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## Eat a Healthful Diet- An Absolute Cure

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# EAT A HEALTHFUL DIET - AN ABSOLUTE CURE



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## EAT A HEALTHFUL DIET - AN ABSOLUTE CURE

Is the answer to all your problems really that simple? Probably not, but scientists continue to show the benefits of eating a good diet and its relation to good health. A good diet throughout lifetime certainly contributes to a life being lived to its fullest.

How can you tell whether your diet is nutritious? One of the simplest methods to quickly assess your diet is to use the five food groups as a guide.

### VEGETABLE AND FRUIT GROUP

Vegetables and fruits contribute vitamins A and C and also fiber. Dark green and deep yellow vegetables are good sources of vitamin A. Most dark green vegetables, if not overcooked, are also reliable sources of vitamin C. So are melons, berries, tomatoes, and citrus fruits.

### BREAD AND CEREAL GROUP

Whole-grain and enriched breads and cereals are important sources of B vitamins, iron, and protein. They are a major source of protein in vegetarian diets. In addition, whole-grain products contribute magnesium, folacin, and fiber.

Foods in the bread and cereal group include all products made with whole grains or enriched flour or meal.

### MILK AND CHEESE GROUP

Milk and most milk products are calcium-rich foods. They contribute riboflavin, protein, and vitamins A, B<sub>6</sub> and B<sub>12</sub>, too. Some of these products are fortified with vitamin D. This group includes whole, skim, lowfat, evaporated, and nonfat dry milk, buttermilk, yogurt, ice cream, ice milk, cheese, cottage cheese, process cheese foods, and process cheese spreads.

### MEAT, POULTRY, FISH, AND BEAN GROUP

These foods are valued for protein, phosphorus, iron, zinc, vitamin B<sub>6</sub>, and still other vitamins and minerals. Included in this group are beef, veal, lamb, pork, poultry, fish, shellfish (shrimp, oysters, crabs, etc.), dry beans, dry peas, soybeans, lentils, eggs, seeds, nuts, peanuts, and peanut butter.

It's a good idea to vary your choices in this group. Each food has a distinct nutritional advantage. Red meats are good sources of zinc. Liver and egg yolks are valuable sources of vitamin A.

Use the following chart for a fast check on the quality of your diet for a day. CAUTION: Don't jump to any conclusions based on just one day's diet.

Food Group Evaluation

Foods Consumed	Fruit & Vegetables			Bread & Cereal 4 servings	Milk 2 servings	Meat 2 servings	Fats Sweets Alcohol
	Vit. A	Vit. C	Other				
Breakfast:							
Lunch:							
Dinner:							
Snacks:							
TOTAL:							
Recommended # servings:	1	1	2	4 or more- Include some whole grain.	2 or more	2 or more	Consume enough to maintain wt. Cut back if overweight.

### FATS, SWEETS, AND ALCOHOL GROUP

Most foods in this group provide relatively low levels of vitamins, minerals, and protein compared to calories. Vegetable oils generally do supply vitamin E and essential fatty acids. Butter and fortified margarines contribute vitamin A. Other foods in this group are mayonnaise and salad dressings; sugar, honey, syrups, candy, jams, jellies, sweet toppings, sugar-sweetened beverages, and other sweets; alcoholic beverages and unenriched, refined flour and baking products.

### DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS

In an effort to provide guidelines for wise food choices for American people, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare in February 1980 made the following recommendations:

#### 1. EAT A VARIETY OF FOODS

No single food item supplies all the essential nutrients in the amounts that you need. The greater the variety, the less likely you are to develop either a deficiency or an excess of any single nutrient. One way to assure variety and, with it, a well-balanced diet is to select foods each day from each of the food groups.

#### 2. MAINTAIN IDEAL WEIGHT

##### To improve eating habits:

- Eat slowly.
- Prepare smaller portions.
- Avoid "seconds".

##### To lose weight:

- Increase physical activity.
- Eat less fat and fatty foods.
- Eat less sugar and sweets.
- Avoid too much alcohol.

### 3. AVOID TOO MUCH FAT, SATURATED FAT, AND CHOLESTEROL

- Choose lean meat, fish, poultry, dry beans and peas as your protein sources.
- Moderate your use of eggs and organ meats (such as liver).
- Limit your intake of butter, cream, hydrogenated margarines, shortenings and coconut oil, and foods made from such products.
- Trim excess fat off meats.
- Broil, bake, or boil rather than fry.
- Read labels carefully to determine both amount and types of fat contained in foods.

### 4. EAT FOODS WITH ADEQUATE STARCH AND FIBER

- Select foods which are good sources of fiber and starch, such as whole grain breads and cereals, fruits and vegetables, beans, peas, and nuts.

### 5. AVOID TOO MUCH SUGAR

- Use less of all sugars, including white sugar, brown sugar, raw sugar, honey, and syrups.
- Eat less of foods containing these sugars, such as candy, soft drinks, ice cream, cakes, cookies.
- Select fresh fruits or fruits canned without sugar or light syrup rather than heavy syrup.
- Read food labels for clues on sugar content—if the names sucrose, glucose, maltose, dextrose, lactose, fructose, or syrups appear first, then there is a large amount of sugar.
- Remember, how often you eat sugar is as important as how much sugar you eat.

### 6. AVOID TOO MUCH SODIUM

- Learn to enjoy the unsalted flavors of foods.
- Cook with only small amounts of added salt.
- Add little or no salt to food at the table.
- Limit your intake of salty foods, such as potato chips, pretzels, salted nuts and popcorn, condiments (soy sauce, steak sauce, garlic salt),

cheese, pickled foods, and cured meats.  
-Read food labels carefully to determine the amounts of sodium in processed foods and snack items.

### **7. IF YOU DRINK ALCOHOL, DO SO IN MODERATION**

-One or two drinks daily appear to cause no harm in adults. If you drink you should do so in moderation.

### **WATCHING FOOD COSTS**

The following suggestions are given to help you get your money's worth in food.

- Check specials in food store advertisements.
- Look at each food critically. Is it costly compared to other foods you might serve? Will your family eat and enjoy it? Do you have the time and skill to prepare it? If it's a convenience item, could you save by preparing it from basic ingredients?
- Learn to estimate accurately the amounts of food needed to feed your family. Keeping a record of the amount of food you throw away in a week may alert you to ways you can reduce waste.
- Use unit pricing to find the brand and container size of food that costs the least per pound, ounce, or pint. Even if it's a better buy, select a food only if you can store it properly and conveniently and can use it without waste.
- Avoid foods that are packaged as individual servings. Extra packaging usually boosts the price. Examples are individual packages of potato chips, ready-to-eat cereals, raisins, and tea. However, for one or two servings, individual packages might save on waste or spoilage.
- Check the date on a perishable food. Be sure you can use all of it before it spoils.
- Shop for low-cost foods within each food group.
- When buying meat, consider the amount of lean meat in the cut, as well as the price per pound. Chicken and turkey are often bargains compared

- to other meats. Fish is often a good buy, too.
- Use small servings of meat, poultry, and fish and rely on more economical foods - potatoes, rice, macaroni products, and bread - to fill in meals.
- Use nonfat dry milk, which is less expensive than fluid milk, at least part of the time in cooking and as a beverage.
- Buy fresh milk at a food or dairy store in 1/2- or 1-gallon containers. Milk usually costs more if it is home-delivered, purchased from special-service stores, or purchased in small containers.
- When buying vegetables and fruit, take advantage of seasonal abundance. Foods in season will be at their peak in quality and often are lower in cost.
- Try low-priced brands. They may be similar in quality to more expensive ones.
- Use whole-grain and enriched flour, bread, or cereal in some form at every meal to get your money's worth in nutrients.

### **References:**

- "Nutrition and Your Health", G-232, USDA
- "Guide to a Better Diet", L-567, USDA
- "Family Food Budgeting", G-94, USDA

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