

30 MyPyramid Steps to a Healthier You

MyPyramid's slogan "Steps to a Healthier You" indicates we can benefit from taking daily small steps to improve our diet and lifestyle. Here are some steps from <http://mypyramid.gov> to get started.

<p>1 On the Internet, go to http://mypyramid.gov and calculate your personalized "My Pyramid Plan."</p>  <p>MyPyramid.gov STEPS TO A HEALTHIER YOU</p>	<p>2</p>  <p>Order veggie toppings for your pizza like mushrooms, green peppers and onions.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Eat foods and beverages low in "added sugars." Naturally occurring sugars such as those which are in milk and fruits do not count as added sugars.</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Vary your fruit choices. Fruits differ in nutrient content.</p> 	<p>5</p> <p>Make most of your choices whole or cut-up fruit rather than juice, for the benefits dietary fiber provides.</p> 	<p>6</p>  <p>Select vegetables with more potassium often, such as sweet potatoes, white potatoes, winter squash, tomato products, beet greens, spinach, dry beans and split peas.</p>
<p>7</p> <p>Choose grain products which name one of the following whole-grain ingredients first on the ingredient list: brown rice, bulgur, graham flour, oatmeal, whole-grain corn, whole oats, whole rye, whole wheat, wild rice.</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Dried fruits make a great snack. They're easy to carry and store well. Because they're dried, 1/4 cup is equal to 1/2 cup of other fruits.</p> 	<p>9</p>  <p>Sauces or seasonings can add calories, fat and sodium to vegetables. Use the Nutrition Facts label to compare the calories and % Daily Value for fat and sodium in plain and seasoned vegetables.</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Walking, gardening, briskly pushing a baby stroller, climbing the stairs, playing soccer or dancing are all good examples of being active. For health benefits, physical activity should add up to at least 30 minutes a day.</p> 	<p>11</p> <p>Try a main dish salad for lunch. Go light on the salad dressing.</p> 	<p>12</p>  <p>For a change, try brown rice or whole-wheat pasta.</p>
<p>13</p> <p>If you avoid milk because of lactose intolerance, try using a lactose-free milk, consuming the enzyme lactase before consuming milk or using a calcium fortified soy or rice beverage.</p> <p><small>Bioavailability of calcium from nondairy foods may vary.</small></p>	<p>14</p> <p>Popcorn, a whole grain, can be a healthy snack with little or no added salt and butter.</p> 	<p>15</p> <p>Do exercises or pedal a stationary bike while watching television.</p> 	<p>16</p> <p>Many vegetables taste great with a dip or dressing. Try a low-fat salad dressing with raw broccoli, cauliflower, red and green peppers or celery sticks.</p> 	<p>17</p> <p>Physical activity may include short bouts of moderate-intensity activity. The accumulated total is what is important and can be accumulated through three to six 10-minute bouts over the course of a day.</p> 	<p>18</p>  <p>Color is not an indication of a whole grain. Bread can be brown because of molasses or other added ingredients. Read the ingredient list to see if it is a whole grain.</p>
<p>19</p>  <p>Frozen juice bars (100% juice) make healthy alternatives to high-fat snacks.</p> <p><small>riculture</small></p>	<p>20</p>  <p>Park farther from your destination (work, shopping, etc.) and walk the rest of the way.</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Look for fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids, such as salmon, trout and herring.</p> 	<p>22</p>  <p>Stock up on frozen vegetables for quick and easy cooking in the microwave.</p>	<p>23</p>  <p>Substitute whole wheat for up to half of the flour in pancake, waffle, muffin or other flour-based recipes.</p>	<p>24</p> <p>If you drink lattes or cappuccinos — ask for them with fat-free (skim) milk.</p> 
<p>25</p>  <p>Refrigerate or freeze perishables, prepared food and leftovers within TWO hours.</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Use the Nutrition Facts label and choose grain products with a higher % Daily Value (%DV) for fiber — the %DV for fiber is a good clue to the amount of whole grain in the product.</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Select fruits with more potassium often, such as bananas, prunes and prune juice, dried peaches and apricots, cantaloupe, honeydew melon and orange juice.</p> 	<p>29</p>  <p>For dessert, make pudding with fat-free or low-fat milk.</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Replace a coffee break with a brisk 10-minute walk. Ask a friend to go with you.</p> 	<p>30</p>  <p>For fresh fruit salads, mix apples, bananas or pears with acidic fruits like oranges, pineapple or lemon juice to keep them from turning brown.</p>

Published by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A&M and Auburn Universities) in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This information is partially funded by Food Stamp Program. Food Stamps helps people with little or no income to buy food. All organizations stated above are Equal Opportunity Employers. Source of handout: University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County, Alice Henneman, <http://llancaster.unl.edu/food>; 2005.