



Different Kinds of Lettuces and Greens



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Lettuce, a type of leafy green, is still one of the most commonly eaten veggies in the United States today. Leafy greens can be either dark or light in color and include types such as spinach, Romaine, kale, escarole, and endive. Mesclun, a mix of young salad greens, offers a variety of different types, including arugula, frisée and radicchio.

Dark-green leafy greens offer plenty of the antioxidant beta carotene, which helps to form vitamin A in the body and may help lower the risk for certain diseases. The darker the leaves, the more nutrient-rich the lettuce. For example, Romaine has seventeen times more vitamin A than iceberg lettuce. Some greens deliver folate, potassium and dietary fiber, too. Greens supply lutein, which contributes to good vision and may help protect your eyes from macular degeneration. The small addition of fat helps with the absorption of certain nutrients. Choose dressings made with oils more often, because they provide unsaturated fat, which is considered to be healthier than cream-based dressings.

Perk up your salad-making with more flavor, color and texture by mixing in different greens.

- For a peppery flavor: arugula or watercress
- For leaves that aren't green: red-and-white radicchio
- For flavor with a "bite": chicory or escarole
- For a mild flavor and delicate green color: mâche, Boston or Bibb lettuce
- For a deep-green color: spinach
- For a crisp texture: Romaine

Many leafy greens, such as spinach, kale and collard greens, also are well suited for cooking. Try sautéing them in a little oil, then season with spices, such as garlic and just a little salt and pepper. When cooked, greens usually will shrink down by half, so this is important to consider when planning meals.

Greens also can be added to soups, stews, casseroles and other dishes, too. For example, baby spinach leaves add a nice flavor and color when folded into an omelet. They also can be added toward the end when making a homemade soup. Kale can be baked into chips, which makes for a great tasting, healthy snack.

Look for different types of leafy greens at your local grocery store or farmers market. Be sure to wash and dry the leaves thoroughly before using and keep them refrigerated. Enjoy within a few days, as the leaves are likely to wilt or spoil if stored beyond that time frame.



Four Easy Steps



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Reduce food poisoning risk with four easy steps.

The 2015-2020 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* outlines four basic food safety principles: CLEAN, SEPARATE, CHILL and COOK. These principles directly align with the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' four simple tips to reduce the risk of food poisoning.

CLEAN - Wash Hands Often

Coupled with the importance of hand-washing, the *Dietary Guidelines* reminds consumers to thoroughly wash all kitchen surfaces, including appliances, reusable grocery bags, and all produce (even if you plan to peel and cut before eating). For example, the insides of microwaves often become soiled with food, allowing bacteria to grow. By washing both the inside and outside, including handles and buttons, food poisoning may be prevented.

Proper hand-washing may eliminate a large percentage of food poisoning cases and significantly reduce the spread of the common cold and flu.

- Wash hands before, during and after meal preparation, after using the bathroom, after changing diapers and after handling pets and pet waste.
- Wash hands in warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds.
- Don't forget to keep surfaces clean, including shelves, counter tops, tables, refrigerators and freezers.

SEPARATE - Keep Ready-to-Eat Foods Separate from Raw Meat Poultry, Seafood and Eggs

When juices from raw meats or germs from unclean objects accidentally touch cooked or ready-to-eat foods such as fruits and salads, cross-contamination occurs.

- Prevent cross-contamination by keeping raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs separate from ready-to-eat foods.
- Use two cuttings boards: one strictly for raw meat, poultry and seafood; the other for ready-to-eat foods including breads and vegetables.
- Wash cutting boards thoroughly in hot soapy water after each use or place in dishwasher. Use a bleach solution (one tablespoon bleach in one quart water) or other sanitizing solution and rinse with clean water.
- Discard old cutting boards that have cracks, crevices and excessive knife scars.

CHILL - Refrigerate Promptly to 40 Degrees Fahrenheit or Below

Refrigerate foods promptly and at a proper temperature to slow the growth of bacteria and prevent food poisoning.

- Make sure your refrigerator is set below 40°F and freezer is at or below 0°F.
- Keep a refrigerator thermometer in your refrigerator and check it regularly.
- Refrigerate perishable food as soon as you get home from the store.
- Refrigerate all leftover foods from a meal within two hours. When outdoors and the temperature is 90°F or warmer, that time is reduced to one hour.
- Store foods in small, shallow containers (two inches deep or less).
- Use or discard opened packages of luncheon meats or spreads within three to five days. Consume by the "use-by" date on the package.
- Thaw food in the refrigerator, under cold running water, or in the microwave right before cooking.
- Marinate foods in the refrigerator, not on the counter.

COOK - Cook to Proper Temperatures

Fish, seafood, meat, poultry and egg dishes should be cooked to the recommended safe minimum internal temperature to destroy any potentially harmful bacteria.

- Always use a food thermometer to check the doneness of meat, poultry, seafood and dishes containing eggs.
- Reheat leftovers to at least 165°F. Older adults should reheat all deli-style meats.
- Boil a meat marinade for several minutes if you plan to re-use it.
- Use the following quick internal temperature guide:
 - Beef, veal, lamb 145°F (with 3 minutes of rest time)
 - Pork 160°F
 - Poultry 165°F
 - Ground beef, veal, lamb 160°F
 - Ground poultry 165°F
 - Finfish 145°F or until flesh is opaque and flakes with a fork
 - Shellfish cook until flesh is opaque throughout
 - Eggs yolk and white are firm, not runny
 - Casseroles, egg dishes 165°F
 - Leftovers 165°F; boil liquids (soup, gravy)

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Eat Right for Life



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Eating the same way in your 40s as you did in your 20s? Ignoring your nutritional needs when you're 60? Not you! Build and maintain your healthiest body by adjusting your eating habits to address the specific needs of each decade.

20s: Bone Building

In your 20s, you're still building up bone density, so this is the decade to help your bones grow strong and healthy. The more you start off with, the better, as your bones will lose density over the years.

Enter calcium, which not only builds strong bones but is also important for healthy muscles, nerves and heart. You need 1,000 milligrams per day, so enjoy dairy products, opt for calcium-fortified soy milk, orange juice and cereals, and load up on beans, leafy greens, almonds and canned salmon with bones.

30s: Baby on Board

These days, women are having babies well into their 30s, which makes folic acid an important nutrient during this decade. Folic acid helps prevent neural tube birth defects such as spina bifida. Unfortunately, many women don't get enough.

For women who plan on becoming pregnant, the 2015-2020 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommend consuming 400 micrograms per day of folic acid from fortified foods and/or supplements, in addition to foods high in folate. Many breads, cereals and grain products are fortified with folic acid; fruits and vegetables are good sources of folate. If you're trying to get pregnant, your doctor may recommend a folic acid supplement.

This also is a time to start thinking about how to prevent chronic diseases that become more prevalent as we age. Eating a diet based mostly on whole plant foods including whole grains, legumes, fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds helps prevent chronic diseases such as Type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease and certain types of cancer.

Avoid dieting, which can lead to weight cycling. A history of dieting and weight cycling (when your weight goes up and down repeatedly) has been linked with increased risk of cardiovascular issues and osteoporosis.

40s: Keeping Score

If you haven't been treating your body right, the 40s is where this will start showing up.

The 40s are a good time to be vigilant about eating plenty of fruits and vegetables, which contain health-promoting vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. Adults need at least 2 cups of fruit and 2½ cups of vegetables a day. Explore new tastes by trying a new fruit or vegetable a couple of times a month.

Try snacking on fruit including apples, bananas and clementines, opt for vegetable-packed, broth-based soups, salads piled with greens and smoothies with berries. If you don't like the taste of vegetables raw, try roasting them which makes them sweeter.

Another important nutrient for the 40-and-over set is fiber, which can help protect against heart disease and some types of cancer. Women under 50 need 25 grams per day, but most adults get only about half that amount. Luckily, the fruits and veggies you're eating for the vitamins and minerals are also rich in fiber, and whole grains and beans are other good sources.

50s: Mindful Eating

The 50s are a time of big changes thanks to perimenopause and menopause. Hormone fluctuations during this time of life cause changes in metabolism and body weight. Rather than dieting to maintain your premenopausal shape, work on accepting your changing body and focusing on mindful eating and regular physical activity.

Also essential: Vitamin D. It's essential for bone health and researchers believe it may reduce the risk of some cancers, heart disease and infectious diseases. Vitamin D is difficult to get from food — the best sources are fortified milk, orange juice and cereals, as well as fish such as salmon and tuna.

The recommended daily amount of vitamin D is 600 IU per day for women ages 19 to 70, but the majority of adults don't get enough. Consult your doctor or registered dietitian nutritionist about your need for a supplement.

60s and Beyond: Protein Power

Protein, along with regular strength building exercise, is essential for maintaining muscle, which we tend to lose as we age. Consuming enough protein also may be linked with bone health.

The average woman needs about 5 to 6 ounces of protein foods each day. Good sources include meat such as beef, chicken, fish, pork and lamb. Not a meat eater? You'll also find protein in eggs, beans, tofu and nuts, as well as low-fat or fat-free milk, yogurt and cheese.

Vitamin B12 — which helps your body make red blood cells and keep the brain and nervous system healthy — is another vital nutrient for women over 60. You can get B12 through any food that comes from an animal: meat, fish, dairy products and eggs. However, as people get older they can develop a reduced ability to absorb vitamin B12. Talk to your doctor to see if you need a supplement.

Each decade brings with it specific health concerns and different nutrition needs. Eat right for your age and you'll sail through the decades feeling great.



Prevent Cancer by Eating Right



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Did you know you can reduce your risk of cancer? More than 1.5 million people in the United States get cancer each year, and research shows that many of these cases could be prevented.

While cancer prevention is still being researched, we do know your chances of developing cancer are affected by the lifestyle choices you make. In fact, new research shows as many as one-third of all cancer deaths are linked to diet and physical activity. Besides quitting smoking and protecting your skin from damaging UV rays, some of the most important things you can do to help reduce your cancer risk are eating right and being physically active on a regular basis throughout life.

Here are some general guidelines to help reduce your cancer risk through eating right.

- **Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables** including beans, which are linked with a lower risk of certain cancers. Fill half your plate each meal with a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables.
- **Eat fewer foods that are extremely processed and low in nutrients.** Filling up on foods with added sugars and fats leave little room for nutrient-dense, cancer-preventive foods. You can still enjoy the foods you love, but your diet should consist mostly of whole grains, vegetables, fruit, nuts, seeds and lean protein foods.
- **Focus on plant proteins.** Beans and lentils are nutritious and affordable sources of protein and dietary fiber. Research links high intakes of red, processed and charred meat with increased cancer risk, so eat these sparingly.
- **Limit alcohol.** Evidence suggests all types of alcoholic drinks may increase your risk of breast, colorectal and other forms of cancer. If you drink at all, limit alcoholic drinks to no more than one drink daily for women and two for men.

For more tips on reducing your risk or managing diseases through nutrition, consult a registered dietitian nutritionist in your area.

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5 Ways to Promote a Positive Body Image for Kids



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Body image is how we feel about our bodies. Whatever their size or weight, children can develop either a positive or negative view of their bodies. And, body image concerns can begin as early as preschool. Therefore, parents and other adult role models need to promote a positive body image for children of all ages.

Why? Young people with a positive image of themselves feel more comfortable and confident in their ability to succeed. They don't obsess about calories, food or weight. And, they have the energy they need to enjoy physical activity.

In contrast, kids with a negative body image feel more self-conscious, anxious and isolated. They are at greater risk for excessive weight gain and for eating disorders. Give your child the gift of positive body image and help prevent these problems — take the following five steps.

Step One: Check Your Own Body Image Issues

How parents feel about their bodies has a powerful influence on kids. Take time to think about ways you might be telling your children about your body image. If you talk about your huge thighs, your latest weight loss diet or your punishing workouts, your kids will pick up on these negative messages. They will begin to worry about the size of their thighs and think they should be dieting.

Step Two: Focus on Health, Not Weight

For your kid's sake (and your own sanity), shift your focus from weight to health. Stop obsessing about numbers on the scale. Instead, concentrate on delicious foods and fun physical activities. Most kids don't need to work out — they need to play with family and friends. Children shouldn't be counting calories or restricting their intake. They should be enjoying regular meals and learning how to make smart, tasty snack choices.

Nutrition and fitness are great goals because they give us energy to do all the things that we want to do. Whatever our age or size, we feel better when we take care of our bodies. Teach your kids about how to get the energy they need to take care of themselves and live an active life.

Step Three: Find Physical Activities That Fit

Feeling fit, strong and capable is one aspect of positive body image. All children need regular physical activity they enjoy. Some kids are natural athletes — they love all sports. Other kids do better at individual activities, such as walking or riding a bike. Some may find their niche in yoga, karate or a hip-hop dance class. It doesn't matter what kids do for physical fitness. It just matters that they do something.

Step Four: Watch Out for Bullies

Weight-related teasing is a major basis for bullying. Encourage your child's school to address the issue. Ask them to support nutrition and physical education that promotes health for kids of every size. If your child is bullied about weight or for any other reason, act now. Discuss your concerns with the school counselor or administrator.

Step Five: Myth-Busting the "Perfect Body"

Help your child become a savvy media critic by talking about bodies on television, in magazines and on the internet. Chat with them about the pictures of models they see in print and online ads. Explain that many of these images are retouched or changed so the bodies appear "perfect."

To help them feel good about their bodies, "high five" your kids by taking these important steps!



Preventing Cross Contact at Home



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Food poisoning often is what comes to mind when you hear the words home food safety. But for the 15 million Americans with food allergies, 3 million with celiac disease and many more with other sensitivities, avoiding contact with an offending food is every bit as much of a concern. Coming into contact with a minuscule amount of the offending food can cause life threatening reactions in people with food allergies or cause damage to the intestines of those with celiac disease.

Most of us know someone with celiac disease, gluten sensitivity or a food allergy, so knowing how to keep foods separate when cooking at home is important.

You've probably heard the terms "cross-contamination" and "cross-contact." While used interchangeably, they are two distinct phenomena.

Cross-contamination is when harmful bacteria are transferred to a food from another food or surface. Most dangerous bacteria can be killed through proper cooking.

Cross-contact is when the food allergen or gluten is transferred to a food meant to be allergen or gluten-free. A key difference here is that offending food proteins remain dangerous after cooking.

Safety Starts at the Store

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration's [Food Allergen and Labeling Consumer Protection Act](#) and [Gluten-Free Food Labeling Rule](#) have made shopping much easier, but care and vigilance is still required:

- When shopping, store problematic foods in plastic bags, place them in a second cart and keep them separate at checkout and in the car.

- Avoid foods from bulk bins, hot/cold salad bars and the deli counter, as these are common sites for cross-contact.
- Read ingredient labels and signage each and every time you shop, as recipes and formulations can change without warning.

Set Up a Storage System

If you can't keep the entire house free from an offending food:

- Cross-contact with an allergen or gluten through condiments is common, due to double-dipping. Choose squeeze bottles when possible to eliminate double dipping. Try to use condiments free from the problematic food for everyone in the family to enjoy, but if this is not possible clearly label the option that is gluten- or allergen-free.
- Dedicate shelves to allergen and/or gluten-free foods to avoid confusion.
- Place gluten- and allergen-containing foods on shelves below allergen/gluten-free foods — in the pantry, refrigerator and freezer.

Conscious Cooking is Key

- Depending on the food that needs to be avoided and where practical, use separate sets of utensils and small appliances such as toasters, pots, strainers, cutting boards, rolling pins, whisks and pizza cutters.
- Prepare and cook allergen/gluten-free dishes first and in/on cleaned equipment and surfaces.
- If possible, dedicate a kitchen space to allergen/gluten-free preparation.

Wash and Wash Again

- Wash and sterilize everything coming into contact with the allergen/gluten-free food being prepared.
- Wash hands with warm, soapy water for 20 seconds.
- Change gloves and aprons.
- Wash plates, small equipment and utensils with hot, soapy water or rinse off residue and put in the dishwasher.
- To clean surfaces and larger appliances, use a dry towel to wipe down crumbs first, then wash or sterilize.

Consider Cross Contact Through Service

- Serve allergen/gluten-free guests first and carry their dishes separate from others.
- For family-style meals, allow guests with allergies/intolerances to serve themselves first.
- Avoid "make-your-own" dishes with high risk for cross-contact, including sundaes, salads and topping bars.

If, after taking all these precautions, you think cross contact has still occurred, let your guest know. They will happily wait to be served a dish that is safe to eat.



Vegging Out: Tips on Switching to a Meatless Diet



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Religious beliefs, philosophical concerns or health may all lead a person to follow a vegetarian diet. But, becoming a vegetarian — especially if you've been a lifelong meat-eater — isn't always easy. Your best bet? Switch to a vegetarian diet in steps. A gradual change will give you time to find vegetarian foods that you enjoy.

Find Foods You Enjoy

A good first step is to review your current diet. Make a list of foods that you regularly eat, paying special attention to vegetarian foods that you like. Next, aim to incorporate these foods — along with a variety of whole grains, fruits, vegetables and beans — into your eating plan. A good way to include vegetables, for example, is to add them to the foods you already enjoy, such as pasta or rice dishes.

Plant-based, meat-free products offer the opportunity to get the taste and flavor of meat without consuming the real thing. Choices may include soybean proteins, wheat proteins and other vegetable sources. Check your grocer's freezer department for vegetarian versions of hamburger, sausage, chicken or bacon. These are tasty additions to dishes including chili or casseroles.

If you're going vegan and eliminating all animal-based food products, look for dairy substitutes including calcium-fortified soy milk and yogurt.

Pick up a vegetarian cookbook or search the internet for vegetarian recipes and meal ideas, and explore vegetarian foods from various global cuisines. While American cuisine can be meat-focused, it's easy to find ample vegetarian options on many Asian, Indian and Middle Eastern menus. The supermarket is a good place to find vegetarian ingredients and ready-to-eat meatless foods from around the world.

Become a Label Reader

Label reading is essential for vegetarians since some seemingly meat-free foods actually contain animal-based ingredients such as lard, chicken fat or gelatin. Ingredients are listed in order from the largest amount to the smallest. These lists can help you make informed choices and avoid packaged foods made with ingredients you will not eat.

Another reason to read labels is to ensure you're getting essential vitamins and minerals. Poorly planned diets of any kind can lead to health problems. Most people get iron, zinc, vitamin B12, calcium and vitamin D from animal products such as meat and milk. It's important for vegans and vegetarians to include other sources of these nutrients in their daily eating plans.

One good way to do this is to review the Nutrition Facts label. This part of the label lists the serving size, as well as the nutrients in one serving. You can use this information to help ensure you're choosing foods rich in vitamins, minerals, protein and fiber. To limit added sugars, avoid foods that list sugar, corn syrup or honey as one of the first ingredients.

It is a myth that vegetarians can't get enough protein in their diets. Vegetarians easily can meet their protein needs when they eat a variety of plant proteins and get enough calories. Plant proteins can provide all the essential amino acids that your body needs. Whole grains, beans, lentils and nuts are good sources of protein. Eating a variety of different plant proteins each day helps your body store and use protein.

Healthy Vegetarian Eating Tips

Plan meals around whole grains, vegetables, fruits and beans. This ensures a variety and balance of nutrients, including fiber, protein and health-promoting phytochemicals.

Cook with heart-healthy fats such as canola and olive oil, which are rich in monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. Include plant sources of fat, such as avocado, nuts and seeds, to salads and other dishes.

Experiment with soy-based foods such as tofu and tempeh. Try marinating, sauteing, baking and even grilling

Use fresh and dried herbs and spices for extra flavor. Mustard, vinegar, hot sauce, hummus and fresh salsa are flavorful condiments.



Making the Grade at Lunchtime



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Breakfast often is called the most important meal of the day, and lunch also plays a critical role in children's overall health and school performance. When children skip lunch, they are likely to have trouble concentrating in the classroom, lack energy for sports and overeat on low-nutrient, after-school snacks.

Whether children eat lunch at home, enjoy a school-provided lunch or pack a lunch box, the goal is a nutrient-rich meal to fuel their brains and bodies for the afternoon. The trick is providing a lunch that packs a nutritional punch and appeals to your child. Try the following ideas to create lunches your child will eat rather than trade, throw away or bring back home.

Put Your Kids in the Chef's Seat

When kids help plan their lunches, they are more likely to eat them. If your child's school has a lunch program, review the menus together and pick the ones that are appealing. When kids eat school lunch, they are more likely to consume milk, meats, grains and vegetables, which gives them a higher nutrient intake over the course of an entire day. Cost- and nutrition-wise, school lunch is a great value.

If your child is more likely to eat a lunch packed at home, create a system that works for both of you. Agree on what goes into every lunch: some protein, a grain, at least one fruit and one veggie, a calcium-rich food or beverage (if not buying milk at school) and perhaps a small sweet or additional snack item. Make a checklist or spreadsheet of what your child likes in each category. For example: "The vegetables I will eat in my lunch are: baby carrots, green pepper slices with ranch dip, cherry tomatoes or a mini-salad."

Make a specific plan for the next week. Take time on the weekend to bag items for each day. Some families have baskets in the fridge and on the counter so everything (except sandwiches) can be prepared ahead of time.

Go for Gold Medal Food Choices

Variety is the basis of well-balanced nutrition. But don't worry if a child wants exactly the same lunch for two weeks in a row. Work around normal pickiness by creating a list of alternatives. For example, if sandwiches are in the "don't like" column, what else might work?

- Wraps (which now come in variety of colors and flavors)
- Cracker sandwiches (usual ingredients on round or square whole-grain crackers)
- Little salads with protein (cheese, nuts, beans)
- Bread-free sandwiches (such as a slice of turkey or roast beef wrapped around a cheese stick and crunchy slice of sweet bell pepper)

Make Fruits and Veggies Fun

Variety in fruits and vegetables keeps them exciting. Lunch boxes with sections make it easy to include more choices without fear that they'll be squished.

- Fruit kabobs can be made with your child's help by combining pineapple or kiwi chunks, strawberries, watermelon or cantaloupe chunks, and orange segments. These are deliciously sweet plain, or add a small container of plain yogurt with a little cinnamon.
- Vegetables make fun kabobs, too. Cucumbers, zucchini and cherry tomatoes are good together, and also are delicious to dip in a small container of hummus.
- Other vegetables made for dipping include raw carrots (strips or baby-cut carrots for convenience) and celery sticks. As a make-ahead, trim and steam some green beans to have ready or steam some broccoli florets; both also are fun to dip in hummus or salsa.
- For convenient packing and eating, add a package of unsweetened applesauce, or one of the small seedless, easy-peel oranges like a clementine or mandarin).
- Make a quick pasta salad. Combine cooked pasta (bowtie, penne, orzo, or whatever shape your child likes) with edamame or white beans, a vegetable of choice, and some pesto or homemade ranch dressing (half plain yogurt, half mayonnaise).
- If sandwiches are a top choice, use them as a vehicle to include a vegetable like a handful of shredded carrots, sliced peppers or some lettuce or baby spinach.

Focus on Eye-Appeal

Kids, like adults, eat with their eyes first. They are attracted to foods by the packaging, so make sure your lunch can compete. Choose a reusable lunch bag or box with favorite cartoon characters or colors. Make foods as bright and colorful as possible. Have fun with shapes and size — use cookie cutters on sandwiches or make mini-muffins.



Healthy Eating for Men



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Food is more than just fuel. Your diet can help fight disease and keep you looking and acting younger.

Eating Right

A healthy diet for men includes:

- At least 2 cups of fruits and 2½ cups of vegetables each day for vitamins, minerals, fiber and phytochemicals.
- Whole grains. Eat at least half of all grains as whole grains each day. Replace refined grains with whole-grain bread, cereal, pasta, brown rice or oats.
- At least two to three servings of fish per week.
- At least 38 grams of fiber a day for younger men; 30 grams of fiber a day for men older than 50.
- Unsaturated fats such as oils, nuts and oil-based salad dressings in place of saturated fats including full-fat dairy foods, butter and high-fat sweets.
- 4,700 milligrams a day of potassium from fruits, vegetables, fish and milk.

Energy Foods

Since men have more muscle and are typically bigger than women, they require more calories throughout the day. Moderately active males likely need 2,000 to 2,800 calories per day. Your energy needs depend on your height, weight and activity level.

For energy and disease prevention, men should eat whole grains such as whole-grain bread, pasta, cereal, brown rice, oats, barley, fruits and vegetables. These foods are high in fiber, help manage hunger and fullness and help fend off certain cancers, such as prostate and colon.

Beyond Meat

Men typically are avid meat-eaters because of the perception that more protein equals more muscle mass. That is not the case unless exercise is involved. Excessive meat eating is linked to heart disease and colorectal cancer in men.

Eat red meat less frequently, and, instead, focus on more beans, lentils, tempeh and tofu. Plant-based proteins decrease disease risk and deliver fiber. Cut down on saturated fat from meat, cheese and fried foods. Instead, opt for foods with unsaturated, heart-healthy fats such as olive oil, canola oil, nuts, seeds and avocados.

Weight and Disease Risk

More than women, men gain weight around the middle due to the hormone testosterone. If your waist measures more than 40 inches around, take a look at your lifestyle behaviors including eating, exercise and sleep. This fat around the waist typically is buried deep in the abdomen and increases your risk for diabetes, heart disease and dementia. Consider working with a registered dietitian nutritionist to develop healthy habits that will last a lifetime.



Where to Store Foods in the Kitchen



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Your sister keeps tomatoes on the countertop, but your best friend insists they should be cold. You've heard that bread gets stale faster in the fridge, but molds more quickly outside of it. And fruit goes in the crisper drawer—except when it doesn't.

If you're confused by all the conflicting rules about what foods go where, don't fret: We have the inside scoop from registered dietitian nutritionists who are experts in food storage.

You're Getting Warmer: Foods to Store on the countertop or in the pantry

Honey is very shelf-stable and will last a long time. Also, if you chill honey it becomes hard to pour, so keep it in your pantry.

Tomatoes fare better when kept out of the fridge, where they can become mealy. It's true that they spoil faster when stored on the counter. If you won't be eating them within 1 to 2 days, store ripened tomatoes in the refrigerator for 2 or 3 days. However, keep in mind that once you cut

into a tomato (or any fruit or vegetable), it needs to be refrigerated to slow the growth of harmful bacteria.

Potatoes and Onions like the same conditions, but they should not be stored together. Potato starch turns to sugar when refrigerated. Potatoes and onions should be stored in a cool, dry place such as the bottom of your pantry. Remove any potatoes and onions that go bad in the pantry from the rest.

Bread can stale quickly in the fridge due to the dry circulating air. If you're afraid your bread will become moldy because your kitchen is hot or humid, or because you won't be eating it quickly, freeze it. You can remove only what you need and thaw it on the counter or in the toaster on the "defrost" setting.

Peanut butter becomes difficult to spread when it's cold, so store it in your pantry if you will use it within 2 to 3 months. Store in the refrigerator for 4 to 6 months. However, if you buy natural peanut butter, check the label; some brands recommend refrigeration to keep the natural oils from separating.

Keep Your Cool: Foods that do better in the refrigerator

Olive oil and nut oils go rancid quickly when exposed to light and heat, which puts the kibosh on their healthful qualities. Refrigeration may cause these oils to become cloudy, but they'll clear up when they return to room temperature.

Cheese may be best served at room temperature — but, like all animal-derived food, still needs to be stored in the fridge. Take it out a short time before serving for the best flavor. Perishable foods, including cheese, should be thrown out if they are kept out of the refrigerator for two or more hours. In the warmer months, that amount of time will be less.

Butter should be kept cold. Your grandma may have kept her butter in a crock on the counter to keep it nice and spreadable. However, keeping butter refrigerated avoids risky bacterial contamination. If you want soft butter, remove it for a little while before serving to let it soften.



Vitamins, Minerals and Supplements: Do You Need to Take Them?



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Most of us know that good nutrition is important for good health. However, when we hear buzzwords such as "calcium deficiency" or learn that a new multivitamin just hit the shelves, it can make us wonder if the food we're eating is enough. Hint: It likely is.

Taking a daily dose of any of the single minerals, vitamins or multivitamin/mineral supplements that line the shelves of supermarkets and drug stores can be tempting. According to the 2015 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, "Nutritional needs should be met primarily from foods. Individuals should aim to meet their nutrient needs through healthy eating patterns that include nutrient-dense foods ... [which] contain essential vitamins and minerals and also dietary fiber and other naturally occurring substances that may have positive health effects." While there may be a need to supplement our diet at certain times in our lives, the safety of taking a supplement also needs to be considered. Too much of some vitamins and minerals can cause health issues; and, therefore, recommended levels should not be exceeded.

Who needs supplements?

As it turns out, the best way to stay healthy is to choose a wide variety of nutritious foods from all five MyPlate food groups. Nutrient deficiencies are not common among Americans, but for varying

reasons some people cannot reach the recommended nutrient amounts without using supplements and/or including fortified foods. In addition to a balanced diet, those individuals may need nutrient supplements depending on their situation. For example, older adults, pregnant women and people who are food insecure are at increased risk of nutrient deficiencies.

In addition, if you are eating less than 1,600 calories each day because you have a poor appetite or you have trouble eating because you have been using alcohol or drugs, discuss the need for supplements with your doctor or registered dietitian nutritionist.

Some individuals are limited in their food choices due to allergies, a medical condition or because they are following a vegetarian or vegan diet. For example, animal foods are the main source of vitamin B12, so people who follow a vegan diet need to eat fortified foods and/or take a supplement.

Women who could become pregnant need to obtain adequate folic acid from fortified foods (cereals and other grains), supplements or both, in addition to consuming folate from foods in a varied diet. Because it helps reduce the risk of some birth defects, folic acid is very important during childbearing years. If lab tests show that a woman's iron status is low during pregnancy, her healthcare provider will recommend an iron supplement.

Vitamin D might be a concern among infants, children and young adults. Infants who are breast-fed and children who consume less than the recommended amount of vitamin D fortified milk or formula and those with increased risk of deficiency likely will need supplemental vitamin D. Adolescent girls, meanwhile, might need additional iron.

On the other side of the spectrum, as people age it can be difficult to get enough vitamins B12 and D. Luckily, this is one of the cases where supplements can make a difference. Getting B12 from fortified foods or taking it alone or as part of a multivitamin/mineral can help raise B12 in your blood. If you're taking calcium or a multivitamin/mineral, choose one that also has vitamin D.

Other groups who may require additional supplementation include people who are taking certain medications or have a health condition that changes how their body uses nutrients, and individuals who have been told by their doctor they have a specific nutrient deficiency.

Your doctor can order tests to help determine if taking a supplement would benefit you. The results might show that you are low in a certain nutrient or you might discover that you're doing just fine. Additionally, review your current diet. An RDN can help you evaluate the foods you eat and make recommendations to meet your personal needs.

Remember, real food contains healthy things a pill can't give us. When we take a nutrient out of a food and concentrate it in a pill, it's not quite the same thing. Be sure to consider your individual situation and consult a doctor or an RDN before considering supplements.



Hiking and Camping with Food Safety in Mind



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It's finally summer – a time to explore the great outdoors. Camping and hiking can be the perfect escape to enjoy the beauty nature has to offer. But whether you set out for a few hours or a few days, keep important food safety principles in mind.

1. Keep Hot Foods Hot and Cold Foods Cold

Bacteria multiply rapidly within the "danger zone," between 40°F and 140°F. Keep foods out of the danger zone by keeping hot foods hot and cold foods cold. This means not only cooking and reheating foods to a safe temperature, but also properly storing foods that require refrigeration. Perishable foods should not be left unrefrigerated for more than two hours, or more than one hour if it's over 90°F outside. Luckily, with a few simple steps, you can keep food safe even without the luxury of a refrigerator or microwave.

Short Hikes: If you are going out for a short hike, bring along nonperishables or chilled foods. To keep cold foods cold, freeze overnight or cover them with frozen gel packs or frozen juice boxes and bottled water. These frozen beverages will thaw during the hike while keeping your food cold.

Overnight Camping: If you are camping overnight, cook foods to the proper internal temperature. Pack a food thermometer to ensure foods have reached a safe temperature, because you can't rely on sight or taste alone to determine doneness.

- Cook burgers made of raw ground beef, pork, lamb and veal to an internal temperature of 160°F.
- Heat hot dogs and any leftover food to 165°F.
- Cook all poultry to a safe minimum internal temperature of 165°F.

- Cook all raw beef, pork, lamb and veal steaks, chops and roasts to a minimum internal temperature of 145°F. For safety and quality, allow meat to rest for at least three minutes before carving or consuming.

Only eat the cold items if they remain below 40°F. In most circumstances, eat cold foods on the first day. However, if you are car camping (driving to your site) you will have the luxury of being able to bring a cooler. To keep food coldest – and safest – load food straight from the fridge into your cooler just before you leave the house, rather than packing it in advance. And remember, don't eat any perishable food that has been out of the cooler for more than two hours, or more than one hour in temperatures above 90°F.

2. Don't Forget to Wash

Bacteria will spread easily in an unclean environment. Bring soap, water, clean towels and hand sanitizer. Always wash your hands, utensils and all surfaces before preparing and eating food.

3. Keep Drinking Water Safe

Don't drink water directly from a lake or stream no matter how clean it looks. Some pathogens thrive in remote bodies of water and there is no way to tell what is in the water. Bring a full bottle of purified water and replenish your supply from tested public systems. If that is not possible, purify any water from the wild.

One way to make water safe is to boil it to kill microorganisms. Bring water to a rolling boil and then boil for at least one minute. If water is muddy, allow it to stand for a while until the silt settles to the bottom. Then boil the clear water off the top. At higher elevations, boil for several minutes because the boiling point of water is lower.

Another option is water purification tablets and water filters. The purification tablets kill most waterborne bacteria, viruses and some parasites. Because some parasites and larger bacteria are not killed by purification tablets, also be sure to use a water filter. These water filtering devices must be 1 micron absolute or smaller. Over time, purification tablets lose their potency, so replace them often. Water purification tablets, filters and sanitizing tablets can be purchased at camping supply stores.

4. Prevent Cross-contamination

Bacteria from raw meat and poultry can easily spread to other foods from dripping juices, hands or utensils. Avoid cross-contamination by washing your hands before and after handling food, and using different platters and utensils for raw and cooked meats, seafood, eggs and poultry. Double-wrap meat and poultry when transporting in a cooler to prevent raw meat juices from dripping onto other foods.

5. Always Clean Up

Keep food safety tips in mind when washing dishes and cleaning up the campsite. You can buy biodegradable camping soap, but use it sparingly and keep it out of fresh bodies of water because it will pollute them. Wash dishes at the campsite, not the water's edge, and make sure all water is purified. As you get ready to leave the campsite, leftover food should be burned or carried out with you. Bring garbage bags to dispose of any trash.



How to Fuel Your Workout



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Which is better fuel for spinning class — protein or carbohydrates? Should you consume a sports drink on a long run? Is it safe to eat before a workout? Listen to locker room talk at the gym and you'll hear lots of conflicting tips about what you should eat and drink before and after you work out. These answers to five common questions about fueling your workout sort fact from fiction.

Will Protein Make My Muscles Grow?

Protein is an important part of a balanced diet, but eating more protein will not magically make you stronger. The only way to grow muscles is to put them to work, and eat enough calories to build mass. Most people can get enough protein from food alone and do not need a supplement.

Carbohydrates are the major fuel for muscles and an athlete's diet should consist of mostly carbohydrate. The body converts carbohydrate to glycogen, which is stored in your muscles to power your workout.

Do Sports Drinks, Gels and Energy Bites Live Up to the Hype?

There's nothing special about the many sports drinks, gels and energy bites on the market. But it is important to replace lost fluids as well as provide carbohydrates to maintain blood glucose levels while working out for longer than one hour.

For some athletes, eating solid food in the middle of a workout can cause digestive upset. In these cases, easily consumed sports gels, chews or drinks may help. Food and fluid intake around workouts should be determined on an individual basis with consideration for an athlete's gastrointestinal tract tolerance, as well as duration and intensity of the workout.

Is It Best to Work Out on an Empty Stomach?

Your body needs fuel to function, especially if you're asking it to run, jump, swim or lift weights. Don't skip breakfast before a morning workout. Eating before exercise, as opposed to exercising in the fasted state, has been shown to improve exercise performance.

Eating in the morning helps replenish liver glycogen and steadies blood sugar levels. If it's hard to stomach solid food first thing in the morning, try a fruit smoothie, or a liquid meal supplement, and don't forget to hydrate before you exercise.

Regular Exercise Means I Can Eat What I Want and Not Gain Weight, Right?

Wrong. Working out isn't license to abandon portion sizes and healthy eating guidelines. It's easy to overestimate the amount of calories you burn while working out.

You should adjust your calorie intake if you're engaging in serious training, such as for a triathlon, where you might be working out more than once a day. Recovery nutrition is necessary if you are an athlete participating in strenuous activity, especially if you are participating in multiple events in the same day. For the casual exerciser working out for an hour or less, a healthy balanced diet will work just fine.

Is Chocolate Milk Really an Athlete's Best Friend?

Because of its favorable carbohydrate and protein content, chocolate milk is indeed an effective recovery aid, but it's not your only choice. Replacing fluid lost during a workout should be first priority. Plain water and water-rich foods such as fruit are good choices. Be sure to eat a balanced meal within a couple hours of working out to help muscles recover. For strenuous workouts, carbohydrate should be consumed within 30 minutes of finishing the workout. This can be done with a sports drink or a carbohydrate-rich snack such as a fruit smoothie.