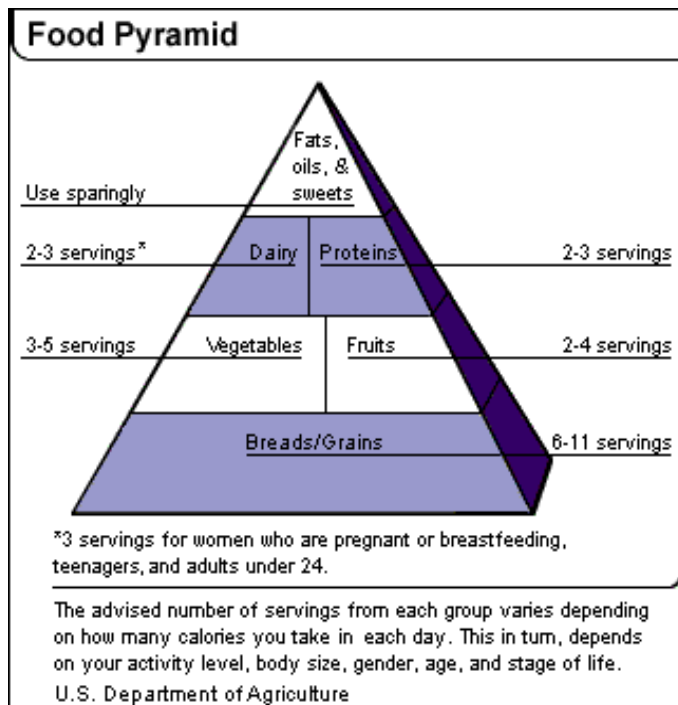


Pyramid

You need to eat the right amounts and balance of food to reduce your risk of disease. Using the food pyramid to visualize your daily food intake is one way to ensure a healthy diet.

Because you need plenty of breads, cereals, rice, and pasta, these foods form the largest part of the pyramid—its base. Next come vegetables and fruits, followed by meat and dairy products, which are needed in smaller amounts. Fats, oils, and sugar appear at the top of the pyramid, because they should be used sparingly.

Try to meet the minimum requirements recommended in the food pyramid each day. Remember that no single item supplies all the nutrients necessary for good health. So eat a wide variety of foods, in these proportions, to ensure you get all you need:



How Big is a Serving?

Using the food pyramid successfully to manage your weight depends on accurately measuring the size of your servings. Many nutritionists recommend using a scale and measuring utensils until you feel confident about estimating ½ cup of milk, 2 tablespoons of margarine, 3 ounces of chicken, and so on.

Serving Sizes	
Food group	Size of one serving
Breads/grains	1 slice of bread; 1/2 hamburger bun, English muffin, or small bagel; 1 small roll or biscuit; 3-4 small or 2 large crackers; 1 ounce dry cereal; 1/2 cup cooked cereal, rice, or pasta
Vegetables	1/2 cup cooked or raw vegetables; 1 cup raw leafy vegetables; 3/4 cup vegetable juice

Fruits	1 medium apple, orange, banana; 1/2 grapefruit; 1/2 cup berries; 1/2 cup chopped, cooked, or canned fruit; 1/2 cup dried fruit; 3/4 cup fruit juice
Dairy	1 cup milk or yogurt; 1.5 ounces natural cheese; 2 ounces processed cheese
Proteins	2-3 ounces cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish; 3 ounces tofu; 1 veggie burger; 1 cup cooked beans, lentils, split peas; 2 tablespoons peanut butter; 1 ounce nuts; 2 eggs or egg substitute
Fats & oils	1 teaspoon oil, margarine, or solid fat; 5 olives; 1/8 avocado
Sweets	1/2 cup nonfat frozen yogurt or sherbet; 1 small cookie; 1/2 cup gelatin or pudding; 1 cup soft drink or lemonade