

GreatVeggies™



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AUG 25 2004

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[Handwritten initials]

GreatVeggies, LLC

Ithaca, NY

August 20, 2004

Food Guide Pyramid Reassessment Team
USDA Center for Nutrition Policy, and Promotion
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 1034
Alexandria, VA 22302

Harwood 1 of 1

To whom it may concern:

As I understand it, you are seeking input on the food guide pyramid. Here are some things to consider from my point of view:

- + The pyramid should make recommendations that more easily reflect the amount to be consumed. Servings are hard to relate to – you have a table in the brochure (and only the canned and boxed stuff has serving related fine print) but a measure that relates to how we prepare what we eat would be nice. Seem as if a cup could be the metric. You might provide food pyramid cups for marketing purposes.
- + The pyramid should reflect portions that are commensurate with one's body weight and fitness (and age). Could the cups mentioned above be increased or lowered pending one's BMI (and age). BMI is not reflective of hard working people – most laborers find that they were last in the normal range in high school even though they still have a six pack instead of a keg for a stomach! Active people can and will eat more with less consequence.
- + The pyramid itself does not reflect a significant culprit of obesity - the sugar area – soda (and candy, ice cream, alcohol - especially beer). These need equal emphasis with fat. Is the cost (now and in the future) of obesity and diabetes less than that of heart disease?
- + Miracle that I found your request for input... nothing on any place in the USDA or dietary portion of your URL.
- + The medical profession has abandoned you. They prefer the statins and liposuction to a proper diet. They are only interested in disease not health because pills are sexier than hills to climb and easier to explain than eating in moderation. You need to get them back on board.

Thanks for the opportunity to provide input.

Sincerely yours,

Edward D. Harwood, Ph.D.

AUG 25



August 17, 2004

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K-State Research and Extension
Wyandotte County
Courthouse Annex

Kansas City, KS

Fax:
Brom
T 023

Food Guide Pyramid Reassessment Team
USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 1034
Alexandria, VA 22302

Re: Written comments about Food Guide Pyramid Reassessment

To Whom It May Concern:

Below are my comments on the "Proposed Food Guide Graphic and Education Materials:"

A. Advantages and disadvantages of retaining current shape for graphic and other potential shapes to use as a representative of the overall Food Guidance System.

One advantage of keeping the Food Guide Pyramid symbol is familiarity. People are slow to change, and this Pyramid has been used since 1992. The second advantage is economics. We have multitudes of materials with this pyramid, including textbooks, posters, videos, and other promotional publications and artifacts. To make a change would require destroying all these materials and starting over.

On the other hand, I believe that the effectiveness of the Pyramid is seen in the lack of behavioral changes we have seen in the overall dietary habits of American consumers. As a nutrition educator, I notice that people are quite knowledgeable about the general information contained on the pyramid, but do not use it to make choices in everyday living. Therefore, people are apathetic toward the food guide pyramid as a tool for helping them achieve a healthy lifestyle.

I would like to see a new graphic, perhaps a pie shape that shows the various food groups, but also recognizes the contemporary lifestyle of today's consumers. Rather than merely food groups, it would be great to have nutrients emphasized. Specifically, I believe that milk, a food commodity, should not be considered a separate food group. Rather, calcium should be promoted, especially when we have so many lactose-intolerant people in the

Wyandotte County
Kansas State
University Agricultural
Experiment Station
and Cooperative
Extension Service

K-State, County Extension
Councils, Extension
Districts, and U.S.
Department of
Agriculture Cooperating.

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employer.

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for Life"

population. This would also, address the criticism, whether true or not, that the Food Guide System is merely an advertising tool for the agricultural industry.

Brown
2 of 3

I would suggest the following slogan:

"Eating and Moving for Optimal Health and Enjoyment"

B. Usefulness of the proposed strategies to highlight both motivational/awareness and educational messages.

I believe the revised Daily Food Intake Patterns would be useful, though I'm not sure consumers would use them without help from an educator or educational tool.

The core messages, however, would be most useful in helping consumers think and live a more healthy life. For example: "Take it on the lips, wear it on the hips", clearly expresses the need to balance caloric intake with caloric expenditure. Or, "Pack the nutrients, not the calories", promotes the selection of nutrient dense foods. Finally, "Be smart, cut excess" encourages the use of moderation in consuming foods related to chronic diseases.

C. Advantages and disadvantages of the plan to individualize guidance in contrast to "generalized" messages.

I believe a more personalized message would be more effective. Consumers want to be more than a number. Knowing that this will not be a "one size fits all" will motivate consumers to consult the food guide system for their individual needs. I work with a variety of audiences, and we often discuss how to use the pyramid for their individual needs, whether age, health condition or body structure. Often my clients do not believe the pyramid relates to them.

D. Advantages and disadvantages of the planned focus on core messages in contrast to use of a graphic to represent educational messages.

The Food Guide Pyramid has too much information that is not processed by today's consumer. Using a simpler graphic and core messages allows the consumer to concentrate on one or more areas, depending on his/her need. This also allows more freedom and creativity among the educators to adapt the system to the needs of the specific audiences. Again, we're moving away from a "one size fits all" or "melting pot" approach. This newer system should be easy to use for diverse populations in the country.

E. Key components for effective interactive educational tools.

While there should be high-quality, high-tech interactive tools for teaching this new system, also consideration for the growing low-resource community

should direct the type of educational tools developed. Simple, direct educational print materials and public relation materials should also be developed. Colorful brochures and booklets with basic information on the core messages should be in several languages. A personal assessment tool online, and in print, should be available for consumers to personalize their diets and lifestyle choices. Websites, hotlines and local offices should be easily assessable to the public for getting immediate information regarding dietary needs.

Brown
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F. Channels of delivery for the Food Guidance System.

I suggest having national, state and local marketing directors to implement this system. This food guidance system should be easily assessable to the "haves" and the "have nots". There needs to be indirect delivery, through all forms of media, including radio, television, bill boards, internet, and print ads and public service announcements. However, direct delivery is crucial. Trained Nutrition Educators must be available to go into each community, build trust, assess needs, and provide educational programs and materials tailored to that community. Or, individuals within each community should be recruited, trained and provided with resources to deliver the system to their neighbors.

Public educational venues should be used extensively including schools, libraries, housing units, and federal agencies that serve the public in health-related ways.

On the other hand, government funds are limited, and private sources should be pursued to finance the distribution of the system.

One final comment: During one of my classes, I asked my high school students why they did not use the Food Guide Pyramid more often when making healthy choices. I found one girl's comment quite interesting: "There are too many other messages out there of good things to eat. When I'm hungry, I grab what looks good." To me, this meant that we need to be more competitive in marketing our messages for healthy eating and living.

Thank you for your time, and all your work for the welfare of the country.

Sincerely,



Nozella Brown
Family Nutrition Program Assistant
K-State Research and Extension of
Wyandotte County

Dr. Andrew B. Chung, MD/PhD

Cardiologist

AUG 25 2004

JP

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August 23, 2004

Chung 1 of 3

Food Guide Pyramid Reassessment Team
USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 1034
Alexandria, VA 22302

To Whom It May Concern:

Enclosed please find the instructions I have given my overweight patients since 1998. This has also been published on the Web since 1998.

It has been my experience that everyone who has been using the 2PD Approach are either now at their ideal body weight (including myself) or well on their way to achieving this. This has also been the experience of other doctors in my community. I believe that the achieved weight loss is permanent because people are able to see themselves following the 2PD Approach for the rest of their lives.

Indeed, there has not been a single case of anyone trying the 2PD Approach and not losing weight. This is despite a publicly issued challenge through the Internet that I have been waiting for the first person to fail the 2PD Approach since 1998.

May this information guide you in formulating your recommendations to the general public on how they should eat to either avoid or reverse obesity.

You may quote me on the following truth about being overweight:

"Being overweight comes not from what you eat but from how much you eat."

Please feel free to call me with any questions or concerns you may have.

Sincerely,

Andrew B. Chung MD/PhD

Andrew B. Chung, MD/PhD
Board-certified Atlanta Cardiologist

CC: The Wellness Foundation, Inc. via ListServ
Governor Sonny Perdue via USPS

Telephone:

Mableton, GA

Fax:

Simple Step-by-Step Instructions for Permanent Weight Loss
The 2PD Approach (Invented in 1998)
(Not-On-Diabetic-Medications Version)

Chung
Page 3

By Dr. Andrew B. Chung, MD/PhD.
Last Modified: 06/07/2004

Note: These instructions may be freely distributed without any changes. Doctor supervision is required especially if you are taking blood pressure medications. If you are on diabetic medications, please get the other set of instructions.

Background information about the 2 Pound Diet (2PD) Approach can be found at <http://www.heartmdphd.com/wtloss.asp>.

- (1) Purchase a food scale from any store near you. It should cost around \$5-10. Also get a pocket notepad.
- (2) Weigh each meal by first setting an empty plate/bowl/cup on the scale and zeroing it. Then place food on the plate/bowl/cup and round up to the nearest ounce. Weigh **everything** you eat **and** drink for a whole day. The only things you don't weigh are water and zero-calorie drinks. Typically, overweight people find they consume 3 to 11 pounds of food per day (the average overweight American about 4-6 pounds). Record the weight of meals on this "first" day in your notepad, total it (there are 16 ounces per pound) and also write the total here as a reminder: Amount of food consumed on the "first" day of the rest of your life is _____ lbs.
- (3) Gradually, decrease your food intake by a few ounces each day as tolerated until you consume less than 2 pounds per day. At this point, you should start losing about 1-3 pounds per week in the beginning and this should level off as you get closer to your ideal body weight. Be sure to weigh everything you consume and write it down so you will remember. Check your notepad to make sure the amount of food you're putting on your plate isn't more than you are allowed for the rest of the day. For example, if you ate 6 ounces of cereal plus skim milk for breakfast and a 10 ounce tuna fish sandwich for lunch, you're not to put more than 16 ounces of spaghetti and/or other stuff on your plate for dinner after you are down to less than 2 pounds of food per day.
- (4) Bring the notepad with you to clinic visits so that your doctor can review your progress and go over any problems.
- (5) If you are on blood pressure medications, you likely will need to have them lowered as you lose weight. Have your blood pressure checked at a local drugstore or fire station monthly and if the top number becomes less than 100 or you become dizzy with standing, contact your doctor for an adjustment in your blood pressure medications.

HELPFUL HINTS:

Chung!
2/13

- (1) Exercise such as brisk walking/running for 30 minutes **before** dinner/supper can curb appetite so that you are less likely to be as hungry following the 2PD Approach. Remember that being hungrier from eating less is more than Ok. Exercise, though good for the heart and blood vessels, is neither necessary nor sufficient for weight loss if the **amount** of food intake stays excessive.
- (2) Chew your food slowly and thoroughly so that you don't finish eating before everyone else at the table. Try talking more. Not finishing everything on your plate is also more than OK. When eating out, halve everything to take home and weigh.
- (3) If your hunger becomes unbearable in between meals, try drinking some water instead of snacking. Also, doing things like your favorite hobbies or socializing can get your mind off of the hunger or craving. Remember that your feeling hungry means you are **not** starving. People dying from starvation are as a general rule **not** hungry.
- (4) Start buying less groceries and do your shopping **after** eating a meal rather than before so that you will be more likely to buy less. You may find that you only need a fourth of the amount you usually buy. Avoid "snack" foods and foods that spoil quickly. Avoid eating out. Continue to eat healthy things like fish, chicken, fruits, and vegetables.
- (5) Buy newer better fitting clothes when your old clothes become loose. Give your old loose clothes away. Do not weigh yourself more than once a month. Doing so can be a source of frustration/stress because it is normal for weight to fluctuate though folks on the 2PD approach will definitely see a downward trend until they get to their "perfect" weight. Remember that frustration/stress will tend to make you hungrier causing you to want to eat more than you should.

D'ARRIGO BROS. CO.

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AUG 23 2004

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OF CALIFORNIA ESTABLISHED 1923

Growers, Packers and Shippers of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables

Salinas, CA

Office FAX
Sales FAX

D'Arrigo-Martin 10/1

August 23, 2004

Food Guide Pyramid Reassessment Team
USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion
3101 Park Center Drive, Room #1034
Alexandria, VA 22302

To Whom It May Concern,

The Grower Shipper community has been a proud supporter of the Produce for Better Health Foundation's 5 to 9 a Day program. It's been a focal point for our industry and we've recently made some tremendous progress with the additional support from our national partners. We still have a lot of work to do on the consumer level. Consumers are still well below the minimum of an average of 5 servings of fruits and vegetables per day.

Much of our emphasis on a local and industry level is fighting the obesity epidemic facing our nation. As a grower-shipper of fresh vegetables from California, we urge you to strongly consider the following suggestions:

- 1) To maintain the existing pyramid shape.
- 2) To move fresh fruit and vegetables to the bottom of the pyramid - making these two food groups the most important for consumers to include in their diet.
- 3) To urge the highest possible number of servings per person for these two groups - if 5 to 13 is the recommended number, than the pyramid should be consistent with these levels.

Thank you for your support on this critical issue that will affect the lives of children and adults throughout the nation.

Sincerely,

Margaret D'Arrigo-Martin
Margaret D'Arrigo-Martin
Executive Vice President



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AUG 25 2004
JP

2nd Grade Teacher

Gloversville, NY

Food Guide Pyramid Reassm't. Team
USDA Center for Nutrition Policy & Promotion
3101 Park Center Drive
Room 1034
Alexandria, Virginia 22302

Gilbert laf

Dear Team:

As an educator I would like to express my thoughts about your proposals for the Food Pyramid. Adding more fruits and vegetables is a great idea. However, by leaving the grains, cereals, breads area as is will only continue the overeating and obesity in our country. I suggest that this area be changed to be the same as the fruits and vegetables. People need to stop eating so many of the complex carbohydrates which are in the grain group. As it stands now, you are encouraging a diet with 55-60% of grains and breads. This needs to be lessened to maybe 40% or less. We are facing a population with many digestive disorders and diseases. My understanding is that the gluten in breads, cakes, pastries are sitting in our intestines and causing inflammatory diseases. You are recommending people eat whole wheat breads, yet I understand that the whole wheat products are harder to digest so they sit in our intestines longer. This will only lead to more digestive disorders and diseases. I ask that you study this area thoroughly before you give this recommendation. I hope your recommendations are not tied to the amount and kinds of grains that our country store in silos.

I suggest, to sell your food recommendations, instead of using a pyramid, use a rainbow. Every meal should have a 'Rainbow of Colors'. According to your data, most people do not use the pyramid, though they know about it. You need a new gimmick to help people choose wisely and change their eating habits if you want to be an influencing factor in our society. You need to stress that smaller portions are better and fresh fruits/vegetables are healthier and processed foods do not give the nutrients that we need. Or perhaps, using the nutrients rather than the food groups would be more helpful. Just using rectangles, show how we need so much of proteins, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals, water and good fats. Then you could put the specific foods in those categories. Keeping the pyramid as is will only continue the gluttony and poor eating habits that Americans have. There needs to be a change. Many of our health problems could be traced to people's poor eating habits if doctors looked at nutrition when treating patients. This is another major problem in our society. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my thoughts. I look forward to your final decision as this will influence my teaching.

Susan Gilbert
Educator

Depend On Mann.

AUG 25 2004



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Nucci / OF 1

August 23, 2004

Food Guide Pyramid Reassessment Team
USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion
3101 Park Center Drive
Room 1034
Alexandria, VA 22302

Dear Food Guide Pyramid,

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE.....LEAVE THE PYRAMID ALONE.

Don't give in to the special interest, America needs more fruits and vegetables, *it is for the health of our nation.*

You know it, I know it, let's let America know it.

Your friends at Mann Packing Company,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Nucci".

Joseph A. Nucci
President & CEO

AUG 25 2004

Patel, comments on graphical design

JP
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(Patel) / of 2

New York
NY

Food Guide Pyramid Reassessment Team
USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 1034
Alexandria
VA 22302.

August 21, 2004

Graphical design of the Food Guidance System

Thank you for your dedication in ensuring the most transparent messages are available to the population towards good eating habits.

I welcome the opportunity to be able to comment.

Please consider the question as to whether a generic graphical representation will adequately address some of the concepts outlined below - because if they are not addressed, the pictorial messages will cause confusion or be rejected as impossible or not relevant.

Sub-graphical designs complimentary to the main graphical presentation maybe of value.

The main graphic could give meaning to the "total" proportions of daily or weekly intake, and the sub-graphics from this (such as dimensional or fold-out representations) could develop the concepts outlined below as pictorial solutions. This would achieve successful and correct use for the Food Guidance system.

Concepts to develop into graphics:

- It is difficult for people to identify the foods represented in the graphics as components of meals and drinks. Just generic food representations will mean rejection of the message.
- Currently there is no acknowledgment within the graphical design of intake that make a significant contribution to eating habits: ready-to-eat meals and fast foods, processed foods, high calorie snacks/fluids, vitamin-mineral supplements and energy drinks. Some of the population cannot identify the graphics with their eating habits and will reject any change.

Patel

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- Many cannot translate the graphics proportional intake into their daily or weekly intake, practical graphics that demonstrate this are required.
- The idea that there are many varieties of the same food which are not necessarily the same needs to be conveyed, for example "milks" for coffee.
- Good food habits are not enough for optimum health. The need to increase physical activity has to be translated with realistic examples of type and frequency to dispel the popular belief that "I do enough exercise"
- Younger age groups have less of the cooking skills required to translate raw foods into cooked meals
- Ready processed foods are commonly used in cooking/ as a component of meals
- Families incorporate convenience foods in meals due to lack of time
- Limits in choice of food due to either budget constraints or limited availability at local stores
- The graphics have to show the variance in the quantities required from each food group at different ages
- Clear guidance on ethnic foods, it is not easy for many to translate which food belongs to a particular class in a generic graphical representation.
- Acknowledge nutritional food myths (canned vs frozen, organic etc..)
- The population would benefit from pictorial representation that identifies specific words to look for on packages that mean good or best avoided. Many do not look at food labeling because it is long, confusing and difficult to read.

Sincerely

Patel

Pratibha Patel
Nutritionist, MSc SRD



International Dairy Foods Association
Milk Industry Foundation
National Cheese Institute
International Ice Cream Association

AUG 25 2004

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Tipton 1 of 2

August 24, 2004

Food Guide Pyramid Reassessment Team
USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion
3101 Park Center Drive
Room 1034
Alexandria, VA 22302

RE: FR Doc. 04-15710, Notice of Proposal for Food Guide Graphic Presentation and Consumer Education Materials

Dear Sir or Madam:

The International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the proposed Food Guide Pyramid Daily Food Intake Patterns and Technical Support Data. As the federal government's official recommendations on what to eat, along with the Dietary Guidelines, it is vital that the Food Guide Pyramid present the best nutrition information available in a format that is easily accessible and understandable to all Americans.

IDFA, which represents the nation's dairy processing and manufacturing industries and their suppliers, is composed of three constituent organizations: the Milk Industry Foundation (MIF), the National Cheese Institute (NCI), and the International Ice Cream Association (IICA). Its 500-plus members range from large multinational corporations to single-plant operations, representing more than 85% of the volume of milk, cultured products, cheese and ice cream and frozen desserts produced and marketed in the United States.

As depictions of the Food Guide System are considered, we believe that the nutritional attributes of dairy foods support their continued inclusion as a separate food group. While dairy foods are the leading source of calcium in the American diet, calcium is not the only nutrient provided by dairy foods. Milk is also an important source of Vitamin D, protein, riboflavin, Vitamin A, magnesium and potassium. Recent studies showed that calcium and protein in dairy products can help promote healthy weight loss when consumed regularly with a reduced calorie diet. Further, while an adequate calcium intake was important in helping people lose weight on a reduced calorie diet, 3 daily servings of dairy allowed people to lose weight faster than even the reduced calorie diet with supplemental calcium. This illustrates that dairy has important nutritional properties that no other product, with or without calcium fortification, can provide. For those for which lactose intolerance is a problem, studies have shown that they are still able to get 3

Washington, DC

phone:

fax:

Tipton 2/10/02

servings a day through cheese, yogurt, or smaller portions of milk that are consumed with other foods or from dairy products with lactose removed.

We provide the following comments in response to specific requests in the Federal Register notice:

Advantages and disadvantages of retaining current shape for graphic and other potential shapes to use as a representative of the overall Food Guidance System.

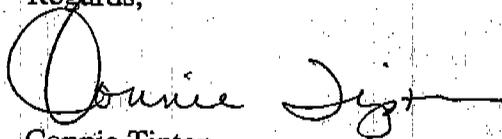
We believe that the current pyramid format is well-recognized by the public as a guide of recommended eating. The basic format should be maintained, with some alteration of content, in order to build on the recognition and acceptance by the American public.

Channels of delivery for the Food Guidance System

It will be best for all consumers if the Food Guidance System is provided in a variety of ways. The more options for accessing the Food Guidance System, the more likely it will be seen and used. One opportunity for presenting the Food Guidance to Americans is through its voluntary use on food product labels. Many labels which are large enough to include this added graphic already depict the Food Guide Pyramid. This reminds consumers to consult the Pyramid as they choose what and how much to consume. In order for food labels to display the Food Guide, it must be concise, broadly applicable and able to stand on its own as a nutrition education tool. While personalized messages are desirable, there must be one general guide if food labels are to continue to provide this information.

IDFA is pleased to provide input to USDA and the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion during this process. If we can provide you with any further assistance or information, please feel free to contact Michelle Matto at (202) 220-3523.

Regards,



Connie Tipton
President and CEO

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Rouser
1 of 9

BALANCED LIFE
PUBLISHING COMPANY
ASkinnyGirl.com

Cecily A. Rouser
AUTHOR

North Palm Beach, FL

Phone
Cell

Please find enclosed a copy of
a book I had published locally.
It offers many ways to eat well
without having to think about it.
Hope it helps - Good Luck

Cecily Rouser

Rouser
2 of 9

Confessions of a Skinny Girl

How to be Happy, Healthy and Thin
Without Dieting



Cecily Rouser

Rouser
30E9

Health/Self-Help

Did You Ever Wonder How Those Skinny People Stay That Way?

Wonder no more. In this book you will find:

- How thin people *think* about food
- How they handle the pressure to overeat
- How you can arrange your life so it's *both* easier and less expensive to eat well and be active

What if a chemist, a psychologist, a chef, a wardrobe consultant, an anthropologist, an efficiency expert, a financial advisor, a make-up artist, a mechanic, and your best friend got together and wrote a book? It might look something like this. Ms. Rouser has drawn concepts from many disciplines to understand her lifelong *non-problem* with weight control and now she shares them with you.

It's many things working together that give you the power to control your weight. A few changes in key areas can set off a chain reaction that can set you up for good habits automatically. Accountants and engineers call it leverage.

Food should be a source of strength, not a weakness. *Confessions of a Skinny Girl* © 2004 gives you the lowdown on food: what to look for, how to prepare it, where to keep it and most importantly: how to think about it. It explains, in simple terms, how your body works and what it needs. You'll also see how to recognize and deal with stress, so you eat for the *right* reasons.

ISBN 0-9754002-0-7



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Price \$24.95

Rouser
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Rouser
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Take a hard look at what is in your kitchen and on your grocery list right now. These are your "usual food choices," your ten staple foods. You have them. Be critical and find out what they are and if they are helping you. If not, change them to foods that will do good things for you, not bad things to you. My list is in Chapter 10.

One afternoon, take two hours to measure the amount of fat in your staple foods. How much fat is in your serving of coffee cream? What is in the mayonnaise you spread on a typical sandwich? What do you put in your chicken salad? Don't forget the butter you put on potatoes or the dressings you use on salads. The drive-through burger you get every day counts, too. Line them all up and measure them out. Add it up. If you're going over your total - cut back! Make some changes. I don't mean buying fat free, tasteless alternatives, but if a choice is there, make sure it's the best choice for you.

Every diet needs a little fat to be healthy. I don't eat a lot of fat, but as I said before, fat is where the flavor is. One change I made was to substitute regular milk for my coffee cream instead of half and half. Over months and years, every little bit helps.

Food Scale

Recently, I broke down and bought a food scale. I use it to divide up mega packs of food, such as ground beef, into manageable portions to freeze for later use. I also bought it so I could find out how a USDA serving size from the "food pyramid" was *supposed* to look. It's a lot smaller than we think, and the portion recommendations definitely don't correlate with the serving sizes used by manufacturers or restaurants. There is no "American" or "Metric" standard serving size. Although I might measure out ingredients when I cook a dish, I surely don't measure food when I am scrambling to get dinner on the table.

Take an afternoon and measure out a serving size of your staple foods. What you think is a serving size may be completely different from what the scale reveals.

Read the nutrition information to see if your usual choices are providing the necessary nutrition you need. This is what

nutritionists mean when they say to "read labels." If you're not getting enough of some nutrient or getting too much of another make some changes. I did when I began having trouble maintaining my energy throughout the day and had an insatiable craving for salt.

I discovered I wasn't getting enough potassium from either my usual food choices or my multi-vitamins. I substituted a salt and potassium mixture (found in the seasonings aisle in the grocery store) for my regular table salt at home. It made a big difference in my energy level - *and* my potato chip consumption! I often add foods to my diet that will keep me healthy. Sometimes they aren't my first food choices, but since they are "good for me" and I enjoy most foods, I add a serving. Sometimes two bites is a large enough serving size for me.

Vegetable Steamer, Cutting Board and Good Knife

When I worked as a make-up artist for several national brands, I couldn't resist asking the women with good skin what they ate on a regular basis. Nine times out of ten, vegetables were at the top of their lists.

It may sound boring, but vegetables, grains and beans, all their glorious colors, are the basis of what I eat. I usually start with them when planning my meals. These aren't just in salads, but I enjoy them in all different forms, from steamed to stir fried to soups.

I certainly enjoy a steak now and then. I'm not a vegetarian by any stretch of the imagination, but I usually use meat and other animal products as side dishes - not the main event. I'll share some recipes with you later, so you'll understand how vegetables can be the stars of the show. And everyone needs to eat *more* of those!

Appendix

I am not a nutritionist. I am a mom just trying to put good food on the family table day after day. I simply try to get the best use out of the information that is available to me. This is my method and I think it works well. I hope it works for you, too.

Food Guide Pyramid: <http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/Fpyr/pyramid.gif>

Have a look at the food guide pyramid. Compare what you consider a "serving" to the pyramid's "serving size." You may find that what you consider an adequate serving is two or three times the recommended amount. You can adjust your portions accordingly and treat yourself to seconds if you are *really* still hungry.

Choosing a Multi-Vitamin:

If a vitamin has 80% or more of a nutrient, I don't need to make a special effort to make sure I have everything I need. I can get the rest from food. Some doctors say you can add 6 years to your life by taking a multi-vitamin every day.

Many commercial vitamins and cereals advertise "a whole day's worth of vitamins" yet still lack some essentials. If you don't get them from other sources, you will pay the price in a lack of energy and a less than optimal way of dealing with everyday stress.

In my general observation, common multi-vitamins come with varying amounts of vitamins, so you might want to look for one that has an abundance of nutrients commonly found in the foods you don't eat or don't care for. For examples, chromium is found in meats, cheeses, whole grains, eggs, fruits, and brewer's yeast. It is necessary for maintaining the normal metabolism of blood sugar. Some multi-vitamins have only 10% RDA of chromium, while others have 100%. If one is skipping carbs, doesn't care for

fruit and eats no animal products, they could find themselves deficient and ought to pick one with a greater amount.

If you need to, take a magnifying glass with you when you shop for a vitamin. Subtract the percentage of each nutrient from 100. If the resulting number is more than 20, see the next section for sources. Look for food sources of these nutrients that you enjoy to *add* to the foods you eat on a regular basis.

My vitamin has:

A	_____ %	I still need _____.
C	_____ %	I still need _____.
D	_____ %	I still need _____.
E	_____ %	I still need _____.
K	_____ %	I still need _____.
B1 (Thiamin)	_____ %	I still need _____.
B2 (Riboflavin)	_____ %	I still need _____.
Niacin	_____ %	I still need _____.
Vitamin B6	_____ %	I still need _____.
Folic Acid	_____ %	I still need _____.
B12	_____ %	I still need _____.
Pantothenic Acid	_____ %	I still need _____.
Calcium	_____ %	I still need _____.
Iron	_____ %	I still need _____.
Phosphorus	_____ %	I still need _____.
Iodine	_____ %	I still need _____.
Biotin	_____ %	I still need _____.

Magnesium	_____ %	I still need _____.
Zinc	_____ %	I still need _____.
Manganese	_____ %	I still need _____.
Chromium	_____ %	I still need _____.
Molybdenum	_____ %	I still need _____.
Selenium	_____ %	I still need _____.
Chloride	_____ %	I still need _____.
Potassium	_____ %	I still need _____.

Sources

This is by no means a complete list of nutritional value. People have their own unique nutritional needs. It is intended to help you start to consciously choose the fuel that you and your family run on. You can get all of these foods by taking the outside circle at your grocery store. There is an overwhelming amount of nutritional information. If you feel you need additional help finding the right amount of vitamins and minerals for you, make an effort to find a source that you *trust*.

Years ago, liver served as everybody's multi-vitamin. It is a good source of many essential nutrients, but I don't care for it. Fortunately there are many great-tasting sources of everything your body needs to run. Look in the recipe section and you will find a dozen recipes that you can tailor to your own needs.

Don't try to get by without fiber. It gives your digestive system something to hold onto as it passes your food through your system. Fresh fruit and vegetables are high in fiber. Beans and legumes are great, too, as well as being filling and a good way to get complex carbohydrates and (when combined with a grain) protein. Seeds and nuts are also a good source of protein and essential fatty acids.

Vitamins A, K, E and D are fat soluble, which means that your body will store excess of these vitamins instead of disposing of them. This means that megadoses of these vitamins are toxic.

Vitamin A: cream, butter, egg yolk and liver.

Carotenes, from which Vitamin A is derived: yellow and green fruits and vegetables.

Vitamin C: citrus fruits, potatoes and their skins, tomatoes and green vegetables.

Vitamin D: fatty fish, eggs, liver, egg yolk and butter as well as fortified milk.

Vitamin E: vegetable oils, eggs and liver, spinach, olives and wheat germ.

Vitamin K: cabbage, cauliflower, spinach, egg yolk, and liver, as well as synthesis by bacteria in the gut.

Vitamin B1 (Thiamin): pork, whole wheat bread, whole grains and legumes as well as the outer layers of seeds.

Vitamin B2 (Riboflavin): milk, eggs, liver and green leafy vegetables.

Vitamin B3 (Niacin): unrefined grains and cereals, milk and lean meats.

Vitamin B6 (pyridoxine): wheat, corn, egg yolk, liver and lean meats.

Vitamin B12 (Cobalamine): whole milk, eggs, oysters, fresh shrimp, liver, pork and chicken.

Folic Acid: Green leafy vegetables, asparagus, lima beans, whole grain cereals, liver.

Biotin: present in almost all food, especially milk, egg yolk and liver

Pantothenic Acid: widely distributed, especially in eggs, yeast and liver.

Calcium: milk, cheeses, ice cream and other milk products.

Substitutes for milk: yogurt, tofu, broccoli, calcium-fortified orange juice.

Phosphorus: widely distributed in many foods.

Iron: dark green vegetables, eggs, soybeans, lean beef, fish, oysters and clams and baked potatoes.

Magnesium: whole grains, nuts, and green leafy vegetables.

Potassium: bananas, oranges, and orange juice.

Iodine: table salt.

Zinc: meat, eggs, liver, and seafood, especially oysters.

Manganese: whole grain products, nuts and seeds, avocado, dark green leafy, vegetables.

Chromium: meats, cheeses, whole grains, eggs, fruits, brewer yeast.

Molybdenum: legumes, beans, lentils, peas, as well as whole grains.

Selenium: seafood, meat, cereals, grains.

Chloride: widely distributed in many foods.