low-fat or lean meats and poultry Vary your protein routine: Choose more fish, beans, peas, nuts, and seeds

Find your balance between food and physical activity

Be physically active for at least _____ **minutes** most days of the week.

Know your limits on fats, sugars, and sodium

Your allowance for oils is _____ **teaspoons** **a day.**

Limit extras (solid fats and added sugars) to _____ **calories** **a day.**

This calorie level is only an estimate of your needs. Monitor your body weight to see if you need to adjust your calorie intake.

Adapted from the USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion. (2005) MyPyramid Results Downloads. *www.mypyramid.gov/professionals/results_downld.html* (Accessed May 20, 2005) by The University of Florida, IFAS Extesion, Dept. of Family, Youth and Community Sciences. Revised by Kansas State University, Dept. of Human Nutrition.

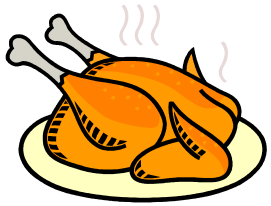
Fruit Group includes all fresh, frozen, canned, and dried fruits; and 100% fruit juices. In general, 1 cup of fruit or 100% fruit juice, or 1/2 cup of dried fruit, is considered 1 cup from this group.

Vegetable Group includes all fresh, frozen, canned, and dried vegetables, and vegetable juices. In general, 1 cup of raw or cooked vegetables or vegetable juice, or 2 cups of raw leafy greens, can be considered as 1 cup from the vegetable group.

Grains Group includes all foods made from wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, popcorn or barley, such as bread, tortillas, pasta, oatmeal, cereals and grits. In general, 1 slice of bread, 1 cup of ready-to-eat cereal, or 1/2 cup of cooked rice, pasta or cereal can be considered as 1 ounce-equivalent from this group. At least half of all grains eaten should be whole grains.

Milk Group includes all fluid milk products and foods made from milk that retain their calcium content, such as yogurt and cheese. Foods made from milk that have little to no calcium (such as cream cheese, cream and butter) are not part of the group. Make most milk group choices fat-free or low-fat. In general, 1 cup of milk or yogurt, 1 1/2 ounces of natural cheese, or 2 ounces of processed cheese can be considered as 1 cup from this group.

Meat & Beans Group: In general, 1 ounce of lean meat, poultry, or fish, 1 egg, 1 tablespoon peanut butter, 1/4 cup cooked dry beans, or 1/2 ounce of nuts or seeds can be considered as 1 ounce equivalent from the meat and beans group.



Oils are liquid at room temperature. They include fats from many different plants and fish, such as canola, corn, olive, soybean, and sunflower oil. Some foods are naturally high in oils, such as nuts, olives, some fish and avocados. Foods that are mainly oil include mayonnaise, certain salad dressings, and soft margarines.