

NUTRITION BASICS



How to Eat Healthy
and Live Longer



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Overview of Basic Nutrition

There is much discussion today about basic nutrition. This is because there is an obesity epidemic on the rise, not just in the United States, but around the world. People are gaining weight for a number of reasons, including less time exercising and poorer eating habits. The poorer eating habits exemplify a lack of basic nutrition. Many people aren't even aware of what exactly makes up basic nutrition. In this report, we will go over what exactly basic nutrition is, so that you can ensure you are following this in your own life.

Basic nutrition involves drinking plenty of water and eating right. Water is essential because the human body is made up of anywhere from 45% to 75% of water by weight. In newborns, the amount of weight made up by water can be as high as 75%. In a study composed of men and women, of all ages, the adult human body averaged 65% water. Another reason why people must drink water regularly is because they cannot store water; thus, it must be replenished regularly.

The common knowledge was that you were supposed to drink eight glasses of water (about 64 ounces) each day. This knowledge has been disputed in recent years to where the recommended amount is now between six to ten glasses, depending upon the person. Suffice it to say, though, that water is vital to life and that humans cannot go for long periods of time without water. Depending upon weather conditions and climate, an average person may be able to survive up to a week at most without water.

Note: For weight loss purposes many nutritionists are now suggesting that you drink half your body weight in water. So a 200 pound person would need to drink 100 oz. of water per day.

Conversely, people can go up to two months without eating. This doesn't mean that it's good for you, though. Nutrient deficiencies can occur when you don't eat, leading to potentially dangerous side effects. The basic understanding was that you were supposed to eat three meals per day – breakfast in the morning, lunch in the afternoon, dinner in the evening. However, that has also been challenged



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in recent years. With many nutritionists now saying that you are best-served by eating four to six lighter meals throughout the day rather than three larger meals. This is because your metabolism continues to be used throughout the day when you eat that many meals per day. This leads to your food being turned into energy and not fat.

Of course, you need to be eating the right foods in order to maximize your energy levels and keep the food you eat from turning into fat. The “right foods” are those that come from eating from the “My Plate” guide, which is the current nutrition guide presented by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It is a food circle or pie chart that shows the serving portions from the five main food groups:

1. Fruits
2. Grains
3. Vegetables
4. Protein
5. Dairy

It is recommended that you eat approximately 30% each of vegetables and grains, while eating 20% each of proteins and fruits. A very small portion of dairy (less than 1%) should also be consumed each day (this small portion can be in the form of a yogurt cup, glass of milk, etc.). The U.S. Government also emphasizes portion control when deciding upon what to eat, plus limiting your intake of sugar and sodium.

In this section, we gave an overview of the importance of water, what is meant by the “right foods,” and the “My Plate” guide. In the next section, we will explore more of the importance of drinking water and eating the right foods, as well as examine more specific details of good nutrition and portion control.

The Importance of Water & Portion Control

In the last section, we touched on how important water is to human life, the right foods to eat to ensure one is getting the nutrients and minerals needed for a healthy life, and portion control to ensure people are not overeating and putting on weight. In this section, we will discuss these topics in more detail, especially the last two.



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We mentioned in the last section about how water is important to life, primarily due to the fact that our bodies are largely composed of water, both by volume and by weight. It was also discussed on how many glasses of water one needs to live a healthy life without feeling dehydrated.

It's important to note that you don't just get water from drinking from the tap or a bottle. You also get water via various foods, such as vegetables and fruits. Still, it's important for people to drink water to add to the amount that they get from the foods they eat. Nowadays, you can get water plain or in various fruit flavors. You, yourself, can add fruit such as lime or lemon to give your water a different flavor if you tire of the same old flavor of water.

Giving yourself variety when it comes to food is important as well. Not only is it vital in order to get all of the foods from the My Plate recommendation that was discussed in the last section, but it's also important to give your taste buds variety so that you don't tire of the same healthy foods. If you get bored with foods you will be less likely to eat them regularly, and makes it too easy to slip back into your old habits.

That's an important fact about eating healthy: You don't have to eat bland foods or the same foods over and over again in order to stay healthy, and to get in or stay in shape. The notion that you have to eat bland to eat healthy couldn't be farther from the truth. Nowadays, there are plenty of good options, plus there are plenty of cookbooks (both in print and digital). In addition you can download apps, and YouTube videos, among other sources, that can give you great ideas on how to make food taste even better without adding much fat, calories, and/or sugar.

In fact, the addition of extra fat, calories, and/or sugar is one of the biggest issues when it comes to eating out in restaurants. Many restaurants will have special sauces as part of their dishes. These sauces often taste delicious, but they are loaded with tons of calories and fat, neither of which are good for your waistline or your health.

The other main issue with eating out in restaurants is the size of the portions. It is recommended that you only eat three to four ounces of red meat twice a week at most. However, if you have gone to any restaurant that serves any type of steak, you know that the serving size is much larger than three to four ounces. Six ounces is a minimum, with steaks running 20+ ounces and more being quite



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common at many restaurants. Thus, if you eat even half of that amount, you're overdoing the amount of red meat you should be eating by at least two to four times the recommended amount. This is why portion control is a must for all of your meals, and especially when it comes to red meat.

Red meat contributes high levels of fat and cholesterol, and both of these have been linked to heart disease. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recommends people eating no more than 300 mg of cholesterol and 20 grams of saturated fat each day.

Another big issue that many people deal with in their diets is carbohydrates. Carbohydrates are sugars and starches that give people energy. There are two main types of carbohydrates: simple and complex. Simple carbohydrates can be broken down more quickly by the body, but the body uses up that energy much more quickly as well. Some foods that have simple carbohydrates include white bread, white sugar, and pastas. Complex carbohydrates take longer for the body to digest, but the energy provided by them lasts longer as well. Foods that include complex carbohydrates include vegetables, brown rice, legumes, and whole grain pasta and breads.

This is a major reason why there has been a push in the United States over the last several years to get more people (especially children) to eat whole grains rather than refined grains and flour. Whole wheat bread is much healthier than white bread because it has more of the nutrients your body needs to stay healthy and perform in top condition. An additional good side effect is that eating whole grains makes you feel fuller for longer, thus leading to you not eating as often because you aren't hungry as often.

In this section, we discussed more on why water is important to your diet, the right foods you need to eat in your diet, how portion control is important, and the two main carbohydrates and how they differ. In the next section, we'll discuss more about the main food groups revealed in My Plate.

Food Groups: Vegetables and Fruits

As we discussed earlier, the "My Plate" guide that is the recommended nutrition guide by the U.S. Department of Agriculture has broken down the main food groups into five distinct categories: Vegetables, Fruits, Grains, Proteins, Dairy. Over the next two sections, we will take a more in-depth look at what each of



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these food groups entails in terms of nutrition and selections. In this section, we will look at vegetables and fruits.

My Plate recommends 30% of the food we eat each day should consist of vegetables. This is designated by the green section on My Plate. It is recommended that women consume about 2-2.5 cups of vegetables per day, while men eat about 2.5-3 cups per day. A vegetable is considered to be any vegetable or any juice that is 100% vegetable juice. Vegetables can be any of raw or cooked, frozen, dehydrated, dried, fresh, or canned. They can also be whole, mashed, or cut. There are five subgroups of vegetables, broken down by their nutritional content:

Beans and Peas: Black beans, white beans, tofu, lentils, soy beans, garbanzo beans, kidney beans, green peas.

Dark Green Vegetables: Kale, watercress, romaine lettuce, broccoli, spinach.

Red and Orange Vegetables: Sweet potatoes, squash, pumpkin, tomatoes, carrots.

Starchy Vegetables: Green peas, green lima beans, potatoes, corn, water chestnuts.

Other Vegetables: Green beans, wax beans, green (bell) peppers, artichokes, bean sprouts, avocado, zucchini, asparagus, Brussel sprouts.

It is vital that you eat your vegetables for the many health benefits that they provide. Some of the vital nutrients that you receive when you eat vegetables include Vitamin A, Vitamin C, Vitamin E, folate (folic acid), dietary fiber, and potassium.

Vegetables are usually lower in calories than other food groups; thus, if you are attempting to lose weight or maintain your weight, adding more vegetables to your diet can reduce your caloric intake. Eating vegetables has been shown to reduce your chances of developing some chronic conditions, including a loss of bone density and kidney stones. You can lessen your chances of developing such diseases as various types of cancer, type 2 diabetes, and heart disease. You can also lessen your chances of having a stroke or heart attack by including more vegetables in your diet.



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My Plate recommends 20% of the food we eat each day should consist of fruits. This is designated by the red section on My Plate. Thus, half of your plate (50%) should be occupied by foods from the vegetables and fruits groups. It is recommended that women eat 1.5-2 cups of fruits per day, while men eat about 2 cups per day. (Note the paragraph on what makes up a “cup of fruit” below). Any fruit or juice that is 100% fruit is considered to be part of the fruit group. Any fruit that is fresh, dried, frozen, or canned counts as fruit. There are many different fruits you can include in your diet:

- Bananas, apricots, apples
- Blueberries, raspberries, strawberries
- Pears, peaches, plums, prunes, nectarines, oranges
- Kiwi fruit, lemons, limes, cherries, grapefruit
- Honeydew, watermelon, cantaloupe
- 100% fruit juices include orange, apple, grape, grapefruit

There are many important reasons why we need to eat fruit every day in our diets. Fruits provide vital nutrients, including Vitamin C, folate (folic acid), potassium, and dietary fiber. Including fruits in your diet can reduce your chances of developing chronic diseases and conditions:

- Specific types of cancer
- Heart attack
- Stroke
- Heart disease
- Type 2 diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Kidney stones
- Bone loss

It’s important to note what constitutes as a “cup of fruit,” since this is the measurement that is usually used when determining how much you should eat. A cup from the fruit group is equivalent to one cup of fruit, one cup of 100% fruit juice, or ½ cup of dried fruit.

In this section, we have discussed the importance of vegetables and fruits in your diet, how much you should have of each, what nutrients they give you, and what



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conditions and diseases they may prevent. In the next section, we will look at the other three groups of My Plate: grains, protein and fats.

Food Groups: Grains, Proteins, and Dairy

In the last section, we talked about how your meals should be made up of 30% vegetables and 20% fruits according to My Plate. In this section, we will fill out the rest of your plate, which consists of 30% grains, 20% proteins, and a small amount of dairy.

My Plate recommends 30% grains; this is designated by the orange section on the My Plate graphic. Grain products are those that are made or derived from oats, rice, cornmeal, barley, wheat, or another cereal grain. The foods that are considered to come from grains include bread, pasta, tortillas, cereals, grits, oatmeal cereals, and breakfast cereals. Grains can be divided into two subcategories: Whole and refined.

Whole grains include the following products:

- Brown rice
- Oatmeal
- Whole wheat bread
- Whole wheat crackers
- Whole wheat cereal flakes
- Popcorn

Refined grains include the following products:

- White bread
- White rice
- Cornflakes
- Cornbread
- Flour tortillas

The main difference between whole grains and refined grains is that whole grains contain the entire grain kernel. This means that it has the bran (which is rich in fiber), the endosperm, and the germ (which is rich in potassium, iron, magnesium, selenium, and B vitamins). Refined grains have the bran and germ removed during a mechanical process known as "milling."



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This makes the texture of refined grains finer than that found in natural, whole grains. It also makes the shelf life of refined grains longer than natural, whole grains. However, the downside of refined grains is that they do not contain the same level of iron, dietary fiber, and B vitamins that whole grains contain.

To compensate for the loss of these important nutrients, grain producers will attempt to put many of these nutrients back into the grain after the milling process; these products are known as “enriched grains.” While enriched grains have more nutrients than refined grains, they still do not have as many as natural, whole grains. In addition, enriched grains do not have the fiber replaced that is lost during the milling process.

Thus, natural, whole grains are healthiest for you, followed by enriched grains, then refined grains. It is important to eat natural, whole grains because all of the original nutrients can be found in these grains; these nutrients can help to reduce your chances of developing chronic diseases and conditions.

In addition, the nutrients found in whole grains can help to maintain strength in your body, helping you to more efficiently digest food and prevent constipation. This also helps to make you feel fuller for longer, due to the fiber found in whole grains. Additionally, whole grains usually have a lower GI than refined grains. This is important because your blood glucose level will be more stable by eating whole grains, leading to a more positive mood and more energy. The fibers in whole grains will also help to combat against such conditions as cancer, obesity, heart disease, and type 2 diabetes.

My Plate recommends 20% proteins. This is illustrated by the purple section in the My Plate graphic. Foods that make up the proteins group include beans, peas, eggs, nuts, meat, seafood, soy-based products, poultry, and seeds. Thus, just some of the foods that make up this group include

- Beef
- Lamb
- Pork
- Veal
- Venison
- Rabbit
- Bison
- Chicken
- Turkey
- Duck
- Tuna
- Trout
- Swordfish
- Herring
- Halibut
- Cod



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- Catfish
- Shrimp
- Mussels
- Lobster
- Crab
- Crayfish
- Split peas
- Lentils
- Navy beans
- Pinto beans
- Lima beans
- Walnuts
- Sunflower seeds
- Sesame seeds
- Peanuts
- Almonds

It's important to note that poultry and meat choices should be low fat or lean for the best health benefits (refer back to the section on high fat and cholesterol regarding red meat in "portion control" for more on why your meat and poultry choices should be low fat or lean).

When eating from the proteins group, you really should try to avoid foods high in saturated fat and cholesterol, as these can contribute to such conditions as high blood pressure, heart disease, and more. This is mostly due to the fact that high levels of saturated fats can raise "bad" cholesterol levels (LDL cholesterol) that can lead to clogged arteries, potentially leading to heart attacks and/or strokes. Such foods include luncheon meats like bologna and salami, poultry such as duck, and other foods like bacon and hot dogs. Many of these also have high levels of sodium, which is another element you want to limit your intake of for optimal health.

Proteins do give you vital nutrients, which is why you do need to include proteins in your diet. Some of these nutrients include zinc, Vitamin E, thiamin, Vitamin B6, riboflavin, niacin, magnesium, and protein. Protein is vital for building and maintaining bones, muscles, skin, blood, and cartilage. They also are vital building components for vitamins, hormones, and enzymes. Plus, they are what give you calories, which is the body's fuel to do the work that needs to be done. B vitamins help to build tissues, plus to ensure proper functioning of the nervous system, iron helps the blood to carry oxygen to various parts of your body, while magnesium helps to ensure good bone structure and proper energy release from muscles.

My Plate recommends a small amount of dairy, illustrated by the small blue circle in the My Plate's graphic. As was mentioned in the "Overview of Basic Nutrition"



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section, a small amount is what is needed to satisfy your dairy requirements. All liquid products derived from milk, foods made from milk, and foods made from milk that keep their calcium content are all considered dairy foods.

The following foods are part of the dairy group:

- Liquid milk (everything from fat-free/skim to whole milk)
- Lactose-reduced and lactose-free milks
- Flavored milks (chocolate, vanilla, strawberry, etc.)
- Milk-based desserts (ice cream, ice milk, puddings made with milk, frozen yogurt)
- All Yogurt (everything from fat-free to whole-milk yogurt)
- Hard natural cheeses (mozzarella, cheddar, Parmesan, Swiss)
- Soft cheeses (cottage cheese, ricotta)
- Processed cheeses (American)

However, food products made from milk that have little to no calcium content, including cream cheese, cream, and butter, are NOT part of the dairy group.

As with the proteins group, your health is best-served by choosing dairy products that have no fat or low fat. As high-fat dairy products can add weight and can increase your risk for such conditions as obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, heart attacks, and strokes. For children under the age of 8, the recommended amount of dairy per day should be 2-2 ½ cups; for those over the age of 9, the amount should be 3 cups.

What constitutes a cup of dairy? As expected, a cup of milk, soymilk, or yogurt makes up one cup. However, for natural cheese, 1.5 ounces equals one cup of dairy. For processed cheese, 2 ounces is equal to one cup of dairy.

The health benefits of dairy products are vital to maintaining your health and a strong body. This is especially due to such essential nutrients and vitamins such as Vitamin D, protein, calcium, and potassium. Calcium is especially vital for strong bones and teeth; it can help to prevent or limit the onset of osteoporosis in older adults. Vitamin D is vital for keeping the proper levels of calcium and phosphorus in order to maintain good bone density and bone mass. Potassium is vital for maintaining a healthy blood pressure.



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In this section, we talked about the vital importance of including grains, proteins, and dairy in your diet. Combined with the previous section, you now have a better understanding of My Plate and what the U.S. Department of Agriculture recommends for a healthy diet. In the next few sections, we will discuss several healthy oils that you can incorporate in your cooking to make your meals even more healthy and delicious.

Healthy Oils: What Are They And Why Are They Good For You?

In the last two sections, we've gone over what makes up the specific portions of the "My Plate" recommended by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. You've learned about the different percentages you should have of the five main food groups of vegetables, fruits, grains, proteins, and dairy, as well as several different types of food from each group. In the next few sections, we will go over some of the oils that are used in cooking, which ones are healthy for you, and why they are healthy for you.

The key that you want to keep in mind when you're considering what cooking oils to use is to choose healthy fats. There are three main types of fats: Saturated, polyunsaturated, and monounsaturated. Saturated fats that you find in such cooking ingredients as butter, lard, and shortening are ones that you should limit your use of, since these types of fats have been linked to elevated LDL cholesterol levels and higher risks of developing heart disease.

Thus, you want to choose cooking oils that are healthier for you, ones that have polyunsaturated fats or monounsaturated fats in them. Examples of oils that have polyunsaturated fats include canola oil, sunflower oil, and walnut oil. These oils can help to improve your HDL cholesterol levels, thus reducing your risk of developing heart disease. Sometimes, these types of oils are referred to as "omega-6" and "omega-3." Omega-3s are especially good to include in your diet, since they have additional anti-inflammatory and heart-healthy properties.

Oils that have monounsaturated fats include olive oil and peanut oil. When you substitute monounsaturated fats for saturated fats, you are choosing healthier eating because you are helping to improve your HDL cholesterol levels and



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lowering your LDL cholesterol levels, thus limiting your chances of developing heart disease.

We will go over several good cooking oils you can use in your cooking. The next section will have the healthiest cooking oils, but the ones below are good options to consider using as well.

Walnut oil is a little higher in price, but there are plenty of omega-3s to be found here, plus a rich, nutty flavor. One thing to be aware of with walnut oil (and with all nut oils in general): It has a short shelf life. Thus, you need to use it right away, only storing it for up to three months at most. It's made up of 67% polyunsaturated fats, 24% monounsaturated fats, and just 9% saturated fats. Its nutty flavor won't work in every dish, but in recipes that call for a light walnut flavor (including salad dressings), it can work quite well to enhance your cooking.

Grapeseed oil is another healthy cooking oil, made up of 73% polyunsaturated fats, 17% monounsaturated fats, and 10% saturated fats. It is extracted from grape seeds and usually mild in flavor, though imported versions might have a stronger grape flavor and aroma. This oil works really well when your recipes call for cooking at high temperatures. Thus, this oil is an excellent choice for sautéing, roasting, and when making salad dressings.

Another good, healthy oil for use in recipes that call for high heat is peanut oil. Peanut oil contains heart-healthy phytosterols, essential plant fats that have been shown to lower LDL cholesterol levels and inhibit cancer cells. It is made up of 48% monounsaturated fats, 34% polyunsaturated fats, and 18% saturated fats. Peanut oil is especially good for sautéing and roasting.

Another healthy oil to use in your cooking is sesame oil. This oil has a rich, nutty flavor and is used quite often in Asian cooking and recipes. There are both untoasted and toasted varieties available at your retail stores, often mixed with other Asian ingredients. This oil is made up of 41% monounsaturated fats, 44% polyunsaturated fats, and 15% saturated fats. The untoasted version is especially a good choice to use in stir-fry recipes, while the toasted version is great to use in salad dressings or on dishes that call for a toasty flavor.



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In this section, we have gone over some of the best, most healthy cooking oils available, and ones that have more monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats and fewer saturated fats. The best and healthiest of these cooking oils will be revealed and examined in the next section.

The Most Heart-Healthy Cooking Oils: Canola and (Extra) Virgin Olive

In the last section, we went over some heart-healthy cooking oils, ones that are high in monounsaturated and/or polyunsaturated fats and low in saturated fats. We went over their composition of fats, along with some of their best uses and their flavors. However, in this section, we will go over what are considered to be the two most heart-healthy cooking oils: Canola and (Extra) Virgin Olive Oils.

Canola oil (which is an oil made from the seeds of a yellow-flowered plant) and olive oil are considered to be the healthiest oils, due to the fact that they are the richest in monounsaturated fats, which have been shown to reduce your LDL cholesterol levels and raise your HDL cholesterol levels.

Canola oil's neutral flavor and high smoke point make it an excellent choice for both sautéing and baking. It is also an excellent choice to use in roasting and in salad dressings. Due to the fact that most canola oil is highly refined, it doesn't have many antioxidants, but does have a very long shelf life. It is made up of 62% monounsaturated fats, 31% polyunsaturated fats, and just 7% saturated fats.

New research suggests, though, that the absolute best oil is virgin or extra-virgin olive oil. This is because the oil is mechanically pressed from olives with no chemical processing, leading to a high level of antioxidants called polyphenols within the oil. Polyphenols have been shown to remove free radicals from your body before they can oxidize LDL (which leads to even more damage for your arteries). The oxidation of LDL is known as "oxidative stress." In addition, olive oil has 78% monounsaturated fats, 8% polyunsaturated fats, and 14% saturated fats.

In the *Annals of Internal Medicine*, the results of a three-week study of 200 men were published. In that study, those men who consumed just under two



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tablespoons per day of high-polyphenol virgin olive oil instead of other dietary fats had larger gains of good HDL cholesterol levels and fewer instances of oxidative stress compared to those men who consumed the same amount of "ordinary" (often labeled as "pure") olive oil.

It's been determined that the chemical refining processes used to create "ordinary" olive oils remove some of the polyphenols from those oils, thus leading to virgin and extra virgin olive oils being more nutritious for you. An added reason to use virgin and extra virgin olive oils in your cooking is that they have a better flavor than ordinary olive oil.

The rich flavor of olive oil is especially good on steamed vegetables, to make your own salad dressings, or to sauté vegetables. If you find the rich flavor of olive oil to be too strong for your palette, you can modify its rich flavor and still get the healthy benefits of olive oil by mixing in a 1:1 ratio of canola and extra-virgin olive oil when making salad dressing.

In the last two sections, we've discussed several of the heart-healthy cooking oils you can use in your cooking. Several of these oils can be used for baking, sautéing, steaming, or in recipes such as your own salad dressings. We looked in-depth at each of walnut oil, Grapeseed oil, peanut oil, sesame oil, canola oil, and olive oil (both the "pure" and the "virgin" or "extra-virgin" varieties).

You know their characteristics in regards to their monounsaturated, polyunsaturated, and saturated fats percentages and what they are best used for in cooking. In the next two sections, we will learn about the dangers of sugar to our health and why so many people in America and around the world consume too much of it.

Sugar- What Is It And Why Is It A Bane To Healthy Eating?

In the last few sections, we went over some of the healthiest cooking oils. Recall that we mentioned about avoiding butter, lard, and shortening due to their high saturated fat content. Saturated fats are one thing you need to limit as much as possible; another thing you must watch out for and limit is sugar. We will discuss a great deal about sugar in the next two sections.



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What is sugar? Sugar is the generalized name for sweet, short-chain, soluble carbohydrates that are often used in food. These carbohydrates are made up of oxygen, hydrogen, and carbon. There are many different types of sugars, derived from different sources. There are simple sugars, including galactose, fructose, and glucose (also known as dextrose), and more complex sugars known as disaccharides. The sugar most commonly used in food is a disaccharide known as sucrose. Others of this group include lactose and maltose. There are also some chemically-different substances that are not classified as sugars, but that also offer a sweet taste. Some of these are used as lower-calorie substitutes for sugar, often referred to as "artificial sweeteners."

The average person eats about 24 kilograms of sugar each year, over 260 food calories per day. Many have questioned since the late 20th century whether humans eat too much sugar. Sugar has been linked to obesity, and the obesity epidemic has been running rampant across much of the world, including the United States. In fact, based on the current rate of Americans becoming obese, the United States is projected to have over half of its population obese by 2030, with 13 of the 50 states projected to have over 60% obesity, 39 of the 50 states having over 50% obesity, and all 50 states having over 44% obesity.

This should be a major concern to all Americans for two primary reasons: Cases of obesity-related diseases (such as heart attacks, strokes, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, etc.) will rise, and health-care costs will soar. In fact, the number of new cases of such conditions as type 2 diabetes, hypertension, arthritis, coronary heart disease, and stroke could increase ten times by the end of this decade, then double that amount by 2030. In conjunction, health care costs related to the obesity epidemic could rise by 10% in 43 states and 20% in nine states.

So, it's obvious that obesity is a growing problem in the United States, and abroad as well (25% of the female population in both the United Kingdom and Australia are obese). Sugar is thought to be a primary factor in this obesity epidemic. Two big questions that arise are, "How does sugar harm our health?" and "Why do people eat so much sugar?"

Sugar harms our health in a number of ways. It promotes tooth decay because it helps to break down the enamel of our teeth, which can eventually lead to periodontal disease. This can affect our ability to eat the foods we need to eat to



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achieve and maintain good nutrition. It lowers the level of HDL cholesterol, which can lead to an increased risk of heart attacks, strokes, heart disease, and type 2 diabetes. It also can increase our risk for arthritis. These are just some of the ways that sugar can affect our health and our ability to achieve and maintain good nutrition.

With all of the reasons why sugar is bad for our health, you would think that it would be a simple matter of just reducing our sugar intake. Unfortunately, it's not quite that simple, for a number of reasons. We will explore several reasons why it is not that simple to avoid sugar in the next section.

Why People Are Addicted To Sugar

In the last section, we talked about what sugar is, how it can negatively impact our health and nutrition, and why it's becoming a growing problem when it comes to the obesity epidemic. We ended the last section by stating that it should be a simple matter of just reducing and avoiding sugar to help overcome the obesity epidemic. Unfortunately, it's not that simple, for a number of reasons.

One reason is that people naturally like sweet flavors, and that's exactly what sugar is. People like sweet flavors as far back as when they were fetuses in their mother's wombs. Doctors would add a sweet substance into a mother's amniotic fluid whenever there was too much amniotic fluid. This way, the baby would drink more of it due to the fact that the liquid now had a sweeter flavor. It was also shown that any pain was reduced due to ingesting the sweet liquid thanks to the natural analgesic effect received while drinking the liquid.

It is believed that people have always had a natural tendency to go for sugar; this is likely why earlier species of man would look for ripe fruits to eat – they were sweet and a good source of calories. Thus, this tendency to go for sugar seems to have developed over the course of man.

It's important to note that it's not the naturally-occurring sugars like fructose in fruit or lactose in milk and other dairy products that is the health issue; it's the sugars you find in processed foods like donuts, cakes, pies, sodas, other sugary drinks, and more. These sugars are added to these foods during processing and/or preparation of these foods.



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The question many scientists are now wondering is whether people can become addicted to sugar as some people are addicted to drugs, cigarettes, alcohol, etc. Some animal studies seem to suggest that a physical addiction to sugar is possible. The studies indicate that there are changes in brain dopamine similar to those who are drug addicts.

One key difference is that people will not get physical shakes and similar withdrawal symptoms when they stop eating sugar (unlike those who stop taking drugs), but they still will ingest sugar even when they know that the consequences of high sugar intake is bad for them. Even when they know that sugar can make them obese, unhealthy, and less able to move, they still crave sugar and go for foods and drinks that have high levels of it. Even with added evidence that sugar reduces good HDL cholesterol levels, making them more likely to develop heart attacks, strokes, heart disease, and type 2 diabetes, they still cannot avoid sugar.

Experts do not suggest that you try to purge all added sugars from your diet. They say that sugar itself is not a "risky food," though Americans do ingest too much of it, largely from sodas and other sugary drinks. What they feel is the real issue with sugar has to do with its connections to obesity and the fact that people are getting heavier, more sedentary, and less active. Thus, they are not burning off the calories they are taking in (and sugar adds a large number of calories, and "empty calories" at that), leading to more weight gain, higher LDL cholesterol levels, and a greater risk of developing such conditions as heart attacks, strokes, heart disease and diabetes.

Experts say that ingesting so much sugar leads to two main problems: Extra (empty) calories are added to your diet, and it takes the place of more nutritious foods you can and should be eating. Thus, they suggest that you cut back on sugar as much as you can (especially the sodas and sugary drinks), but that doesn't mean you have to totally eliminate sugar from your diet. As the old saying goes, "everything in moderation."

In the last few sections, we've looked at what sugar is, why it is dangerous to our health, and how it can be addictive. In the final two sections of this report, we will look at the different body types people can have and how people should eat based upon their body types.



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What Are The Different Body Types A Person Can Have?

In the last two sections, we talked about what sugar is, what health problems it can cause, and why people consume so much of it. Speaking of consumption, did you know that the percentages of carbohydrates, protein, and fat you should consume can be affected by your body type? It can. There are three main body types that we will take a look at in the next two sections, along with how you should be eating for your specific body type.

The three main body types are ectomorphs, endomorphs, and mesomorphs. Ectomorphs are people who have thinner limbs and smaller bone structures. Think of runners, especially marathon runners. Most of them are smaller in body stature, which aids them in being able to run great distances all at once in a relatively short period of time. These people have a fast metabolism and have a tolerance for high levels of carbohydrates. Thus, they do quite well when they eat a lot of carbohydrates. In addition, they should have a moderate amount of protein and a low amount of fat in their diets. The recommended percentages for this body type are 55% carbohydrates, 25% protein, and 20% fat.

Note that the menu you would eat if you are this body type can vary between men and women, due to the different structure and weight between men and women. For an ectomorph man, you could eat two palm-sized amounts of foods rich in protein at each meal, two fist-sized amounts of vegetables at each meal, and three cupped handfuls of foods rich in carbohydrates at each meal. For an ectomorph woman, you could eat one palm-sized amount of food rich in protein at each meal, one fist-sized amount of vegetables at each meal, and two cupped handfuls of foods rich in carbohydrates at each meal.

Those who are considered endomorphs have a larger bone structure, plus have higher amounts of both fat mass and total body mass. Some great examples of endomorphs are powerlifters and offensive and defensive linemen in American football. Both groups have a great deal of body mass, as they have to lift and/or block large amounts of weight in their professions. These people usually tend to be less active in terms of moving around or running around. Thus, any extra calories they eat will most likely be stored as fat. Thus, they have a greater chance of storing energy as both lean mass and fat mass. This also means that they have less propensity of handling carbohydrates as well as ectomorphs.



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Therefore, endomorphs do better on a diet that is higher in fat and protein, with carbohydrates being monitored carefully and taken at specific times (such as after working out, etc.). A good distribution would be 40% fat, 35% protein, and 25% carbohydrates. For an endomorph man, you could eat two palm-sized amounts of protein-rich foods at each meal, two fist-sized amounts of vegetables at each meal, one cupped handful of carbohydrate-rich foods at each meal, and three thumb-sized amounts of fat-rich foods at each meal. For an endomorph woman, you could eat one palm-sized amount of protein-rich food at each meal, one fist-sized amount of vegetables at each meal, one half-cupped handful of carbohydrate-rich foods at each meal, and two thumb-sized amounts of fat-rich foods at each meal.

So far, we have discussed the first two body types, ectomorphs and endomorphs. You have learned the differences between them in terms of their body shapes, how they process fats, proteins, and carbohydrates, and what would be good consumption for their specific body types. The third body type, mesomorphs, will be discussed in the final section, along with some final thoughts on good nutrition.

The Third Body Type & Final Advice On Good Nutrition

In the last section, we talked about the first two of the three main body types, ectomorphs and endomorphs. In this final section, we will talk about the third main body type, mesomorphs, plus give some final thoughts and advice on good nutrition.

The third body type is a mesomorph. Mesomorphs are in between an ectomorph and an endomorph when it comes to bone structure, as mesomorphs have a medium-sized bone structure. They usually have an athletic body as well. If they're active, they will often have a good amount of lean mass. Examples of this body type include gymnasts and wrestlers. Mesomorphs will often tend to be dependent on growth hormone and testosterone; thus, this means that they usually have a tendency to gain muscle and have low amount of body fat.

The best diet distribution for mesomorphs is one that is mixed fairly evenly between carbohydrates, proteins, and fats. A good combination that will fit a mesomorph well is 40% carbohydrates, 30% proteins, and 30% fat. Thus, a mesomorph man can eat two palm-sized amounts of protein-rich foods at each



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meal, two fist-sized amounts of vegetables at each meal, two cupped handfuls of carbohydrate-rich foods at each meal, and two thumb-sized amounts of fat-rich foods at each meal. For mesomorph woman can eat one palm-sized amount of protein-rich food at each meal, one fist-sized amount of vegetables at each meal, one cupped handful of carbohydrate-rich foods at each meal, and one thumb-sized amount of fat-rich food at each meal.

Note that the aforementioned percentages for each body type are only rough estimates; each person is going to vary a bit. Thus, a bit of experimentation will be needed to find the right amount of proteins, carbohydrates, and fats depending upon both your specific body type and your lifestyle (especially in terms of how active or sedentary you are).

In this report, you have learned about what nutrition is and why it is important to your health. You have learned about the five main food groups in My Plate and the percentages that make up a nutritious meal. You've learned the benefits of drinking water and why it is so important to your body. You have learned about the two main types of carbohydrates, how they differ, and which provides you with more energy and is generally the better carbohydrate to consume.

You learned about the main food groups and the benefits of each group. You learned about many different food options that belong to each group so that you can ensure your meals have foods from each of the five main food groups. You learned about many different types of healthy oils that you can use in your cooking, including ones that work well for roasting, sautéing, and for making your own salad dressings.

You learned about the dangers of sugar and why you must limit the amount you consume. You also learned where most Americans get the overabundance of sugar in their diets and why sugar can be a hazard to your health. You also learned why many people cannot simply just drop it from their diets due to its addictive nature. Finally, you learned about the three main body types and how they differ in terms of the compositions of fats, carbohydrates, and proteins they need, based upon their specific body structures and how they utilize the foods they consume.

As you can see, nutrition is a very expansive field with many facets to it that you need to know about in order to eat healthy and to live a healthy lifestyle. New



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research comes out all of the time, much of it you can access via the Internet. Thus, it's vital that you continue to stay up-to-date on the latest research so that you know what is considered to be the most current information on eating well and living a healthy lifestyle. Hopefully, this report has given you a good solid foundation on what makes good eating habits and what your body needs in order to function at its optimal level each day.

To your health!



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