

The Skinny on Sugar, Salt & Fat

SUGAR

Most people consume sugar through soft drinks, candy, sweet baked goods and cereals. Refined sugars are often added to less obvious foods such as breads, crackers, spaghetti sauces, salad dressings and canned fruits.

Why sour on sweets? Added sugars, especially foods processed with corn syrup and high fructose corn syrup, pack empty calories, making it harder to manage your weight.

Sugar busters:

Go natural. Fresh fruits can satisfy your sweet tooth with healthier natural sugars.

Opt out. Choose packaged foods without added sugar; reduce or cut sugar in recipes.

SALT

Nutrition guidelines limit sodium to no more than 2,300 mg of sodium per day, but most people get much more than that. Studies show cutting back on sodium lowers blood pressure and may help control high blood pressure (hypertension) or prevent it as well as heart disease.

Saltshakers:

Limit fast foods and salt-cured foods such as bacon, corned beef, smoked fish, pickles and olives. Look for packaging that specifies "low sodium" or "no salt added."

Check the labels of processed foods for sodium content. Packaged foods high in salt include frozen dinners, soy sauce, soups, cheese, deli meats, salsa and other condiments.

FAT

Experts recommend that average healthy adults limit fat intake to 20-35 percent of total calories. **Smart start:** Examine food labels. Minimize saturated fat and avoid trans fat (usually flagged by the term "partially hydrogenated oil" on food labels).



Heart Smart Eating TO LOWER LDL (BAD) CHOLESTEROL:

The TLC Diet (Therapeutic Lifestyle Changes) is recommended by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute.

TLC guidelines:

- **Reduce saturated fat:** less than 7% of calories
- **Reduce dietary cholesterol:** less than 200 mg/day
- **Increase soluble fiber:** 10-25 g/day. **Sources:** fruits, oatmeal, some cereals
- **Increase plant stanols/sterols:** 2g/day. **Sources:** fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, cereals, legumes, vegetable oils (particularly soybean oil)
- **Limit sodium intake:** 2,300 mg/day
- **Consume just enough calories** to achieve or maintain a healthy weight and reduce your blood cholesterol level.

For more info, check the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute's Web site at www.nhlbi.nih.gov (SEARCH TLC Diet).

TO LOWER HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE:

The DASH Diet (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) is similar to the TLC plan, but DASH targets blood pressure.

DASH emphasizes:

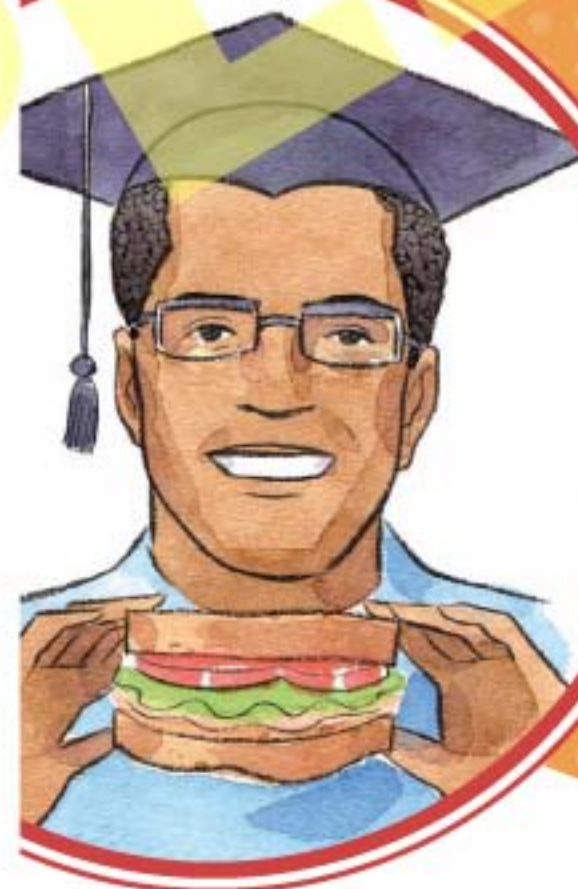
- **Foods** low in saturated fat, cholesterol and total fat
- **Fruits,** vegetables and low-fat dairy foods
- **Foods** rich in magnesium, potassium, calcium and fiber
- **Whole** grain products, fish, poultry and nuts
- **Limiting** red meats, sweets and sugary beverages
- **Less** salt and sodium overall

For more info, check the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute's Web site at www.nhlbi.nih.gov (SEARCH DASH Diet).



SMART EATING

MAKING HEALTHY DIET DECISIONS



MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICES

Many factors influence the food choices you make each day. And just about all foods can fit into a healthful diet. The key is making healthy diet decisions you can live with.

The first step is learning your calorie allowance. It's based on your age, activity level and gender. You'll find help at www.mypyramid.gov, or ask your health care provider. You can make smarter choices when you know your limits.



Good Nutrition Basics

Good nutrition basically consists of grains, vegetables, fruits, low-fat dairy products, and foods high in protein, including lean animal-based foods, beans or soy products. Each of these food groups benefits your body in essential ways.

GRAINS (particularly "whole" grains) provide dietary fiber, B vitamins (thiamin, riboflavin, niacin and folate), and minerals (iron, magnesium and selenium). Grains help with energy and feeling full.

VEGETABLES & FRUITS, especially those that are brightly colored offer vitamins, minerals, fiber and disease-fighting phytochemicals; they maintain energy and help keep cholesterol and blood pressure in check.

LOW-FAT DAIRY builds and maintains healthy teeth and bones, and helps regulate blood pressure.

LEAN MEATS & BEANS (the proteins) generate energy and serve as building blocks for your body — they're essential to muscles, bones and blood.

TOGETHER, these foods (with emphasis on fruits and vegetables) represent a healthy balance of food choices.



Ingredients for No-Nonsense Eating

Experts say that eating well can significantly reduce your risk for disease. So how do you build a truly healthful food plan? It doesn't have to be complicated.

Try this recipe:

Balance: Build your meals with 45%-65% "better" carbohydrates, 20%-35% "better" fats, and 10%-35% "better" lean protein.

Better Carbohydrates: Choose fiber-rich foods — fruits, vegetables, legumes, and whole grains.

Better Fats: Cook with olive, canola or soybean oil instead of vegetable oil or shortening. Choose lean cuts of meat and foods containing mono- and polyunsaturated fats.

Better Protein: Seafood, poultry (skinless), legumes and soy foods are top choices, being low in fat. Limit servings to 3-4 ounces, twice a day. Include 1-2 servings of fish a week.



Fat Trimmers

- Use less fat in recipes.
- Replace whole eggs with egg whites in recipes and omelettes.
- Choose nonfat dairy foods.
- Trim fat from meats.
- Substitute butter with olive or canola oil.
- Avoid deep-fat fried foods.

Sugar: Limit to 25% of total calories but strive for less. Too much sugar can lead to obesity.

A winning approach: Wholesome carbohydrates and reasonable amounts of healthful fat can help control weight as well as control cholesterol and blood sugar levels.

Fiber: Men need 30-38 grams a day and women need 21-25 to aid digestion and cholesterol levels.

Sodium: Restrict foods processed with added sodium and limit salting your foods, especially if you are salt-sensitive or have high blood pressure.

Dietary Supplements ... Who Needs Them?

Evidence shows that the best source of nutrients is food. Unlike pills, whole foods contain fiber, essential fatty acids and disease-fighting substances. Supplements may provide added protection for certain individuals including smokers, strict vegetarians, pregnant or breast-feeding women, and those who are age 50+ or have chronic health problems, or who drink more than 1-2 alcoholic drinks daily. If you feel your diet is deficient, consult your health care provider or a registered dietitian about supplements.

Serving Size Surprise

Oversized portions are expanding the collective waistline. Watch your plate to avoid added weight.

PORTION CONTROL

Learn the recommended serving sizes using these visuals:



1/2 cup

An ice cream scoop = half-cup

Guide for beans and legumes; chopped, cooked or canned vegetables; nuts; tofu; a scoop of ice cream



1 cup

A tennis ball = 1 cup

Guide for fresh, sliced fruits; salad greens and other raw vegetables; a medium orange, apple or pear



2-3 oz.

A deck of cards = about 2-3 ounces of protein

Guide for cooked meats such as hamburger, pork, skinless poultry and fish