

BACKGROUND

2005 DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS

I. Purpose, History and Process:

The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* (DGA) establish the direction for all government nutrition programs, including research, education, food assistance, labeling, and nutrition promotion. The DGA also provide the foundation for food and nutrition legislation and the government's position for debating standards and reports such as Codex Alimentarius, or the World Health Organization's global health report. The DGA allows the government to speak with one voice when presenting advice for healthy Americans ages two years and over about making food choices that promote health and prevent disease. All federally-issued dietary guidance for the general public is required to be consistent with the *Dietary Guidelines*.

The first edition of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* was released in 1980. Beginning with the 1985 edition, USDA and HHS appointed a Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee of prominent experts in nutrition and health to review current scientific and medical knowledge and recommend revisions to the Secretaries. Section 301 of the National Nutrition Monitoring and Related Research Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5341) requires the Secretaries of HHS and USDA to jointly publish a report entitled, *Nutrition and Your Health: Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, at least every five years. The Fifth Edition of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* was released in May 2000.

II. Key Findings of the 2005 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee:

The Committee concluded that the following nine recommendations incorporate its key scientific findings:

- Consume a variety of foods within and among the basic food groups while staying within energy needs.
- Control calorie intake to manage body weight.
- Be physically active every day.
- Increase daily intake of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and non-fat or low-fat milk and milk products.
- Choose fats wisely for good health.
- Choose carbohydrates wisely for good health.
- Choose and prepare foods with little salt.
- If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.
- Keep food safe to eat.

III. Highlights of Specific Recommendations:

Variety/Nutrient Intake –

- Most Americans need to increase their consumption of vitamin E, calcium, potassium, and fiber.
- Many Americans need to increase their intake of vitamins A and C, and magnesium.
- A few special nutrient recommendations apply to the elderly, women in the childbearing years, and groups susceptible to vitamin D insufficiency
 - *Iron*-- Women of childbearing age can reduce the risk of iron deficiency by eating foods high in iron (preferably meat, poultry, fish, shellfish) and/or consuming iron-rich plant foods.
 - *Folic Acid*-- To reduce the risk of a pregnancy being affected by a neural tube defect, daily intake of 400 µg of synthetic folic acid (from supplements or fortified food) is recommended for women who are capable of becoming pregnant and those in the first trimester of pregnancy.
 - *Vitamin B₁₂*-- The goal for those over age 50 is to eat foods fortified with vitamin B₁₂, such as fortified breakfast cereals, or to take vitamin B₁₂ supplements to achieve a B₁₂ intake of at least 2.4 mcg/day (this equals about 40% of the Daily Value expressed on food labels.
 - *Vitamin D*-- The elderly, persons with dark skin, and persons exposed to insufficient UVB radiation are at risk of being unable to maintain vitamin D status. Persons in these groups may need substantially more than the 1997 Adequate Intake for vitamin D from vitamin D-fortified foods and/or vitamin D supplements.

Energy Balance/Calorie Control:

- *Calories/Carbohydrates/Fats*--To stem the obesity epidemic, most Americans need to reduce the amount of calories they consume. When it comes to weight control, calories *do* count—not the proportions of carbohydrate, fat, and protein in the diet. The healthiest way to reduce calorie intake is to reduce one’s intake of saturated fat, added sugars, and alcohol—they all provide calories but they don’t provide essential nutrients. For most people, a reduction of 50 to 100 calories per day will prevent weight gain, but a reduction of 500 calories or more per day is a common goal in weight loss programs. Controlling portion sizes helps limit calorie intake, especially when eating energy-dense foods (foods that are high in calories for a given amount).
- *Physical Activity*-- 30 to 60 minutes of moderate physical activity per day is recommended to prevent weight gain, but 60 to 90 minutes of physical activity per day is recommended to sustain weight loss.

Physical Activity: *30 minutes* of at least moderate physical activity on most days provide important health benefits in *adults*. More than 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity on most days provide even more health benefits. Vigorous intensity physical activity (e.g., jogging or other aerobic exercise) provides greater benefits for physical fitness than moderate physical activity, and it burns more calories per unit time.

- At least *60 minutes* of moderate to vigorous physical activity on most days is recommended *for children* to maintain good health and fitness and for healthy weight during growth.
- Short bouts (e.g., 10-minute bouts) of moderate activity can count toward total physical activity goals.
- During leisure time, it is advisable for all individuals, to limit sedentary behaviors such as television watching and video viewing and replace them with activities that require more movement.

Fats: To decrease their risk of an elevated LDL cholesterol, most Americans need to decrease their intakes of saturated fat and *trans* fat, and many need to decrease their dietary intake of cholesterol. Recommended goals are less than 10% of calories from saturated fat and less than 300 mg of cholesterol per day for adults with an LDL cholesterol <130 mg/dL.

- *Saturated Fats*—Saturated fat consumption should be kept as low as possible. Dietary intake of saturated fat is much higher than that of *trans* fat and cholesterol. Intakes of all three fats should be decreased, however, decreasing intake of saturated fat is most beneficial because it is consumed in greater amounts.
- *Trans Fats*-- The Committee recommended that *trans* fatty acid consumption by all population groups be $\leq 1\%$ of energy intake. Since *trans* fatty acids are produced in the hydrogenation of vegetable oils and account for more than 80 percent of total *trans* fat in the food supply, the food industry has a large role to play in helping consumers decrease their *trans* fat intake.
- *Omega-3 Fatty Acids*-- To benefit from the potential cardioprotective effects of EPA and DHA, the Committee recommended weekly consumption of two servings of fish, particularly fish rich in EPA and DHA. However, it is advisable for pregnant women, lactating women, and children to avoid eating fish with a high mercury content and to limit their consumption of fish with a moderate mercury content. The report also stated that other rich food sources of EPA and DHA may be beneficial, although more research is needed.
- *Total Fat*-- Recommended total fat intake is between 20% and 35% of energy.

Carbohydrates: Recommended total carbohydrate intake is between 45% and 65% of energy. The IOM set a Recommended Dietary Allowance of 130 grams per day for adults and children.

- *Fiber Intake:* Most Americans of all ages need to increase their fiber intake. The recommended intake of dietary fiber is 14 grams per 1000 calories.
- *Sugar Intake:* Reducing intake of added sugars (especially sugar-sweetened beverages) may be helpful in weight control and aid in achieving recommended nutrient intakes. A combined approach of reducing the frequency of consuming sugars and starches (e.g., limiting snacking on foods that contain these carbohydrates) and optimizing oral hygiene practices is advised to reduce dental caries incidence.

Selected Food Groups: Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and milk products are carbohydrate-containing foods, and they all are important to a healthy diet.

- *Fruit/Vegetable Intake:* To meet nutrient adequacy recommendation, a range of 5-13 servings of fruits and vegetables each day is recommended for daily energy intakes of 1200-3000 calories. For a 2000 calorie daily energy intake, 9 servings (4 ½ cups) are recommended.
- *Whole Grains Intake:* The goal for whole grain intake is at least three servings (equal to 3 ounces) per day, preferably by eating whole grains in place of refined grains.
- *Milk Intake:* For people who require 1600 kcal/day or more, the goal for milk and milk products is 3 cups of non-fat or low-fat milk or the equivalent per day. The goal is 2 cups per day for those with lower calorie needs.

Salt Intake:

- Nearly all Americans consume substantially more salt than is recommended. Decreasing salt (sodium chloride) intake is advisable to reduce the risk of high blood pressure. Expressed in terms of sodium, the general goal is for adults to aim to consume *less than* 2300 mg of sodium per day.
- Many persons will benefit from reducing their salt intake even more. Such persons include hypertensive individuals, blacks, and middle- and older-aged adults.
- Since sodium added during the processing of foods provides more than three-fourths of total intake, the food industry has a large role to play in helping consumers decrease their sodium intake.

Alcohol Intake: The consumption of alcohol can have beneficial or harmful effects depending on the amount consumed, the age and other characteristics of the person consuming the alcohol, and specific situations. The lowest all-cause and coronary heart

disease mortality rates occur at an intake of one to two drinks per day. Morbidity and mortality are highest among those drinking large amounts of alcohol.

- Those who choose to drink alcoholic beverages should do so sensibly, and in moderation.
- Abstention is an important option; approximately one in three American adults do not drink alcohol.
- Moderation is defined as the consumption of up to one drink per day for women and up to two drinks per day for men. One drink is defined as 12 ounces of regular beer, 5 ounces of wine (12% alcohol), or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits.
- Drinking alcoholic beverages should be avoided before or when driving, or whenever it puts anyone at risk.
- In some situations, alcohol should be avoided: DGAC added breastfeeding women to the list of examples.

Food Safety: The most important food safety problem is microbial foodborne illness. The behaviors in the home that are most likely to prevent a problem with foodborne illnesses, are:

- Cleaning hands, contact surfaces, and fruits and vegetables. (This does not apply to meat and poultry, which should not be washed.)
- Separating raw, cooked, and ready-to-eat foods while shopping, preparing, or storing.
- Cooking foods to a safe temperature.
- Chilling (refrigerating) perishable foods promptly.

Avoiding higher-risk foods is an important protective measure against foodborne illness. In the case of listeriosis, higher-risk groups such as the young, pregnant women, the elderly, and those who are immunocompromised should re-heat frankfurters and deli meats to a safe temperature.

IV. Next Steps:

Dietary Guidelines Policy Document:

- Later this week, the Committee report will be posted at www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines. A *Federal Register* notice will announce availability of the report and a 30-day public comment period.
- A joint working group of HHS and USDA scientists will prepare the draft 2005 *Dietary Guidelines* policy document based upon the DGAC report. An independent scientific peer review of the draft policy document will also be performed by a separate group of Federal government scientists.
- The *Dietary Guidelines* policy document will be finalized and cleared through the Departments in December 2004.
- In January 2005, Secretaries Veneman and Thompson will jointly release the sixth edition of *Nutrition and Your Health: Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

Dietary Guidelines Communication Materials:

- In July, the Departments awarded separate communications contracts to Porter Novelli, Washington, DC: HHS/Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP) for the *Dietary Guidelines* communications and USDA/Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion (CNPP) for the Food Guidance System.
- HHS and USDA staff are working closely to coordinate message development between the *Dietary Guidelines* and the Food Guidance System.
- HHS issued a *Federal Register* notice soliciting existing communications research pertinent to the development of messages and materials for the 2005 *Dietary Guidelines*. This provides an opportunity for organizations to bring to our attention research they believe will inform our communication efforts.
- USDA issued a Federal Register notice soliciting public comment by August 27th on the proposed Food Guidance System plan and expects HHS and other Federal agencies to provide comments along with the general public. Communication efforts associated with Food Guidance System and *Dietary Guidelines* are being coordinated.

V. Members of the 2005 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee:

Chair:

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