

Gobble up a nutritious diet to maintain good health and physiological effects and prevalence.

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Introduction

A healthy diet is a diet that maintains or improves overall health. A healthy diet provides the body with essential nutrition: fluid, macronutrients such as protein, micronutrients such as vitamins, and adequate fibre and food energy [1]. A healthy diet may contain fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, and may include little to no processed food or sweetened beverages [2]. The requirements for a healthy diet can be met from a variety of plant-based and animal-based foods, although a non-plant source of vitamin B12 is needed for those following a vegan diet. Various nutrition guides are published by medical and governmental institutions to educate individuals on what they should be eating to be healthy. Nutrition facts labels are also mandatory in some countries to allow consumers to choose between foods based on the components relevant to health [3].

World Health Organization Recommendations

The World Health Organization (WHO) makes the following five recommendations with respect to both populations and individuals

1. Maintain a healthy weight by eating roughly the same number of calories that your body is using [4].
2. Limit intake of fats. Not more than 30% of the total calories should come from fats. Prefer unsaturated fats to saturated fats. Avoid trans fats.
3. Eat at least 400 grams of fruits and vegetables per day (potatoes, sweet potatoes, cassava and other starchy roots do not count). A healthy diet also contains legumes (e.g. lentils, beans), whole grains and nuts.
4. Limit the intake of simple sugars to less than 10% of calorie (below 5% of calories or 25 grams may be even better).
5. Limit salt / sodium from all sources and ensure that salt is iodized. Less than 5 grams of salt per day can reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease.

The WHO has stated that insufficient vegetables and fruit is the cause of 2.8% of deaths worldwide.

Other WHO recommendations include ensuring that the foods chosen have sufficient vitamins and certain minerals, Avoiding directly poisonous (e.g. heavy metals) and carcinogenic (e.g. benzene) substances, Avoiding foods contaminated by

human pathogens (e.g. *E. coli*, tapeworm eggs), and replacing saturated fats with polyunsaturated fats in the diet, which can reduce the risk of coronary artery disease and diabetes.

American Heart Association

The American Heart Association, World Cancer Research Fund, and American Institute for Cancer Research recommend a diet that consists mostly of unprocessed plant foods, with emphasis on a wide range of whole grains, legumes, and non-starchy vegetables and fruits. This healthy diet includes a wide range of non-starchy vegetables and fruits which provide different colors including red, green, yellow, white, purple, and orange. The recommendations note that tomato cooked with oil, allium vegetables like garlic, and cruciferous vegetables like cauliflower, provide some protection against cancer. This healthy diet is low in energy density, which may protect against weight gain and associated diseases. Finally, limiting consumption of sugary drinks, limiting energy rich foods, including "fast foods" and red meat, and avoiding processed meats improves health and longevity. Overall, researchers and medical policy conclude that this healthy diet can reduce the risk of chronic disease and cancer [5].

It is recommended that children consume less than 25 grams of added sugar (100 calories) per day. Other recommendations include no extra sugars in those under 2 years old and less than one soft drink per week. As of 2017, decreasing total fat is no longer recommended, but instead, the recommendation to lower risk of cardiovascular disease is to increase consumption of monounsaturated fats and polyunsaturated fats, while decreasing consumption of saturated fats.

Choose good carbohydrates: whole grains the less processed the better, vegetables, fruits and beans. Avoid white bread, white rice, and the like as well as pastries, sugared sodas, and other highly processed food.

Pay attention to the protein package: good choices include fish, poultry, nuts, and beans. Try to avoid red meat

References

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