



# DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS 2015-2020 EIGHTH EDITION



A large body of evidence now shows that healthy eating patterns and regular physical activity can help people achieve and maintain good health and reduce the risk of chronic disease throughout all stages of the lifespan. [The 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#) reflects this evidence through its recommendations:

1. Follow a healthy eating pattern across the lifespan. All food and beverage choices matter. Choose a healthy eating pattern at an appropriate calorie level to help achieve and maintain a healthy body weight, support nutrient adequacy and reduce the risk of chronic disease.
2. Focus on variety, nutrient density and amount. To meet nutrient needs within calorie limits, choose a variety of nutrient-dense foods across and within all food groups in recommended amounts.
3. Limit calories from added sugars and saturated fats and reduce sodium intake. Consume an eating pattern low in added sugars, saturated fats, and sodium. Cut back on foods and beverages higher in these components to amounts that fit within healthy eating patterns.
4. Shift to healthier food and beverage choices. Choose nutrient-dense foods and beverages across and within all food groups in place of less healthy choices. Consider cultural and personal preferences to make these shifts easier to accomplish and maintain.
5. Support healthy eating patterns for all. Everyone has a role in helping to create and support healthy eating patterns in multiple settings nationwide, from home to school to work to communities.

For most individuals, achieving a healthy eating pattern will require changes in food and beverage choices. This edition of the Dietary Guidelines focuses on shifts to emphasize the need to make substitutions—that is, choosing nutrient-dense foods and beverages in place of less healthy choices—rather than increasing intake overall. Most individuals would benefit from shifting food choices both within and across food groups. Some needed shifts are minor and can be accomplished by making simple substitutions, while others will require greater effort to accomplish.

#### REFERENCES:

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2015 – 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 8th Edition, December 2015. Available at <http://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/>.