



Breaking Down the *Dietary* *Guidelines* For Americans

Objectives

- Identify Dietary Guidelines
- Understand Food Groups
- Get Inspired to Vary Your Recipes
- Build a Healthy Meal



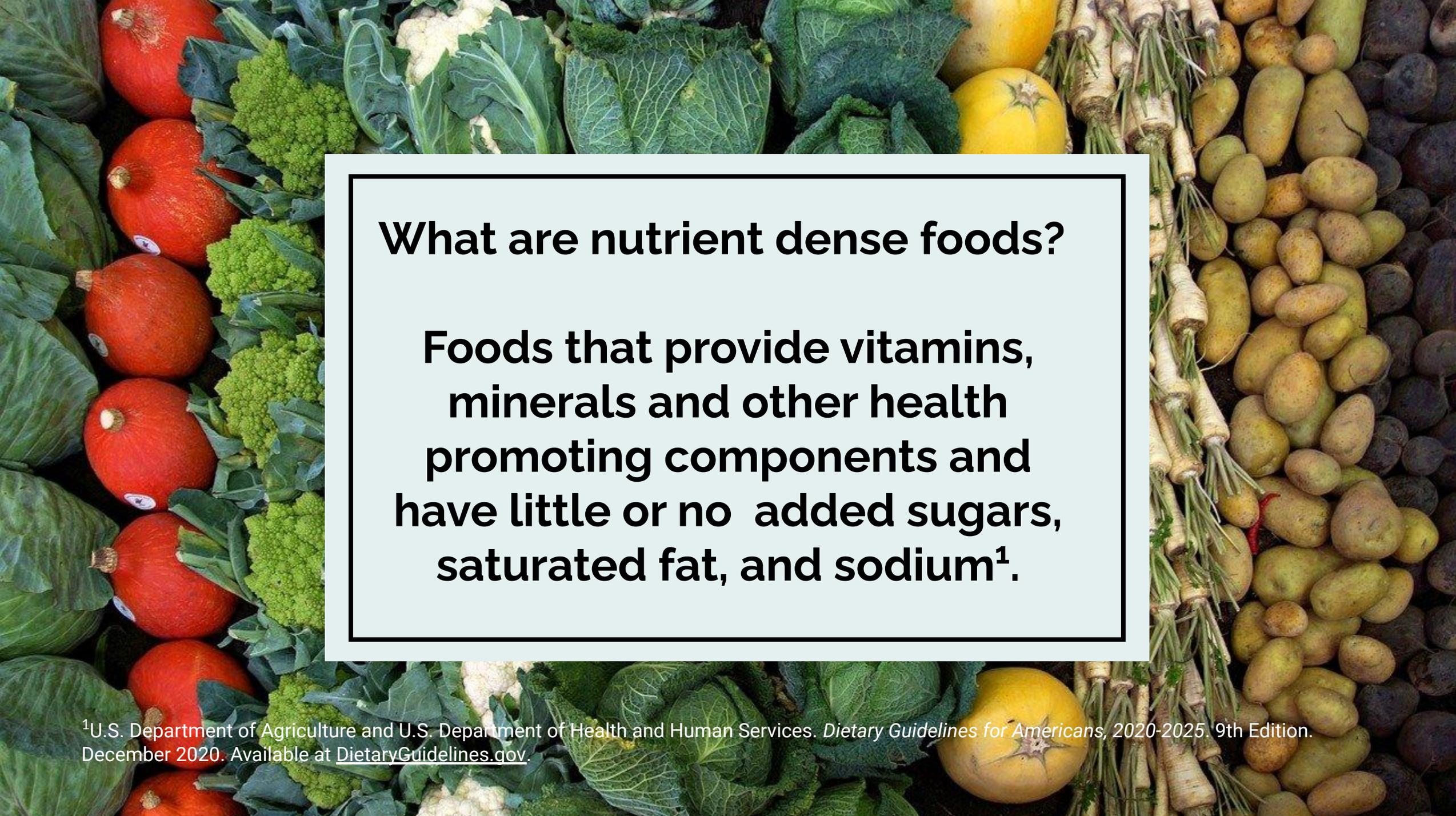
Dietary Guidelines For Americans

- Provides evidence based recommendations
- Updated every 5 years with the latest research in mind
- The framework provided by the Dietary Guidelines is intended to be customized to fit individuals' preferences and needs
- Communities across the country can utilize the framework provided by the dietary guidelines to choose nutrient dense and culturally relevant foods from all food groups
- Individuals should work with a healthcare professional to identify specific calorie and nutrient needs based on age, sex, weight, activity level and any other medical conditions
- MyPlate.gov provides an entire recipe library to help you use and apply the dietary recommendations into your daily routine





**The goal of the
Dietary Guidelines
is to help
Americans meet
nutritional needs
through nutrient
dense foods and
beverages.**



What are nutrient dense foods?

Foods that provide vitamins, minerals and other health promoting components and have little or no added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium¹.

¹U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025*. 9th Edition. December 2020. Available at [DietaryGuidelines.gov](https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov).



Vegetables

- Almost 90% of American do not meet the recommendation for vegetables
- Vegetables in the most nutrient dense form contain limited additives - like salt, butter or sauces
- It is important to include a variety of vegetable types: dark green, red and orange, beans, peas, lentils, starchy and others

Adult Daily Recommendation: 2.5 cups

How Can I Increase My Vegetable Intake?

- Add vegetables to mixed dishes: tacos, sandwiches, burgers, pizza, casseroles, pasta dishes, soups
- Eat a smaller portion of the entree to make room for a vegetable side dish
- Plan at least one snack per day to contain vegetables
- Experiment with flavors and cooking methods!
 - Try adding new spices and herbs to change up the flavor profile
 - Mix up the preparation method for a new texture
- Experiment with recipes like those offered on the [MyPlate website](#)
 - Tip: you can filter the recipe library by the food group you'd like to focus on





Fruit

- At least 80% of Americans do not meet fruit recommendations
- Focus on whole fruits: fresh, canned, frozen and dried forms
- Many fruits are available year round, and some may be available seasonally, take note on your next trip to the grocery store

Adult Daily Recommendation: 1.5-2 cups



How Can I Include More Fruit In My Diet?

- Plan to have fruit at one snack per day
- Add fruit into meals: eat it as a side dish or as a sweet treat
- Find out what fruits are in season near you, and plan a trip to the Farmer's Market to purchase locally grown items
- Experiment with flavor combinations
 - Some fruits flavors pair perfectly with savory dishes
 - Add fresh fruit to a dish for a new flavor and texture
- Use the MyPlate [website](#) to find new recipes
 - Tip: type your favorite fruit into the search bar to find a recipe with that item

Grains



- Choose whole grains over refined grains
- To ensure an item is whole grain: the whole grain should be the first or second item on the ingredient list
- Americans consume the majority of grains with added sodium and sugars: crackers, pretzels, cakes, cookies, etc.
- Transition from refined grain to whole grain versions of common foods to increase the nutrient density

Adult Daily Recommendation: 6-7oz

Think Differently About Grains



- There is no shortage of grains in the American Diet - the main concern is the type of grains Americans are consuming
- It is important to choose grains that add nutrients into recipes and the overall dietary pattern
 - Replace convenient refined grains with whole grain options
- Nutrient dense grain items contain little to no added sugar or sodium
- Try adding flavor to grains with fruits or vegetables
 - Mix fresh fruit with your next bowl of oatmeal
 - Add sauteed vegetables to a bowl of brown rice
- If you are nervous about branching out with grains, start by using the MyPlate recipe [library](#) to filter by "Cuisine" to find a recipe with a grain you are comfortable with

Dairy

- Most individuals would benefit from increasing their intake of low fat or fat free dairy (or fortified soy items)
- The items in the dairy category include fortified soy milk and soy yogurt due to their similar nutrient composition to milk items
 - Other plant derived “milk” products are not included in this category recommendations
- Dairy can often be a source of added sodium (like in cheeses) or sugars (like in ice cream) - it is important to be aware of the types dairy items you are choosing



Adult Daily Recommendation: 3 cups

How Can I Incorporate More Low-Fat Dairy?

- Swap low-fat or fat-free milk in recipes in place of whole milk or cream
- Drink low-fat or fat free milk (or fortified soy beverages) at meals
- Add unsweetened low-fat yogurt to breakfast or snacks throughout the day
- Use low-fat milk in your morning coffee
- Skip the added sugar from your nightly ice cream - utilize the recipe from the [MyPlate website](#) for a fruit milk shake



- It is important to consume a variety of protein sources: lean meats, poultry, eggs, seafood, beans, peas and lentils, nuts and seeds
- Be conscious of the fat content in meat and poultry items and limit processed meats (hot dogs, sausages, lunch meats)
- A healthy vegetarian dietary pattern can be achieved by including plant protein sources like soy and nuts and seeds
- Choosing seafood protein sources can provide beneficial fatty acids often lacking in the American diet

Adult Daily Recommendation: 5-6oz



Protein

How Can I Vary My Protein Sources?

- Make one day a week meatless: use a meat alternative such as beans, nuts or seafood in every meal of the day.
 - Meatless meals can be a budget friendly and nutrient dense choice
 - Try a bean based chili recipe, sauteed tofu and vegetables or fish tacos for a change
- Have seafood twice per week
 - Try canned tuna on your salad, make salmon patties from scratch, or grilled shrimp with vegetables
- Get inspired! Select the “vary your protein routine” option to filter recipes on the MyPlate recipes [website](#) to learn how to prepare a new protein source





**One Meal
At A Time**

Make Nutrient Dense Choices

- Think about making nutrient dense choices to each individual part of your meal
 - Increase fruits and vegetables
 - Choose whole grains
 - Use low-fat or fat-free dairy
 - Vary protein sources
 - Limit added sugar, sodium, and saturated fat
- Making small changes to each meal can lead to a whole day of nutrient dense meals and an overall healthy dietary pattern



More Recommendations...

- For more information on the *2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines For Americans* go to dietaryguidelines.gov to download the full document
- Find detailed recommendations on category subgroups in Table [A3-2](#)
- Learn more about each food group at MyPlate.gov
- Learn more about the history and evolution of the *Dietary Guidelines* [here](#)

