New 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans

Most Americans need to trim their waistlines to reduce the risk of developing diet-related chronic disease. More than one in three children and over two-thirds of adults in the United States are either overweight or obese.

2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans
Released on January 31, 2011, the new and improved 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans specifically address the growing issue of overweight and obesity. They give science-based nutritional guidance to promote health and reduce the risk of chronic diseases.

Intended for Ages 2 Years & Older: The Dietary Guidelines are intended for Americans ages 2 years and older, including those at increased risk of chronic disease. Children under 2 years of age are not included because their eating patterns and nutritional needs are very different than those of older children and adults.

Key Messages: There are 23 key messages for the general public and six additional key messages for specific population groups, including older adults and women who are pregnant or breastfeeding. Emphasis is on eating healthful foods in the right portions and getting adequate physical activity to complement those choices.

Three Areas for Change: Consumers are encouraged to make changes in three areas to achieve and maintain a healthy weight.

1. Balance calories “in” (food) with calories “out” (physical activity). In other words, consume only enough calories from foods and beverages to meet your needs while getting adequate physical activity.

2. Eat greater amounts of healthful foods, such as vegetables, fruits, whole grains, fat-free and low-fat dairy products and seafood.

3. Eat smaller amounts of less healthful food components, such as sodium (salt), saturated and trans fats, added sugars and refined grains.

Consumer Tips: Here are some practical steps to help you include the Dietary Guidelines in your everyday life to improve your health.

- Enjoy your food, but eat less.
- Avoid oversized portions.
- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables. Divide the other half of your plate between a protein and a grain source.
- Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk.
- Compare sodium in foods, such as soup, bread, and frozen meals, and choose the foods with lower numbers.
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks.

Visit www.dietaryguidelines.gov for more tips and consumer recommendations, including physical activity and food safety. By making only one or two changes at a time, you will find it easier to maintain these healthful behaviors with less frustration. If you have a chronic health condition, consult with a health care provider or registered dietitian to determine an appropriate dietary pattern for you.

Release of New Food Pyramid: In the coming months, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will release a next generation Food Pyramid and more consumer-friendly advice and tools for translating the Dietary Guidelines into your daily life.
Background of Dietary Guidelines for Americans: The first Dietary Guidelines for Americans was released in 1980 through a joint effort of USDA and HHS in accordance with a law mandated by Congress. These guidelines have been reviewed, updated if necessary, and published every 5 years by USDA and HHS. They are the basis of Federal nutrition policy, education, labeling, outreach, and food assistance programs (e.g. school meals programs and Meals on Wheels programs for seniors) used by consumers, industry, nutrition educators and health professionals.

Prepared by Janis G. Hunter, HGIC Nutrition Specialist, and Katherine L. Cason, Professor, Food Science and Human Nutrition Department, Clemson University, 04/11.

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