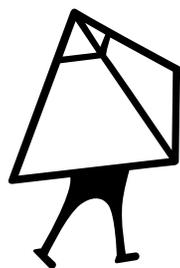


Food Guide Pyramid for Older Adults



The Tufts University Food Guide Pyramid for Older Adults is geared to help people 50 years or older—and especially those 70 and older—eat a healthful diet. As you age, you need less food to maintain your weight. However, your need for vitamins and minerals may stay the same or even increase. That’s why it is important to choose a variety of nutrient-rich foods everyday. And remember to include physical activity such as walking, climbing stairs or yard work as part of your daily routine.

Make the Pyramid Work for You!

FOOD GROUP

RECOMMENDATIONS

EXAMPLES OF SERVING SIZES

Low- and Nonfat Dairy Products



Eat or drink 3 or more servings of low- or nonfat dairy products. If you have trouble digesting milk products, try lactose-free dairy products, or add lactase to milk.

1 cup low- or nonfat milk or yogurt
1 1/2 oz lowfat cheese

Dry Beans and Nuts Fish, Poultry, Lean Meat, and Eggs



Eat 2 or more servings of these protein-rich foods.

Beans are a good source of fiber, protein and other nutrients.

Choose fish, skinless poultry, lean meat or eggs.

1–1 1/2 cup cooked lentils or dry beans
1 1/2 cup chili
4 Tbsp peanut butter

2 – 3 oz. fish, skinless poultry or lean meat—baked, broiled or grilled
1/2 cup canned tuna
1 egg or 1/4 cup egg substitute



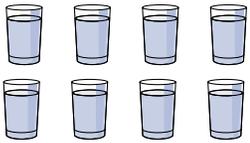
UNIQUE NUTRIENT NEEDS

The flag at the top of the pyramid signals special consideration for calcium, vitamin D and vitamin B₁₂. You need higher levels of calcium and vitamin D to keep bones strong. Nonfat or lowfat milk provide an excellent source of calcium and vitamin D. Nonfat dairy products offer the best sources of calcium. Because many older adults cannot efficiently use the vitamin B₁₂ that is found in animal foods, vitamin B₁₂-fortified foods such as breakfast cereals or supplements are better absorbed. Check with your physician or health care provider to find out if you need supplements. Also, contact your health care provider when your food choices are limited over a period of time due to illness, chewing problems, lack of appetite or inability to shop or prepare food.

Here is a list of how much calcium, vitamin D and vitamin B₁₂ is needed each day for adults over 50:

- **Calcium**— 1,200 milligrams (mg)
- **Vitamin D**— 400 International Units (IU) for adults 51–70 and 600 IU for those over 70. Do not exceed these recommendations.
- **Vitamin B₁₂**— 2.4 micrograms (mcg)

Make the Pyramid Work for You, cont.

FOOD GROUP	RECOMMENDATIONS	EXAMPLES OF SERVING SIZES
Bright-Colored Vegetables 	Eat 3 or more servings of bright-colored fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables. Look for dark green, red, orange and/or yellow vegetables for best nutrients.	<i>1 cup romaine lettuce</i> <i>1/2 cup winter squash or sweet potato</i> <i>3/4 cup 100% vegetable juice</i> <i>1/2 cup carrots</i> <i>1/2 cup cooked spinach</i>
Deep-Colored Fruit 	Eat 2 or more servings of fresh, frozen, dried, or canned fruit packed in juice. Those with deep colors typically have more nutrients. Choose 100% fruit juice. Juices fortified with calcium provide a non-dairy calcium source.	<i>1 medium peach or banana</i> <i>1/2 cup berries or sliced melon</i> <i>1/4 cup dried apricots or raisins</i> <i>3/4 cup 100% orange juice</i>
Whole, Enriched and Fortified Grains and Cereals 	Eat 6 or more servings of high-fiber, fortified, or whole grains such as brown rice, whole-wheat pasta, and bran cereal.	<i>1/2 cup raisin bran or oatmeal</i> <i>1 slice whole-wheat bread</i> <i>1/2 cup cooked enriched pasta or rice</i>
Water/Liquids 	Consume eight, 8-ounce glasses of water or beverages such as fruit or vegetable juice, milk, reduced sodium soup, tea or coffee each day.	<i>8 oz. water</i> <i>8 oz. tea or coffee</i> <i>8 oz. reduced sodium soup</i> <i>8 oz. nonfat milk</i>

TIPS FOR HEALTHFUL EATING

USE SPARINGLY items that appear at the top of the pyramid.

SUGAR adds calories, but not nutrients to the diet. Limit foods and beverages with added sugar.

SATURATED AND TRANS FATS raise levels of low-density lipoprotein (LDL), the so called bad cholesterol. Meat and full fat dairy products contain saturated fat. *Trans* fats are found in traditional stick margarines, shortenings and hydrogenated vegetable oils and foods made with these fats. Choose vegetable oils such as canola, soybean, corn and olive oil. Use tub margarine instead of butter.

SALT raises blood pressure in some people. Prepare foods with less salt/sodium and choose reduced sodium soups and frozen entrees.

HIGH-FIBER foods help to promote regularity. Dry beans, fruits, vegetables, whole grains and cereals, and nuts offer high-fiber choices. Be sure to drink more water if you increase your fiber intake.

WATER/LIQUIDS are needed everyday. As you get older you have a decreased sense of thirst and are more likely to become dehydrated. Some medications may contribute to this problem by increasing your need for water. Alcoholic beverages should not count toward your water/liquids intake.