

## DIET RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Carbohydrates: 55% – 65%**
- **Fats: Less than 35%**
- **Protein: 12% - 15%**

Today's consumers are beginning to realize the importance of increasing their consumption of whole grains and wheat foods. The nutrition and convenience of wheat foods make them a natural in our fast-paced society. What's more, there's an endless variety of delicious wheat foods to suit every taste.

Wheat is primarily made up of complex carbohydrates, which provide a source of time-released energy. The nutrition community recommends that 55% – 65% of our daily calories come from carbohydrates.

Nutritionists also advise eating no more than 35% of our calories from fats and approximately 12% - 15% of our calories from protein. However, Americans are currently only eating 50% of their calories from carbohydrates, 34% from fats and the remainder from protein.

Any excess of calories from eating more food than the body needs is stored as fat. Extra calories from fat appear to be stored more readily than extra calories from protein or carbohydrates. A balanced diet including foods from the five major food groups is needed to assure adequate calories for growth, maintaining health and general activity.

MyPyramid (see below) recommends finding a balance between food and physical activity by emphasizing grains, especially whole grains, fruits and vegetables. Appropriate amounts of calcium rich foods and lean sources of protein are also encouraged. One size doesn't fit all. MyPyramid helps individuals choose the right types of foods and amounts based on age, sex and activity level.

Wheat products provide dietary fiber in our diets. Dietary fiber is the carbohydrate in food, which humans cannot digest. Fiber acts as a broom to sweep out the digestive tract. Adequate intake of foods containing fiber has been related to lesser incidence of colon cancer and some types of heart disease. Increasing consumption of foods containing fiber has also been related to better control of diabetes, an overall healthy colon, and weight control. Recent research suggests that eating wheat bran fiber may help prevent breast cancer.

Wheat foods are good sources of fiber as are fruits and vegetables. One slice of whole wheat bread contains 2 grams dietary fiber; one slice white bread contains 0.5 grams; once ounce of wheat bran cereal contains between 8 and 9 grams. The National Academy of Science recommends eating 25 – 38 grams of fiber each day, but Americans are currently only consuming about 15 grams daily.

# MyPyramid

STEPS TO A HEALTHIER YOU

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## GRAINS

Make half your grains whole

Eat at least 3 oz. of whole-grain cereals, breads, crackers, rice, or pasta every day.

1 oz. is about 1 slice of bread, about 1 cup of breakfast cereal, or 1/2 cup of cooked rice, cereal, or pasta.

## VEGETABLES

Vary your veggies

Eat more dark-green veggies like broccoli, spinach, and other dark leafy greens.

Eat more orange vegetables like carrots and sweetpotatoes.

Eat more dry beans and peas like pinto beans, kidney beans, and lentils.

## FRUITS

Focus on fruits

Eat a variety of fruit.

Choose fresh, frozen, canned, or dried fruit.

Go easy on fruit juices.

## MILK

Get your calcium-rich foods

Go low-fat or fat-free when you choose milk, yogurt, and other milk products.

If you don't or can't consume milk, choose lactose-free products or other calcium sources such as fortified foods and beverages.

## MEAT & BEANS

Go lean with protein

Choose low-fat or lean meats and poultry.

Bake it, broil it, or grill it.

Vary your protein routine - choose more fish, beans, peas, nuts, and seeds.