

MARCH WELLNESS: FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



The **2020 - 2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans** is full of information. It includes everything from nutrient dense food choices to estimated calorie needs, healthy eating to reduce the risk of chronic disease, dietary recommendations and much more. **The full, informative 149-page guideline can be downloaded here: [Dietary Guidelines](#).** Two of the basic recommendations you will find from for implementing a healthy nutrition plan are:

1. Eat Fruit. Based on a 2,000 calorie diet per day (*refer to pg. 140 of the [Dietary Guidelines](#) to confirm your estimated caloric needs, based on your age, sex and activity level*), the “Healthy U.S.- Style Dietary Pattern” for fruit consumption is the equivalent of 2 cups per day. It’s estimated that 80% of Americans do not meet the recommended guidelines for consuming fruits. Fruit recommendations can be reached by increasing intake of whole fruits and 100% fruit juice. There are many options to choose from. Here are some categories of fruit, and a some examples of each:

- * *Berries*: blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, kiwifruit and currants.
- * *Citrus*: grapefruit, lemons, oranges and limes.
- * *Melons*: cantaloupe, watermelon and casaba.
- * *Other*: apples, bananas, peaches, raisins, pomegranates, pineapple, rhubarb and pears.

Additional examples can be found on pg. 28 of the [Dietary Guidelines](#)

2. Eat Vegetables. Based on a 2,000 calorie diet per day (*refer to pg. 140 of the [Dietary Guidelines](#) to confirm your estimated caloric needs, based on your age, sex and activity level*), the “Healthy U.S.- Style Dietary Pattern” for vegetable consumption is 2 ½ cups per day. Did you know that more than 90% of the Americans do not meet this recommended guideline? One suggestion for increasing vegetable intake is to increase the vegetable content in mixed dishes. Another is to eat less of the main dish so that more of the meal comes from side dishes of vegetables. There is a wide variety of vegetables to choose from. Here are the categories, and some examples of each:

- * *Dark-Green Vegetables*: broccoli, chard, kale, spinach, romaine lettuce and turnip greens.
- * *Red and Orange Vegetables*: carrots, sweet potatoes, 100% tomato juice, red and orange bell peppers and winter squash.
- * *Starchy Vegetables*: corn, lima beans, water chestnuts and yam.
- * *Other Vegetables*: avocado, asparagus, bamboo shoots and beets.

Additional examples can be found on pg. 28 of the [Dietary Guidelines](#)

For the complete “Healthy U.S. - Style Dietary Pattern” chart, additional vegetable and fruit examples, and more recommendations for consuming more fruit and vegetables, refer to pages 19 - 32 of the [Dietary Guidelines](#)

West Suburban Health Group Website: westsuburbanhealth.com

Health Provider Websites: Fallon: fchp.org Harvard Pilgrim: harvardpilgrim.org

Tufts: tuftshealthplan.com Blue Cross Blue Shield: bluecrossma.com