

DIETARY GUIDELINES:

Road Map to Good Nutrition Treat Yourself Right-The Joy of Eating Well

Some people live their lives without knowing the pleasure of eating. They cut what they perceive as "bad foods" from their diets, banishing themselves to dull, tasteless meals or a world of yo-yo dieting.

Fortunately, there's a free road map to good nutrition that shows how you can eat well without sacrificing taste. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans, first issued in 1980 edition includes some important changes.

For the first time since their creation, the guidelines recommend Americans maintain or improve their weight by balancing their diet with moderate physical activity. The revised guidelines also call for a greater emphasis on grain foods.

Why the emphasis on grains? The new guidelines recognize grain foods like bread, pasta, cereal and crackers for their contribution to the "total diet." Because grains are rich in complex carbohydrates (starches), they're generally low in fat- making them an excellent replacement for higher -fat foods.

A source of the three major B vitamins and iron, grain foods often provide folate, potassium, calcium, vitamin E and magnesium. Because they're usually good sources of fiber, whole grains fill you up without filling you out. According to the guidelines, we should get 6-11 servings of grains a day, but studies show most Americans fall short of the mark, averaging about three.

At a time when 70 percent of shoppers report they're trying to cut back on fat, these guidelines spell out how to make healthful food selections, achieve a balanced diet and maintain a healthy weight.

In general, the new dietary guidelines provide simple steps to better health. Good nutrition begins with the food choices we make each day, so keep these seven guidelines Dietary Guidelines in mind:

1. Eat a variety of foods.
2. Balance the food you eat with physical activity. Maintain or improve your weight.
3. Choose diet with plenty of grain products, vegetables and fruits.
4. Choose a diet low in fat, saturated fat and cholesterol.
5. Choose a diet moderate in sugars.
6. Choose a diet moderate in salt and sodium.
7. If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.

Please keep in mind these are general guidelines and do not take into consideration any special medical conditions on an individual base. Please consult with your doctor and a dietitian for individual needs.