



Senior Series

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Putting MyPyramid on Your Table

Meat and Bean Group

MyPyramid is a guide to help people of any age plan a healthy diet. As we age, we need to plan more carefully the food that we choose in order to stay healthy. Individual calorie and nutrient needs change over time. This series of *Putting MyPyramid on Your Table* can help you choose foods that fit into a daily food plan to maintain good health.



Meat & Bean Group

Go lean with protein

MyPyramid.gov

Foods in the meat and bean group contain protein. Protein is needed to repair body cells and make new ones. Meat and beans also provide B vitamins, iron, and zinc, which help boost the immune system, build and repair muscle, and help brain function.

MyPyramid suggests we eat 5½ ounces of meat or its equivalent for those on a 2,000 calorie a day diet. Dried beans or peas, eggs, peanut butter, or nuts also contain protein and they are part of the meat group.

Note these equivalents:

- 1 ounce meat, poultry, or fish
- ¼ cup cooked dry beans or peas
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon peanut butter
- ½ ounce of nuts or seeds

Go Lean with Protein

- Choose lean meat and skinless poultry most often. Vary your protein choices with fish, beans, eggs, nuts, and seeds.
- For lean cuts of beef look for the words “loin” or “round” in the names such as sirloin or round steak. Lean pork choices include pork loin, tenderloin, center loin, and lean ham.
- Choose ground beef that is 90% to 95% lean. Read labels carefully before buying.
- Choose ground poultry without skin and fat.
- Select fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids, such as salmon, trout, and herring.
- Choose lean roast beef, turkey, or ham for sandwiches. An alternative sandwich spread is peanut butter, almond butter, or soy butter.
- Enjoy your morning eggs mixed with vegetables or herbs.

Before Preparing

- Trim away visible fat from meat before cooking and remove poultry skin.
- Bake, broil, or grill meat, poultry, and fish.
- Drain off any fat that appears during cooking.
- Bake breaded meat, poultry, and fish instead of frying.
- Flavor your meat, poultry, and fish with herbs or low fat sauces.
- Prepare dry beans and peas without added fats.

Consume a variety of nutrient dense foods and beverages within and among the basic food groups while choosing foods that limit the intake of saturated and trans fats, cholesterol, added sugars, salt, and alcohol.

Meat and beans are an important part of MyPyramid. Look for other *Putting MyPyramid on Your Table* fact sheets.

References

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