



# Personalizing the Dietary Guidelines



# Objectives

- Eating healthy at every age.
- Cultural variance.
- Applying the guidelines at the grocery store.
- Healthy eating within calorie recommendations.
- Lowering the risk of chronic disease.



Each stage of life has its  
own nutrition considerations

# Early Life Stages



- From the first introduction of complementary foods (around 6 months of age), the goal should be to establish a healthy dietary pattern.
- It is important to include foods from all food groups. Not only for sufficient nutrients, but also to promote acceptance of a wide variety of healthy foods.
- **Taste preferences are being formed!** It is recommended to avoid added sugars and salts to keep from developing a preference for high sugar and high salt foods.
- **Research shows...** Early food preferences influence later dietary patterns. Setting children up on a path to make nutrient dense choices will benefit them through all life stages.



# Older Adults

- Individuals older than 60.
- Higher risk for developing chronic diseases: cardiovascular disease, cancer, osteoporosis.
- Bone density and muscle mass changes as the body ages.
- Calorie needs generally decrease in this population, due to lower activity levels and changes in muscle mass.
- Achieving a healthy weight by following a healthy dietary pattern is one of the best ways to support healthy aging.



# Cultural Variances

- The Dietary Guidelines are meant to “meet people where they are...”
  - A healthy dietary pattern can benefit people of all ages, health status, races or ethnicities.
- When applying the guidelines, start with personal preferences.
  - Exposure to a variety of foods is important in early life stages to develop a child’s interest in trying new foods.
  - Apply personal and/or family preferences for foods in a nutrient dense form.
- Individuals and communities can customize the framework provided by the *Dietary Guidelines* to prepare culturally relevant, nutrient dense foods from all categories and subgroups.



# Shopping with the Guidelines

- Start at the source! Only items in the kitchen can be prepared for meals.
- Keep the dietary guidelines for each food group in mind when grocery shopping.
  - Focus on whole fruits and vary vegetables.
  - Make half of diet grains as whole grains.
  - Vary the protein routine.
  - Move to low-fat or fat-free dairy products.
  - Limit added sugars, sodium and saturated fat.
- Small changes add up and can make a big difference over time.





# Utilize the Nutrition Facts Label

- Use the nutrition facts label on packaged foods to make informed and healthy choices.
  - First, take note of the serving size.
  - Nutrients to note that should be limited: calories, sodium, saturated fat and added sugars.
  - Other nutrients to notice: fiber, vitamin D, and potassium.
  - The % daily values indicate how much of that nutrient (in 1 serving) contributes to the total daily diet - 5% or less is considered low, and 20% or more is considered high.



# Calories and Portion Sizes

- The Guidelines are meant to provide a framework for a nutrient-dense diet while remaining within calorie limits. *It is not designed to restrict calorie intake.*
- The goal is to help Americans make shifts in their choices to achieve a healthy dietary pattern.
- Paying attention to portion sizes is often more important when it comes to non-nutrient-dense foods.
- About 85% of an individual's daily calorie intake is needed to meet recommendations for each food group.
- The remaining 15% are available for uses such as added sugars and fat.



Despite the establishment of Dietary Guidelines in 1980, the American eating patterns have fallen short and diet related chronic diseases have become a major public health concern!

Diet related chronic diseases include:  
cardiovascular disease,  
type 2 diabetes, obesity,  
liver disease, some  
cancers and dental care.

# Lowering the Risk of Chronic Disease

- The Framework provided by the *Dietary Guidelines* is promoted to help Americans achieve and maintain a healthy dietary pattern. The Guidelines help Americans reduce the risk of chronic diseases.
- The emphasis is placed on a healthy dietary pattern as a whole, not on individual nutrients or foods.



# Implementing the *Dietary Guidelines*

- Make small, consistent changes!
  - Try starting with one food group or one meal at a time.
- Play with recipes. When preparing traditional and culturally relevant foods, focus on making those items as nutrient dense as possible.
- Start at the source. Keep the *Dietary Guidelines* in mind when grocery shopping.
  - ***You can only prepare the foods you have available!***

