

Menu Planning Guide

By using the Food Guide Pyramid and selecting a variety of foods, you can plan and prepare meals for your family that measure up to good nutrition. When planning meals, consider individual likes and dislikes, how many people you will be serving, and the cost and availability of foods.

1. The main dish for each meal is usually a protein food - meat or meat alternative for lunch and dinner, cereal and/or eggs for breakfast.
2. Build menus around the protein foods or main dishes. Select complementary foods from the Food Pyramid to include the minimum servings from each group.
3. Serve foods that are in season; they will be more readily available, best in flavor, and more reasonably priced.
4. Contrast colors and textures in foods, with at least one crisp food at each meal.
5. Provide variety using different flavors. Avoid serving more than one sharp or highly flavored food at each meal.
6. Vary shapes and forms of foods at each meal.
7. Contrast temperature in foods, with at least one hot and one cold food at each meal.
8. Use fresh, frozen, and canned foods to vary flavor and texture and add interest.

MEAL PATTERN	SAMPLE MENU	COMMENTS
<u>Breakfast</u> fruit or juice cereal bread milk or beverage*	Orange Juice Hot cereal with raisins Whole wheat toast Milk or beverage*	- should fulfill at least ¼ of day's food needs - serve a meat or alternative on occasion
<u>Lunch</u> meat or main dish fruit or vegetable bread milk or beverage*	Turkey/Lettuce/Tomato On pita bread Pear carrot sticks Milk or beverage*	- a good time to offer variety, such as milk in soup, vegetables or fruit in salad or as dessert, using meat substitutes (ex. peanut butter)
<u>Dinner</u> salad meat or main dish vegetable bread dessert milk or bev.*	Mixed green salad Spaghetti and meatballs Broccoli Italian bread Apple crisp Milk or beverage*	- can serve one fruit or vegetable instead of salad

*milk is recommended

HOW MANY SERVINGS ARE NEEDED EACH DAY?

Bread, Cereal, Rice, and Pasta Group	eat 6 oz. every day
Vegetable Group	eat 2 ½ cups every day
Fruit Group	eat 2 cups every day
Milk, Yogurt, and Cheese Group	eat 3 cups every day
Meat, Poultry, Fish, Dry Beans, Eggs, and Nuts Group	eat 5 ½ oz. every day
Fats, Oils, and Sweets	use sparingly

WHAT COUNTS AS A SERVING?

Breads, grains, cereal

What counts as one ounce?

- 1 slice of bread
- ½ cup cooked rice, pasta, or cereal
- 1 cup of ready to eat (dry) cereal
- 1 mini bagel
- 1 small muffin... 2 ½ inches
- 7 crackers

Vegetables

What counts as one cup?

- 1 cup chopped raw or cooked vegetables
- 2 cups raw leafy greens

Meats, beans, nuts, eggs, etc.

What counts as one ounce?

- 1 oz. of cooked lean meat, poultry, fish
- 1/4 cup cooked beans
- one egg
- 1 Tbsp. peanut butter
- ½ oz. of nuts

Milk, Yogurt, cheese

What counts as one cup?

- 1 cup milk, yogurt, or pudding
- 1½ to 2 oz. of cheese
- 2 oz. processed American cheese
- 1/3 cup shredded cheese
- 2 cups cottage cheese

Fruits

What counts as one cup?

- 1 medium piece of fruit
- 1 cup of 100% fruit juice
- 1 cup of canned fruit
- ½ cup dried fruit

****Remember: the amount you eat on a regular basis may actually be more than one serving. For example, a dinner portion of pasta would count as 2-3 servings. One hamburger bun is 2 servings of bread/grains.*