



Chapter 10

Nutrition Guidelines

Guidelines for Healthy Americans

Directions: Read the following selection. Then answer the questions under *Thinking Critically*, and complete the activities as directed by your teacher.

Many American diets have too many calories and too much saturated fat, cholesterol, sugar, and sodium. They also have too little fiber or complex carbohydrates. Such diets contribute to the high rates of obesity and other diseases, such as heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, diabetes, and some forms of cancer.

You have an opportunity to exert a positive affect on your health by deciding what and how much to eat. You can look at an eating plan in different ways; you can check the number of calories, or check the grams of fat, carbohydrates, or protein.

MyPyramid offers food guidance according to food groups. This guide is based on the USDA's research of what foods Americans eat, what nutrients are in these foods, and how to make the best food choices to promote good health. It is a general guide to choosing a healthful diet.

The Department of Health and Human Services and the USDA developed the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. They represent the best, most current advice for Americans ages two years and older. The idea behind the Dietary Guidelines is that eating foods in certain proportions provides the most healthful blend of nutrients. Your diet plan should consist of foods you enjoy eating and can easily obtain—foods that fit your tastes, personality, cultural traditions, and lifestyle. A well-balanced diet is a source of pleasure as well as good nutrition. As with any tool, you will gain skill in using the Dietary Guidelines through practice. Use the menus below to practice planning a healthy diet. Analyze each menu according to how well it meets the USDA MyPyramid suggestions for food group portions each day.

Menu	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snacks
# 1	1 cup milk; 1 cup ready-to-eat cereal with ¼ cup berries; ¾ cup orange juice	Chef's salad (1 cup greens, 2 oz. ham, 1 hard-cooked egg, 1 oz. cheddar cheese); 3 oz. breadsticks; ¾ cup tomato juice; 1 brownie	3 oz. hamburger on a 1 oz. bun; 1 cup milk; ½ cup broccoli; ½ cup mashed potatoes; 1 slice pound cake	Peanut butter sandwich (2 Tbsp. peanut butter, 2 Tbsp. jelly); 10 animal crackers
# 2	2 medium pancakes with ½ cup applesauce; 2 oz. sausage links; 1 cup milk	Tuna sandwich (2 oz. tuna, 1 oz. Swiss cheese) on 1 oz. hard roll; 1 peach; 1 cup milk; 1 small bag cheese popcorn	Black bean burrito (½ cup beans, 1 oz. Colby cheese, corn tortilla); ½ cup peas; ½ cup pears; 1 cup milk; 1 slice apple crisp	4 graham crackers; 1 small sweet potato

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Thinking Critically

1. Explain how the Dietary Guidelines for Americans represent good common sense for healthful living.

2. What do you believe is most important to tell other teens about the Dietary Guidelines? Why?

3. Food is often categorized as good for your health (high nutrient density) or bad for your health (low nutrient density). For example, a snack consisting of potato chips with dip and a soft drink has little nutritional value. However, it is okay to eat these foods on occasion. When might it be acceptable to indulge in these foods?

Explain your rationale.

For Further Study

- ◆ Develop a goal to improve your eating habits for one or more of the Dietary Guidelines. For example, “I need to improve on lowering the amount of sugar and sodium in my diet and increasing the amount of potassium. I will substitute a glass of water for my first soft drink craving each day. I will start working on this goal tomorrow.” Monitor your progress for two weeks. Then write a summary of your experience and submit it to your teacher.
- ◆ Develop a survey to record (1) the number of cups of milk each day and (2) the number of portions of other dairy foods in the milk group consumed each day for 11- to 14-year-old females and 15- to 18-year-old females as well as males in each of the same age groups in your school district. Write an article for the school or district newsletter reporting your data. Substantiate your findings by using the recommendations in the USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans and MyPyramid in your article. Include suggestions for improving student consumption of milk, yogurt, and cheese. Submit your article to your teacher.
- ◆ How often have you heard your parents tell you to eat your vegetables? Rules! Rules! Rules! Get a handle on grown-up rules, and read *The Secret Knowledge of Grown Ups* by David Wisniewski. Choose or create a rule pertaining to good food choices. Follow the format in David’s book to tell the truth about the rule. Illustrate this truth on a poster and share your findings with the class.