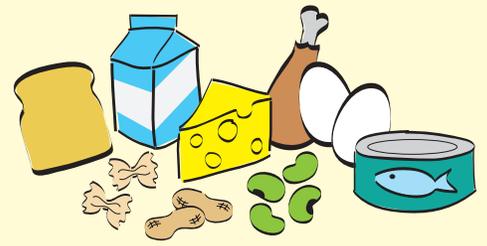


# Action Steps For a Healthy Diet



## Fruits

- Consume at least half of your daily fruit choices as whole fruits (such as fresh, frozen, cooked, dried, or canned in 100% fruit juice).
- Choose 100% fruit juice instead of sugar-sweetened beverages (such as energy drinks, flavored waters, fruit drinks, soft drinks, and sports drinks).
- Try fruit as snacks, salads, side dishes, and desserts.

## Vegetables

- Eat more colorful vegetables (such as fresh, frozen, canned, and dried) and 100% vegetable juices.
- Buy frozen (without butter or sauce) or low sodium or no-salt-added canned vegetables.
- Try vegetables as snacks, salads, and side dishes and incorporate vegetables into main dishes.

## Grains

- Consume at least half of your total grain choices as whole grains (such as whole wheat, whole oats, and brown rice). Whole grains are a source of important vitamins and minerals and are typically high in fiber, too.
- Switch from refined to whole grain versions of commonly consumed foods (such as breads, cereals, pasta, and rice).
- Limit refined grains and products made with refined grains, especially those high in calories, saturated fat, added sugars, and/or sodium (such as cakes, chips, cookies, and crackers).

## Dairy

- Substitute fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) dairy products (such as cheese, milk, and yogurt), or fortified soy beverages for regular/full-fat (whole) dairy products.
- Limit dairy desserts, especially those high in calories, saturated fat, and added sugars (such as ice cream, other frozen desserts, and puddings).

## Protein

- Eat a variety of protein foods, such as beans and peas, eggs, fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) dairy products, lean meats and poultry, seafood (fish and shellfish), soy products, and unsalted nuts and seeds.
- Choose seafood and plant sources of protein (such as beans and peas, soy products, and unsalted nuts and seeds) in place of some meats and poultry.
- Add beans or peas to salads, soups, and side dishes, or serve them as a main dish.
- Snack on a small handful of unsalted nuts or seeds rather than chips or salty snack foods.

## Saturated Fat, Sodium, and Sugars

- Choose fresh meats, poultry, and seafood, rather than processed varieties.
- Switch from stick margarine to soft margarine (liquid, tub, or spray).
- Look for light, low sodium, reduced sodium, or no-salt-added versions of packaged foods, snacks, and condiments, when available.
- Limit desserts, savory snacks, and sweets (such as cakes, chips, candies, cookies, crackers, ice cream, and microwave popcorn).
- Consume smaller portions of foods and beverages that are higher in saturated fat, sodium, and sugars, or consume them less often.

## Helpful Meal Preparation Tips

- Try baking, broiling, grilling, or steaming. These cooking methods do not add extra fat.
- Trim or drain fat from meats before or after cooking and remove poultry skin before cooking or eating.
- Cook and bake with liquid oils (such as canola and olive oil) instead of solid fats (such as butter, lard, and shortening).
- Prepare your own food when you can and limit packaged sauces, mixes, and “instant” products (including flavored rice, instant noodles, and ready-made pasta).
- Limit the amount of salt and sugar you add when cooking, baking, or eating.
- Flavor foods with herbs and spices and no-salt seasoning blends instead of salt.
- Rinse sodium-containing canned foods, such as tuna, vegetables, and beans before eating.
- When eating out, ask how your food is being prepared. You can also request to see nutrition information, which is available in many chain restaurants.

