

# Charting A Healthy Course

A Consumer's Guide  
to Good Nutrition



American Council For Fitness & Nutrition  
*a healthy balance for life.*



BlueCross BlueShield Association  
An Association of Independent Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans



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### Overview

Good nutrition and physical activity are the building blocks of a healthy lifestyle. When coupled with a regular dose of physical activity, like brisk walking, stretching, or even gardening, healthy eating can help you and your family feel better, increase your energy and look better too! The best part — good nutrition is within everyone's reach. All it takes is a little nutrition know-how!

This nutrition guide was developed by the American Council for Fitness and Nutrition in partnership with the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association to help you and your family navigate the new Federal Dietary Guidelines and incorporate healthy eating into your everyday routine. From portion size to calorie needs, you'll find the tips and resources you need to guide your way toward a healthier you.

We hope you find this guide helpful in charting a healthy new course!

## Sounds Like a Plan!

**Healthy eating starts with a plan.** Every body is different, with nutritional needs that vary based on age, gender, condition and physical activity. Knowing what foods and amounts are right for you is a good place to start.

So what is a healthy diet? Federal Dietary Guidelines describe a healthy diet as one that:

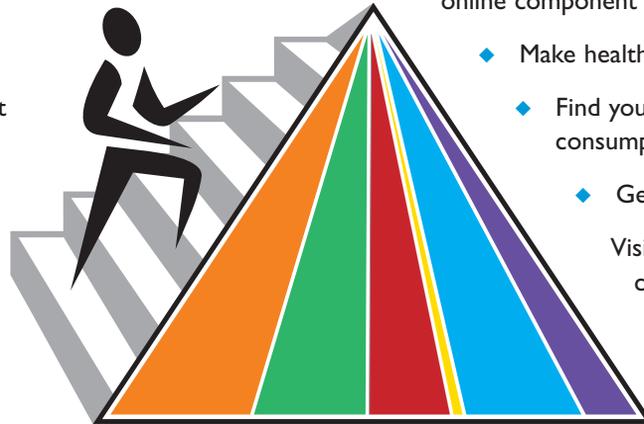
- ◆ Emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products;
- ◆ Includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs and nuts; and
- ◆ Is low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium) and added sugars.\*

\* United States Department of Agriculture, [MyPyramid.gov](http://MyPyramid.gov)

In April 2005, the U.S. Department of Agriculture released the **MyPyramid** symbol to help more Americans balance good nutrition and physical activity with everyday healthy choices. The new symbol and interactive food guidance system replaces the 1992 Food Guide Pyramid, and incorporates recommendations from the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. **MyPyramid** includes an interactive online component that you can use to:

- ◆ Make healthy choices from every food group;
- ◆ Find your own personal balance between food consumption and physical activity; and
- ◆ Get the most out of your daily calories.

Visit [www.MyPyramid.gov](http://www.MyPyramid.gov) to assess your daily calorie and physical activity needs, and create your own online **MyPyramid** plan.



**MyPyramid.gov**  
STEPS TO A HEALTHIER YOU



## It's Not Only What You Eat It's How Much You Eat, Too

Knowing how much to eat is just as important as knowing what to eat. Portion control not only guides calorie intake, it can help to balance the right combination of foods and nutrients that your body needs. In this way, portion control helps to ensure that your daily diet packs a nutritious punch!

According to USDA's newly released **MyPyramid**, an average person in his or her mid-30s who engages in physical activity for 30-60 minutes most days of the week, needs about 2,000 (female) or 2,600 (male) calories a day to meet energy needs and maintain a healthy weight.

Here's how those 2,000 calories look spread across the **MyPyramid** food groups.

### Approximate calories from each food group needed daily (Based on a 2,000-calorie diet)

Food Group	Servings	Average Calories needed per day	Foods calories were based on
Grain	6 ounces*	950	whole wheat rice & breads
Vegetable	2.5 cups	85	variety green & orange vegetables
Fruit	2 cups	160	variety of fruits
Milk	3 cups	200	reduced fat milk & dairy
Meat**	5.5 ounces	340	lean meats & fish
Other/fats & oils	6 teaspoons	260	butter, oils

\* In general, 1 slice of bread, 1 cup of ready-to-eat cereal, or 1/2 cup of cooked rice, cooked pasta or cooked cereal can be considered as 1 ounce equivalent from the grains group. At least half of all grains consumed should be whole grains. (Grains are expressed in ounces because weight is a unit of measure that can be applied to all grains, from pasta and rice to bread and bagels.)

\*\* The meat group includes lean meat, fish, poultry, eggs, dried beans and peas. Dried beans and peas are counted in both the vegetable and meat groups; individuals who regularly eat meat, poultry and fish would count dried beans and peas in the vegetable group. Vegetarians would count some of the dried beans and peas they eat in the meat group.

## How Many Calories Do You Need?

Every body is different, and different daily calorie needs vary from person to person. Age, gender and physical activity levels all affect how many calories a person needs each day. Use the quick and easy equation below to calculate your unique calorie needs.



Your current weight  
x 10 if you are inactive (less than  
30 minutes/day of moderate physical activity)  
x 12 if you are moderately active (30-60  
minutes/day of moderate physical activity)  
x 15 if you are active (60 or more minutes/day  
of moderate physical activity)

**Example:** A 150-lb. person who is moderately active needs 1,800 calories to maintain his or her current weight.

Remember to stay within your calorie needs each day and to include physical activity that's appropriate for you. The U.S. Surgeon General reports that a minimum of 30 minutes of moderate physical activity, such as brisk walking (the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports recommends 10,000 steps a day) most days of the week can produce long-term health benefits. Even if you don't have a solid block of time, remember that physical activity can always be broken

down into three 10-minute intervals. Walk around your office building for a short break during the day, take the stairs instead of the elevator or park toward the back of a shopping center and walk to the store.

If your goal is healthy weight loss, use your desired weight in the equation rather than your current weight.

Desired Weight x 10 if inactive  
x 12 if moderately active  
x 15 if active

\_\_\_\_\_ x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_  
desired weight activity level your calorie needs

**Example:** A 250-lb person who is moderately active should aim for a 2,400 calorie diet to work toward a desired weight of 200-lbs.

200 x 12 = 2,400  
desired weight activity level calorie needs

For a complete breakdown of calorie needs by age, gender and activity level, based on maintaining a healthy weight, visit [www.MyPyramid.gov](http://www.MyPyramid.gov).

*\* Before beginning any weight loss or nutrition program or new exercise regime, consult with your doctor or health care provider.*

## What Does 2,000 Calories Look Like?

Always read the food label or ask for menu nutrition information to make sure that the calories and portion sizes fit into your total calorie goal for the day. Depending on brand and type, products such as bread, milk and cereal, can have different amounts of calories for the same serving size.

### For a 2,200 calories/day diet . . .

Add any of the following as a snack, which equal about 200-220 calories:

- ◆ A handful of nuts\* (almonds, walnuts or peanuts).
- ◆ A sports/energy bar\*.
- ◆ 2 cups of buttered-flavored microwave popcorn\*.

\* Check the food label for exact number of calories.

Below is a sample menu based on a 2,000-calorie diet:

Breakfast	Serving size	Calories
Cereal (bran or whole grain type)	1/2 to 1 cup	110
Milk (reduced fat 2%)	1 cup	100
Banana	1 medium	105
<b>Snack</b>		
Yogurt (low calorie, low-fat, fruit)	6 ounces.	100
Apple	1 medium	80
<b>Lunch</b>		
Chicken Salad Wrap (with whole wheat pita and plain yogurt instead of mayo)		310
Baby Carrots		45
Baked Potato Chips (single serve bag, plain)		110
Fig Filled Cookies (single serve pack)		200
Diet Soft Drink		0
<b>Snack</b>		
Low Fat Cheddar Cheese	19g 3/4 ounce	60
Wheat Crackers	single serving pack	100
<b>Dinner</b>		
Small Salad & Dressing (low-fat)	1 cup, 1 tbsp	150
Steamed Broccoli	1/2 cup	50
Cooked Instant Brown Rice	1/2 cup	50
Broiled Salmon	3 ounces	230
Roll with Butter	medium, 1 tsp.	100
Wine	5 ounces	100
<b>Total Calories</b>		<b>2,000</b>

## Including Fast Food In Your Diet — Is It Possible?

Food	Calories
<b>Grilled Chicken Sandwich</b>	360
<b>Hamburger with everything</b> (mayo, ketchup, mustard, pickles, lettuce, tomato, etc.)	430
<b>Entrée Salad</b> (no dressing)	180
with meat	380
<b>Salad dressings:</b>	
Honey Mustard	280
Creamy Ranch	230
Reduced Fat Ranch	100
Fat Free French	80
<b>5 Piece Chicken Nuggets</b>	220
Sauce: Barbeque	40
Honey Mustard	130
<b>Medium Fries with Ketchup</b>	440
<b>Milkshake</b> (medium – 16 oz.)	430

### Tips to make it healthier

- ◆ Order a small or kid size fries
- ◆ Avoid the double patty
- ◆ Substitute a baked potato or side salad for the fries (remember to use a lower fat dressing and don't load up the potato with lots of cheese or sour cream)
- ◆ Use low fat mayo
- ◆ Order a frozen yogurt instead of a milkshake

### Serving vs. Portion — What's the Difference?

A serving size is the amount of food recommended for meeting nutrition and energy needs and maintaining a healthy weight. In **MyPyramid**, a serving is represented as a household measure. A portion is the amount of food you actually eat. Serving sizes were simply standardized to find a common language to communicate good nutrition to consumers. On the other hand, portion size is chosen by the individual and will depend on their daily caloric needs, weight management goals and overall health status.

For example, pregnant and breastfeeding women may require larger portions of food than do women who are not pregnant and an active male would require larger portions or more food than an inactive male of same height, age and weight.

Food Group	Tip	Goal	Look each food up in the Food Guide*	Example Your Total
<b>VEGETABLES</b>	Make at least half your plate whole grains.	4 ounce equivalents 10 ounce equivalent is about 1 slice bread, 1 cup dry cereal, or 1 cup rice or pasta.		ounce equivalents
	Try to have vegetables from several subgroups each day.	3 1/2 cups Vegetables: Dark Green, Orange, Beans, Dry Beans and Peas, Other Vegetables		cups
	Make most choices fruit, not juice.	3 cups		cups
<b>MILK</b>	Choose fat-free or low-fat milk when you can.	3 cups 1 1/2 cups cottage cheese = 1 cup milk		cups
<b>MEAT &amp; BEANS</b>	Choose lean meat and poultry. Vary your protein choices: fish, beans, peas, eggs, and seeds.	5 1/2 ounce equivalents (1 ounce equivalent is 1 ounce meat, poultry or fish, 1 1/2 ounces beans, peas, eggs, or tofu)		ounce equivalents
<b>PHYSICAL ACTIVITY</b>	Build more physical activity into your daily routine at home and work.	At least 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous activity a day. 15 minutes or more at a time.		minutes

\*Some foods don't fit into any group. These foods may be healthy but do not count toward your intake of any group.

Did you do today?  Great  So-so  Not so Great

Goal for tomorrow is:

Goal for tomorrow is:

## Your Secret to Success Try This at Home!

Research shows that keeping track of what you eat and how physically active you are can help you discover unhealthy patterns

and learn to make healthier choices. A simple way to start is to keep a running list of the foods you eat each day. As you start to see patterns or places where you can make healthier eating choices, make substitutions in your diet. In addition, [www.MyPyramid.gov](http://www.MyPyramid.gov) offers a unique food and activity-tracking feature that will allow you to compare your choices to the recommended levels for your age and gender.

Learn to judge the amount of food you eat by measuring out the recommended serving sizes below and seeing what they really look like in the dishware and glassware you use. Before long you'll be able to recognize what the correct serving looks like without measuring it!

Following are typical serving sizes to help you gauge, and be aware of, the actual portions you are eating:

- ◆ 1 ounce for cheese
- ◆ 1 cup for fresh fruit or vegetables
- ◆ 1/2 cup for canned fruit or cooked vegetables
- ◆ 1/2 cup for starchy vegetables and dried beans
- ◆ 1 slice for most breads (read nutrition facts label, some brands are 2 slices)
- ◆ 1/2 cup for dry cereal
- ◆ 1/2 cup for cooked cereal (oatmeal, cream of wheat, etc.)
- ◆ 1/3 cup for rice or pasta (cooked)
- ◆ 1 cup for dairy products (milk, yogurt)
- ◆ 3 ounces for lean meats, poultry and fish
- ◆ 1 teaspoon for oil, margarine or butter



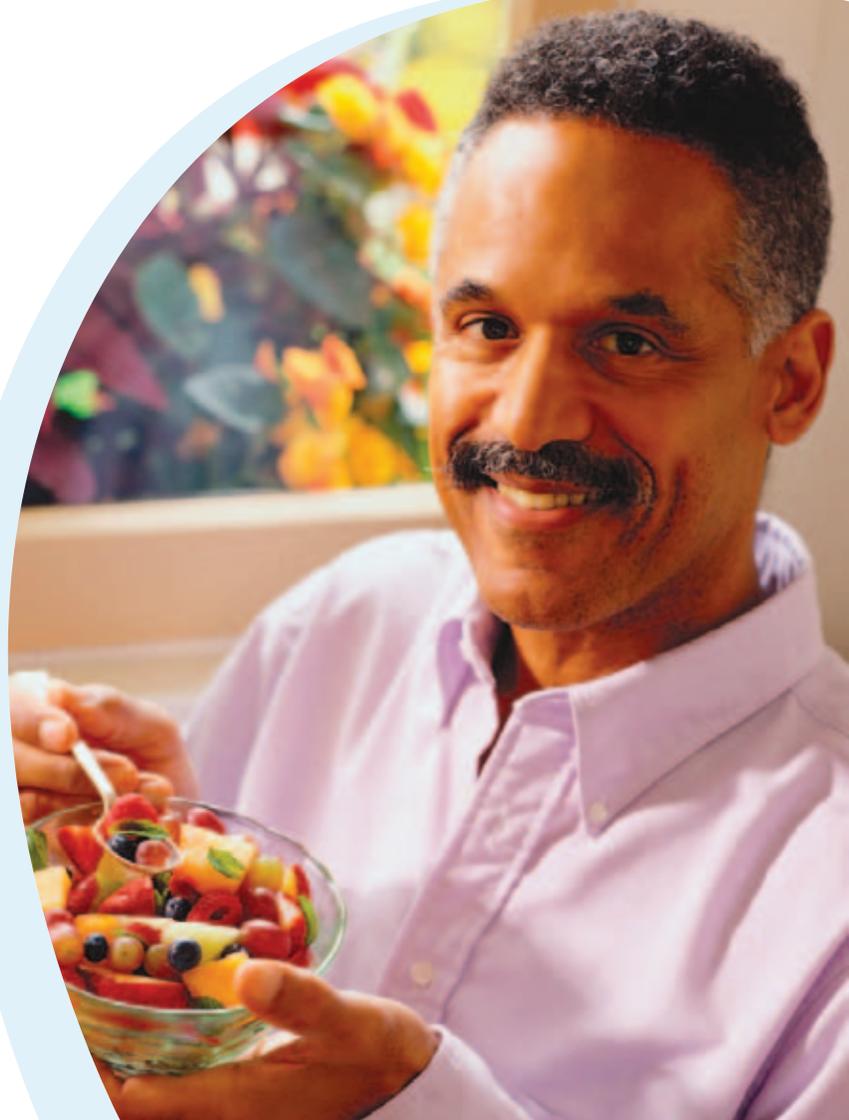


## Fit Your Food In!

- ◆ A 1/2-cup serving of canned fruit, vegetables or potatoes looks like half a tennis ball sitting on your plate.
- ◆ 3 ounces of meat, fish or poultry is about the size of a deck of playing cards or the palm of your hand.
- ◆ A 1-cup serving of milk, yogurt or fresh greens is about the size of your fist.
- ◆ A serving (3/4 cup) of fresh fruit should be about the size of your fist.
- ◆ A potato (1/2 cup) should be about the size of a computer mouse.
- ◆ A serving (1 ounce) of low-fat cheese should be about the size of an ice cube or your thumb.
- ◆ A serving (1 tbsp.) of low-calorie salad dressing should be about the size of half a golf ball.
- ◆ 1 teaspoon of oil, margarine or butter is about the size of the tip of your thumb.

## Tips for Eating Out or On the Run

- ◆ Only eat half of your meal and put the other half in a to-go bag.
- ◆ Order a lunch or appetizer portion whenever possible.
- ◆ Don't order the large size.
- ◆ If you do not have control (if your eyes are bigger than your stomach) avoid eating at buffets.
- ◆ Ask for sauces, gravy and salad dressings on the side.
- ◆ Avoid family style restaurants; they tend to have the same drawbacks as eating at a buffet.
- ◆ Don't be afraid to substitute an item or the cooking method.
- ◆ Share!
- ◆ Take your lunch (to the office, on a trip in the car or plane).
- ◆ Choose water or diet soda in place of regular soda.



## American Council for Fitness and Nutrition

The American Council for Fitness and Nutrition (ACFN) is a non-profit organization that brings together food and beverage companies, associations and health and nutrition advocates to work toward viable long-term solutions to the nation's obesity epidemic. ACFN represents a diverse group of organizations and is guided by an Advisory Board of experts in the fields of nutrition, physical activity and behavior change. ACFN collaborates with health professionals, educators, governments, policy makers and consumers on lasting approaches to reducing and preventing obesity.

For more information about ACFN, including tips and programs that are making a positive difference in helping people live healthier lives, please visit the ACFN website at [www.acfn.org](http://www.acfn.org).

ACFN's thanks and appreciation go to Advisory Board member, Lisa Katic, R.D., who developed the content for *Charting a Healthy Course, A Consumer's Guide to Good Nutrition*.

## Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association is the trade association for the 40 independent, locally operated Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies. In 2003, the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association and member companies created **WalkingWorks<sup>SM</sup>** to help Americans live healthier, more active lives, and ultimately reduce the likelihood of costly health problems down the road. Developed in partnership with the President's Council on Fitness and Sports, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Steps to a Healthier US initiative, **WalkingWorks** encourages individuals to incorporate walking into their daily routines, and offers materials and tools that guide individuals in creating personalized walking programs.

For more information on WalkingWorks<sup>SM</sup> visit [www.bcbs.com/walkingworks](http://www.bcbs.com/walkingworks).

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