DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS, 2015-2020,
AND THE STATE OF THE AMERICAN DIET

Vanessa da Silva, PhD, RD
Assistant Professor and Nutrition Specialist
University of Arizona
DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS

• Released by the USDA and HHS every five years since 1980

• Makes recommendations for Americans ages 2 and older about preventing diet-related health conditions
DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS

Resource for health professionals and policymakers:

- Develop federal food, nutrition and health policies and programs
- Basis for federal nutrition education materials for the public
- Describe and recommend healthy eating patterns to patients
DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS

• Evidence-based

• Reflects advancements in scientific understanding about healthy eating choices and health outcomes over a lifetime
DIETARY GUIDELINES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

• Made up of 14 prestigious researchers and scientists in the fields of nutrition, health, and medicine

• Reviewed 2010 Guidelines and new scientific evidence since then

• Submitted scientific report for input from other experts as well as the public
New Dietary Guidelines released on Jan 7th, 2016


Some images from StockSnap.io.
THE GUIDELINES

1. Follow a healthy eating pattern across the lifespan.

2. Focus on variety, nutrient density, and amount.

3. Limit calories from added sugars and saturated fats and reduce sodium intake.

4. Shift to healthier food and beverage choices.

5. Support healthy eating patterns for all.
“While previous editions focused primarily on specific, individual dietary components — such as foods, food groups, and nutrients — the 2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines emphasizes overall eating patterns, the combinations of all the foods and drinks that people consume every day.” (health.gov)
DIETARY PATTERNS

• Focus on dietary patterns, not nutrients

• Previous DGA have had sections focusing on nutrients of concern

• Dietary patterns are easier to follow than nutrient-focused recommendations

• Sodium, saturated fats
A HEALTHY EATING PATTERN INCLUDES:

• A variety of vegetables from all of the subgroups

• Fruits, especially whole fruits (at least half)

• Grains (at least half should be whole grains, some fortified)

• FF or LF dairy, including milk, yogurt, cheese, and/or fortified soy beverages

• A variety of protein foods, including seafood, lean meats and poultry, eggs, legumes, and nuts, seeds, and soy products

• Oils
A HEALTHY EATING PATTERN LIMITS:

- Saturated fats and trans fats, added sugars, and sodium
- Less than 10% of daily calories from added sugars
- Less than 10% of daily calories from saturated fats
- Less than 2,300 mg per day of sodium
- Alcohol (drink only in moderation)
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

• Adults: at least **150 minutes** (moderate intensity) and muscle-strengthening exercises on at least 2 days each week

• Youth (6 to 17 years): at least **60 minutes** of physical activity per day, including aerobic, muscle-strengthening, and bone-strengthening activities
ANOTHER KEY WORD: ‘SHIFTS’

• This edition of the Dietary Guidelines focuses on shifts to emphasize the need to make substitutions rather than additions.

• This means choosing nutrient-dense foods in place of less healthy choices rather than increasing intake overall.
HOW ARE WE DOING?

• Knowing typical eating patterns is important

• How does the average American diet compare to the recommendations in the Dietary Guidelines?

DATA SOURCES:
- What We Eat in America, NHANES 2007-2010 for average intakes by age-sex group.
- Healthy U.S.-Style Food Patterns, which vary based on age, sex, and activity level, for recommended intake ranges.
DIETARY INTAKES COMPARED TO RECOMMENDATIONS
GRAINS

• Choose 100 percent **whole-grain foods** for at least **half** of all grains consumed

• **Limit the intake of refined grains** and products made with refined grains

• Individuals who eat refined grains should choose **enriched grains**
Average Whole and Refined Grain Intakes in Ounce-Equivalents per Day by Age-Sex Groups, Compared to Ranges of Recommended Daily Intake for Whole Grains and Limits for Refined Grains
PROTEIN

• Variety: seafood; meats, poultry, and eggs; nuts, seeds, and soy products; beans and peas

• Nuts and seeds should be unsalted, and meats and poultry should be consumed in lean forms

• Caution with sodium and saturated fats in processed meats and processed poultry
PROTEIN

Average Protein Foods Subgroup Intakes in Ounce-Equivalents per Week by Age-Sex Groups, Compared to Ranges of Recommended Intake
More than half of the population is meeting or exceeding total grain and total protein foods recommendations, but **not meeting the recommendations for the subgroups** within each of these food groups.
HOW ARE WE DOING?

• About three-fourths of the population has an eating pattern that is low in vegetables, fruits, dairy, and oils
VEGETABLES

- **Variety**: dark green, red and orange, legumes (beans and peas), starchy, and other

- **Prepared in healthful ways**: steamed, sautéed, roasted, or raw. Limit additions such as salt, butter, or creamy sauces

- **Goal is to meet food group recommendations without consuming excessive calories**
Average Vegetable Subgroup Intakes in Cup-Equivalents per Week by Age-Sex Groups, Compared to Ranges of Recommended Intakes per Week
# Vegetable Subgroups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dark-green vegetables</strong></td>
<td>Broccoli, spinach, leafy salad greens (including romaine lettuce), collards, bok choy, kale, turnip greens, mustard greens, green herbs (parsley, cilantro)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Red and orange vegetables</strong></td>
<td>Tomatoes, carrots, tomato juice, sweet potatoes, red peppers (hot and sweet), winter squash, pumpkin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legumes (beans and peas)</strong></td>
<td>Pinto, white, kidney, and black beans; lentils; chickpeas; limas (mature, dried); split peas; edamame (green soybeans)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Starchy vegetables</strong></td>
<td>Potatoes, corn, green peas, limas (green, immature), plaintains, cassava</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other vegetables</strong></td>
<td>Lettuce (iceberg), onions, green beans, cucumbers, celery, green peppers, cabbage, mushrooms, avocado, summer squash (includes zucchini), cauliflower, eggplant, garlic, bean sprouts, olives, asparagus, peapods (snowpeas), beets</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HOW ARE WE DOING?

• Most Americans *exceed* the recommendations for added sugars, saturated fats, and sodium
LIMIT:

• Less than 10% of daily calories from added sugars
• Less than 10% of daily calories from saturated fats
• Less than 2,300 mg per day of sodium
Average Intakes of Added Sugars as a Percent of Calories per Day by Age-Sex Group, in Comparison to the Dietary Guidelines Maximum Limit of Less than 10 Percent of Calories
SOURCES OF ADDED SUGARS

Food Category Sources of Added Sugars in the U.S. Population Ages 2 Years and Older
INTAKE OF SATURATED FATS

Average Intakes of Saturated Fats as a Percent of Calories per Day by Age-Sex Groups, Compared to Dietary Guidelines Maximum Limit of Less than 10 Percent of Calories
Food Category Sources of Saturated Fats in the U.S. Population Ages 2 Years and Older
INTAKE OF SODIUM

Average Intake of Sodium in Milligrams per Day by Age-Sex Groups, Compared to Tolerable Upper Intake Levels (UL)
SOURCES OF SODIUM

Food Category Sources of Sodium in the U.S. Population Ages 2 Years and Older
Implementation of *Dietary Guidelines* through MyPlate

- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
- Focus on whole fruits.
- Vary your veggies.
- Grains: Make half your grains whole grains.
- Protein: Vary your protein routine.
- Dairy: Move to low-fat or fat-free milk or yogurt.
- Limit: Drink and eat less sodium, saturated fat, and added sugars.
NEW IN THIS EDITION

Focus on foods and patterns:

• Previous editions of the Dietary Guidelines focused primarily on individual dietary components such as food groups and nutrients. However, people do not eat food groups and nutrients in isolation but rather in combination, and the totality of the diet forms an overall eating pattern.
WHAT’S CHANGED IN THIS VERSION OF DGA?

• **Sodium**: 1,500 mg/d recommendation is now limited to adults with hypertension and prehypertension

• **Added sugars**: new more specific recommendation - to consume less than 10% of daily calories from added sugars
WHAT’S CHANGED IN THIS VERSION OF DGA?

• **Cholesterol limit removed:** no longer limit to 300 mg/d

• Insufficient evidence of relationship with intake and blood cholesterol and cardiovascular disease

• Decreased egg consumption has led to lower intake of essential vitamin choline
WHAT’S CHANGED IN THIS VERSION OF DGA?

• **Caffeine**: not a nutrient, but guidance states that moderate coffee consumption (three to five 8-oz cups a day, up to 400 mg caffeine) can be part of a healthy eating pattern.

  1. Does not encourage people who do not currently consume caffeine to begin

  2. Cautions against added empty calories often found in caffeinated beverages
CONTROVERSIES

Committee recommendation:

• Americans should shift to an eating pattern that includes more plant-based foods

• Eat less red meat and processed meat

• Not more than 12.5 oz per day
Committee recommendation:

- Research indicates lower intake of meat is associated with better health outcomes
- Not only promotes health, but is also more environmentally sustainable
CONTROVERSIES

Concern:

• Research does not define ‘meats’ in a consistent manner

• Meat, red meat, processed meat, sausage, eggs, poultry, fish, lean meats, high fat meats

• Sustainability is beyond the scope of the DGAC
Make half your plate fruits and vegetables: Focus on whole fruits
- Choose whole fruits—fresh, frozen, dried, or canned in 100% juice.
- Enjoy fruit with meals, as snacks, or as a dessert.

Make half your grains whole grains
- Look for whole grains listed first or second on the ingredients list—try oatmeal, popcorn, whole-grain bread, and brown rice.
- Limit grain desserts and snacks, such as cakes, cookies, and pastries.

Move to low-fat or fat-free milk or yogurt
- Choose fat-free milk, yogurt, and soy beverages (soy milk) to cut back on saturated fat.
- Replace sour cream, cream, and regular cheese with low-fat yogurt, milk, and cheese.

Drink and eat less sodium, saturated fat, and added sugars
- Use the Nutrition Facts label and ingredients list to limit items high in sodium, saturated fat, and added sugars.
- Choose vegetable oils instead of butter, and oil-based sauces and dips instead of ones with butter, cream, or cheese.
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks.

Make half your plate fruits and vegetables: Vary your veggies
- Try adding fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables to salads, sides, and main dishes.
- Choose a variety of colorful veggies prepared in healthful ways: steamed, sautéed, roasted, or raw.

Vary your protein routine
- Mix up your protein foods to include seafood, beans and peas, unsalted nuts and seeds, soy products, eggs, and lean meats and poultry.
- Try main dishes made with beans and seafood, like tuna salad or bean chili.
DGA COMMUNICATION POINTS

• **Aim to communicate about foods first.** A basic premise of the Dietary Guidelines is that nutrient needs should be met primarily through consuming foods.

• **All food and beverages choices matter.** An eating pattern includes the combination of all foods and beverages that make up an individual's complete dietary intake over time. A healthy eating pattern is more than the sum of its parts; it represents the totality of what individuals habitually eat and drink, and these dietary components act in concert to promote health.

• **Convey the big picture.** The Key Recommendations for healthy eating patterns should be applied in their entirety. Although you may have a need to communicate about one food group, food, food component, or nutrient, it's important to help your audience understand how a component fits within broader healthy eating patterns as a whole.
DGA COMMUNICATION POINTS

• **Promote nutrient-dense choices.** Healthy eating styles are based on choosing a variety of foods that contain vitamins, minerals, fiber, and other healthful nutrients or components at an appropriate calorie level. Nutrient-dense foods include vegetables, fruits, whole grains, seafood, eggs, beans and peas, unsalted nuts and seeds, fat-free and low-fat dairy products, and lean meats and poultry and foods with little or no saturated fats, sodium, and added sugars.

• **Be inclusive.** All forms of food -- fresh, canned, dried, and frozen -- can be included in healthy eating patterns.

• **Encourage personalization.** Healthy eating patterns can be adapted and tailored to the individual to accommodate their personal, cultural, and traditional preferences, as well as food budget.
• **One size does not fit all.** An individual’s eating pattern, nutrient needs, and food group amounts will vary based on age, height, weight, sex, and activity level. Consider the audience you are communicating to and choose healthy eating patterns at an appropriate calorie level for the age group. For many audiences, especially children, calorie and nutrient needs can vary greatly. Providing calorie, food group, or nutrient amounts can give the audience a better understanding what healthy eating patterns include.

• **Empower change.** For most individuals, achieving healthy eating patterns will require changes in food choices. Suggest positive, action-oriented steps that can move individuals closer to healthy eating patterns.

• **Promote physical activity.** Physical activity can contribute to calorie balance and body weight management. In addition, physical activity promotes health and reduces risk of chronic disease and should be encouraged.
THANK YOU!

vdasilva@email.arizona.edu