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URL of this page: <https://medlineplus.gov/nutrition.html>

Nutrition

Good nutrition is important in keeping people healthy throughout their lives - when they are **babies** [https://medlineplus.gov/infantandnewbornnutrition.html] , **toddlers** [https://medlineplus.gov/toddlernutrition.html] , **children** [https://medlineplus.gov/childnutrition.html] , **adults**, and then **older adults** [https://medlineplus.gov/nutritionforolderadults.html] . It can help people live longer and lower their risk of health problems like **heart disease** [https://medlineplus.gov/howtopreventheartdisease.html] , **type 2 diabetes** [https://medlineplus.gov/diabetestype2.html] , **obesity** [https://medlineplus.gov/obesity.html] , and more.

Good nutrition is about healthy eating. This means regularly choosing healthy foods and beverages. A healthy eating plan should give your body the energy and nutrients that you need every day. Nutrients include **proteins** [https://medlineplus.gov/dietaryproteins.html] , **carbohydrates** [https://medlineplus.gov/carbohydrates.html] , **fats** [https://medlineplus.gov/dietaryfats.html] , **vitamins** [https://medlineplus.gov/vitamins.html] , **minerals** [https://medlineplus.gov/minerals.html] , and **water** [https://medlineplus.gov/drinkingwater.html] . The plan should also take into account your preferences, cultural traditions, and budget.

Healthy eating does not mean that you have to follow a very strict diet or eat only a few specific types of food. It doesn't mean that you can never eat your favorite foods. You can eat a variety of foods, including less healthy favorites. But it's important not to eat too much of those foods or have them too often. You can balance those foods with healthier foods and regular physical activity [https://medlineplus.gov/howmuchexercisedoneed.html] .

The keys to a healthy eating plan include:

- Eating a variety of foods, including vegetables, fruits, and whole-grain products
- Eating lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, and low-fat dairy products
- Getting enough **fiber** [https://medlineplus.gov/dietaryfiber.html]
- Drinking lots of water
- Limiting **salt** [https://medlineplus.gov/sodium.html] , added sugars, alcohol [https://medlineplus.gov/alcohol.html] , and saturated fat
- Making sure that you get enough nutrients, especially **calcium** [https://medlineplus.gov/calcium.html] , **vitamin D** [https://medlineplus.gov/vitamind.html] , and **potassium** [https://medlineplus.gov/potassium.html]

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Start Here

- 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans [https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/]
 (Department of Agriculture; Department of Health and Human Services)
- Breaking Down Food: A Closer Look at What You Eat [https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2023/08/breaking-down-food]
 (National Institutes of Health)
Also in Spanish [https://salud.nih.gov/recursos-de-salud/nih-noticias-de-salud/descomponiendo-la-comida]
- MyPlate Food Guide [https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/myplate.html] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [https://kidshealth.org/es/teens/myplate.html]

- MyPlate.gov [<https://www.myplate.gov/>] (Department of Agriculture)
- Nutrition.gov [<https://www.nutrition.gov/>] (Department of Agriculture)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.nutrition.gov/es>]
- Start Simple with MyPlate App [<https://www.myplate.gov/resources/tools/startsimple-myplate-app>] (Department of Agriculture)

Related Issues

- Aim for a Healthy Weight: Menus [https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/lose_wt/menuplanner.html]  (National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute)
- Dejunking Your Diet: The Drawbacks of Ultra-Processed Foods [<https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2024/02/dejunking-your-diet>]  (National Institutes of Health)
Also in Spanish [<https://salud.nih.gov/recursos-de-salud/nih-noticias-de-salud/eliminando-la-comida-chatarra-de-su-alimentacion>]
- Diet Choices to Prevent Cancer [<https://familydoctor.org/cancer-diet-choices-to-prevent-cancer/?adfree=true>] (American Academy of Family Physicians)
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/cancer-opciones-de-dieta-para-prevenir-el-cancer/?adfree=true>]
- Diet in the News -- What to Believe? [<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/media/>] (Harvard School of Public Health)
- Feeding Your Family on a Tight Budget [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/feeding-families.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/feeding-families.html>]
- Food Ingredients & Packaging [<https://www.fda.gov/food/food-ingredients-packaging>] (Food and Drug Administration)
- Fresh Take on What "Healthy" Means on Food Packages [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/fresh-take-what-healthy-means-food-packages>]  (Food and Drug Administration)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/articulos-para-el-consumidor-en-espanol/una-nueva-perspectiva-del-significado-de-healthy-saludable-en-los-paquetes-de-alimentos>]
- Healthy Eating Linked to Better Brain Health [<https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2024/12/healthy-eating-linked-better-brain-health>] 
Also in Spanish [<https://salud.nih.gov/recursos-de-salud/nih-noticias-de-salud/la-alimentacion-saludable-esta-relacionada-con-una-mejor>]
- Healthy Eating on a Budget [<https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/healthy-eating-budget>] (Department of Agriculture)
- How Do I Change Recipes? [<https://www.heart.org/-/media/files/health-topics/answers-by-heart/how-do-i-change-recipes.pdf>]  (American Heart Association) - PDF
- Is Food Safe if It Has Chemicals? [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/food-safe-if-it-has-chemicals>] (Food and Drug Administration)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/son-seguros-los-alimentos-si-tienen-sustancias-quimicas>]
- Making Healthy Choices at Fast Food Restaurants [<https://familydoctor.org/making-healthy-choices-fast-food-restaurants/?adfree=true>] (American Academy of Family Physicians)
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/seleccion-de-alimentos-saludables-de-comidas-rapidas/?adfree=true>]

Specifics

- Eat Healthy: Food Group Gallery [<https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/food-group-gallery>] (Department of Agriculture)
- Eat Healthy: Fruits [<https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/fruits>] (Department of Agriculture)
- Eat Healthy: Vegetables [<https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/vegetables>] (Department of Agriculture)
- Foods for Eye Health [<https://www.eatright.org/health/wellness/healthful-habits/5-top-foods-for-eye-health>] (Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics)
- Healthy Recipes [<https://medlineplus.gov/recipes/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/recetas/>]
- Make Better Beverage Choices [<https://www.myplate.gov/tip-sheet/make-better-beverage-choices>] (Department of Agriculture)
- Milk and Plant-Based Milk Alternatives: Know the Nutrient Difference [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/milk-and-plant-based-milk-alternatives-know-nutrient-difference>] (Food and Drug Administration)

Also in Spanish [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/articulos-para-el-consumidor-en-espanol/la-leche-y-las-alternativas-base-de-plantas-conozca-la-diferencia-de-nutrientes>]

- MyPlate Kitchen (Recipes) [<https://www.myplate.gov/myplate-kitchen>] (Department of Agriculture)
- Nutrition Facts for Cooked Seafood [[https://www.fda.gov/files/food/published/Nutrition-Information-for-Cooked-Seafood-\(purchased-raw\)--Medium-PDF-Poster.pdf](https://www.fda.gov/files/food/published/Nutrition-Information-for-Cooked-Seafood-(purchased-raw)--Medium-PDF-Poster.pdf)] (Food and Drug Administration) - [PDF](#)
- Nutrition Facts for Raw Fruits [<https://www.fda.gov/files/food/published/Nutrition-Information-for-Raw-Fruits---small-PDF-Poster.pdf>] (Food and Drug Administration) - [PDF](#)
- Nutrition Facts for Raw Vegetables [<https://www.fda.gov/media/70792/download>] (Food and Drug Administration) - [PDF](#)
- Tipsheet: Eating Healthy Ethnic Food [https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/lose_wt/eat/tips_eth_dine.htm]  (National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute)

Test Your Knowledge

- Are You Eating Enough Fruits and Vegetables? [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/quiz/000339_54.htm] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/quiz/000339_112.htm]
- MyPlate Quiz [<https://www.myplate.gov/myplate-quiz>] (Department of Agriculture)
- MyPlate Quizzes [<https://www.myplate.gov/resources/tools/quizzes>] (Department of Agriculture)
- Test Your Knowledge About Healthy Eating [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/quiz/000330_25.htm] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/quiz/000330_86.htm]

Statistics and Research

- FastStats: Diet/Nutrition [<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/diet.htm>] (National Center for Health Statistics)
- How Much Fast Food Do We Eat in America? [<https://blogs.cdc.gov/nchs/2025/06/26/7784/>]
(National Center for Health Statistics)

Clinical Trials

- ClinicalTrials.gov: Nutrition [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Nutrition%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: Nutrition Disorders [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Nutrition+Disorders%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: Nutritional Physiological Phenomena [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Nutritional+Physiological+Phenomena%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: Influence of Preoperative Diagnosis of Nutritional Disorders on Short-Term Outcomes After... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40732944>]
- Article: Taste Plasticity in Nutrition and Health: A Scoping Review. [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40284201>]
- Article: To disrupt the traditional compartmentalized learning of nutrition functions, a proposition... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40080067>]
- Nutrition -- see more articles [[https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Nutrition+Disorders%22%5Bmajr%3Aexp%5D+OR+%22Nutritional+Physiological+Phenomena%22%5Bmajr%3Aexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+2+Years%22+%5Bedat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+\]](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Nutrition+Disorders%22%5Bmajr%3Aexp%5D+OR+%22Nutritional+Physiological+Phenomena%22%5Bmajr%3Aexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+2+Years%22+%5Bedat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+)]

Reference Desk

- Definitions of Health Terms: Nutrition [<https://medlineplus.gov/definitions/nutritiondefinitions.html>]  (National Library of Medicine)

Find an Expert

- Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics [<https://www.eatright.org>]
- Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion [<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cnpp>]
- Find a Nutrition Expert [<https://www.eatright.org/find-a-nutrition-expert>] (Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics)
- Food and Drug Administration [<https://www.fda.gov/>]
- National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov>] 

Men

- Eatright.org: For Men [<https://www.eatright.org/for-men>] (Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics)

Women

- Healthy Eating [<https://womenshealth.gov/healthy-eating>] (Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health)
Also in Spanish [<https://espanol.womenshealth.gov/healthy-eating>]

Patient Handouts

- Calorie count - fast food [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000887.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000887.htm>]
- Eating extra calories when you are sick - adults [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000035.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000035.htm>]
- Eating out [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000339.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000339.htm>]
- Fast food tips [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000105.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000105.htm>]
- Healthy grocery shopping [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000336.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000336.htm>]
- How to read food labels [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000107.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000107.htm>]
- Managing your weight with healthy eating [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000330.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000330.htm>]
- Nutrition Facts for Cooked Seafood [[https://www.fda.gov/files/food/published/Nutrition-Information-for-Cooked-Seafood-\(purchased-raw\)---Medium-PDF-Poster.pdf](https://www.fda.gov/files/food/published/Nutrition-Information-for-Cooked-Seafood-(purchased-raw)---Medium-PDF-Poster.pdf)] (Food and Drug Administration) - **PDF**
- Nutrition Facts for Raw Fruits [<https://www.fda.gov/files/food/published/Nutrition-Information-for-Raw-Fruits---small-PDF-Poster.pdf>] (Food and Drug Administration) - **PDF**
- Nutrition Facts for Raw Vegetables [<https://www.fda.gov/media/70792/download>] (Food and Drug Administration) - **PDF**
- Snacks for adults [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000338.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000338.htm>]



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

12 healthy snacks with 200 calories or less [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000724.htm>]

Calorie count - fast food [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000887.htm>]

Eating extra calories when you are sick - adults [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000035.htm>]

Eating out [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000339.htm>]

Fast food tips [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000105.htm>]

Food additives [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002435.htm>]

Healthy food trends - beans and legumes [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000726.htm>]

Healthy food trends - brussels sprouts [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000725.htm>]

Healthy food trends - chia seeds [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000727.htm>]

Healthy food trends - flaxseeds [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000728.htm>]

Healthy food trends - kale [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000729.htm>]

Healthy food trends - microgreens [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000730.htm>]

Healthy food trends - quinoa [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000731.htm>]

Healthy grocery shopping [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000336.htm>]

How to read food labels [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000107.htm>]

Managing your weight with healthy eating [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000330.htm>]

Simple, heart-smart substitutions [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000746.htm>]

Snacks for adults [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000338.htm>]

Soy [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007204.htm>]

Related Health Topics

Breastfeeding [<https://medlineplus.gov/breastfeeding.html>]

Calcium [<https://medlineplus.gov/calcium.html>]

Carbohydrates [<https://medlineplus.gov/carbohydrates.html>]

Child Nutrition [<https://medlineplus.gov/childnutrition.html>]

Cholesterol [<https://medlineplus.gov/cholesterol.html>]

Dietary Fats [<https://medlineplus.gov/dietaryfats.html>]

Dietary Fiber [<https://medlineplus.gov/dietaryfiber.html>]

Dietary Proteins [<https://medlineplus.gov/dietaryproteins.html>]

Diets [<https://medlineplus.gov/diets.html>]

Eating Disorders [<https://medlineplus.gov/eatingdisorders.html>]

Food Labeling [<https://medlineplus.gov/foodlabeling.html>]

Food Safety [<https://medlineplus.gov/foodsafety.html>]

Infant and Newborn Nutrition [<https://medlineplus.gov/infantandnewbornnutrition.html>]

Malnutrition [<https://medlineplus.gov/malnutrition.html>]

Minerals [<https://medlineplus.gov/minerals.html>]

Nutrition for Older Adults [<https://medlineplus.gov/nutritionforolderadults.html>]

Nutritional Support [<https://medlineplus.gov/nutritionalsupport.html>]

Obesity [<https://medlineplus.gov/obesity.html>]

Pregnancy and Nutrition [<https://medlineplus.gov/pregnancyandnutrition.html>]

Vegetarian Diet [<https://medlineplus.gov/vegetariandiet.html>]

Vitamins [<https://medlineplus.gov/vitamins.html>]

Weight Control [<https://medlineplus.gov/weightcontrol.html>]

National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Nutrition* is the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov>]

Other Languages

Find health information in languages other than English [<https://medlineplus.gov/languages/nutrition.html>] on *Nutrition*

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