



# Healthy Kids

LSU AgCenter Nutrition Programs Newsletter



**MyPyramid.gov**  
STEPS TO A HEALTHIER YOU

## Understanding MyPyramid

The new USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans came out in January 2005. There is also a new Food Pyramid, called MyPyramid. Do you know how it differs from the old Food Guide Pyramid? Let's learn together!

MyPyramid looks a little different from the Food Guide Pyramid. One side shows a person running up the stairs. That message encourages us to be more physically active every day. The other side of the pyramid shows different food groups in different colors. A variety of foods are included in each group. The message of the MyPyramid is, "Find balance between the calories you eat and the amount of physical activity."

MyPyramid includes five basic food groups: Grains, Vegetables, Fruits, Milk, and Meat and Beans. It is recommended that we eat a variety of foods from all five food groups each day. At the same time, we should stay

within our calorie needs. In other words, we should not eat more than a certain number of calories each day. The amount depends on your sex, your age and how active you are. For example, a 10-year-old girl who is moderately active needs from 1,600 to 2,000 calories a day. A boy of the same age and physical activity level needs from 1,800 to 2,200 calories.

Here are a few recommendations and tips for each food group:

### 1. Grains:

- a. Choose whole grains as often as you can.
- b. Half of the grains you eat every day should be whole grains.
- c. Choose popcorn for a snack.
- d. Try oatmeal for breakfast.
- e. Snack on toasted oat cereal.

### 2. Vegetables

- a. Go for the colors!
- b. Try a veggie pizza.
- c. Dip green pepper strips in low-fat dressing.
- d. Try a salad made with spinach.

### 3. Fruits

- a. Fresh, frozen, canned or dry – they are all delicious!
- b. Carry an orange or apple in your backpack for a snack.
- c. Snack on canned mandarin oranges.
- d. Sprinkle raisins on breakfast cereal.

### 4. Milk

- a. Feed your bones with high-calcium foods!
- b. Dip fruit in flavored yogurt for a delicious snack.
- c. Drink plain or low-fat chocolate milk with meals.
- d. Make a smoothie with low-fat yogurt and frozen strawberries.

### 5. Meat & Beans

- a. Go lean!
- b. Sprinkle peanuts over stir-fry vegetables
- c. Take the skin off chicken.
- d. Have a tuna salad sandwich on whole-wheat bread.
- e. Ask for baked or grilled meat and chicken.

To help you grow strong and have plenty of energy, learn to make healthy choices such as these. Let MyPyramid guide your food choices, and stay healthy!

Resource: MyPyramid: Steps to a Healthier You youth fact sheet, USDA, 2005 and LSU AgCenter Publication 2920.

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