

Step 4 Healthy Diet Young Adults

Ages 19-30

This information is for parents who want to learn more about a healthy diet for themselves. Sometimes it is fun and informative to really monitor what you are eating. However, it can be hard to do this strictly every day, especially for a busy parent. Meals should be a time to relax and socialize with others, not a rigid plan of exact ingredients. Luckily, there are some easy changes that you can do every day help make you and your family healthier.

1. Read food labels and make healthy, lower fat choices.
2. Watch portion sizes—measure portions until you can estimate the size that equals a serving.
3. Drink only 1 or less sweet drink (juice included, and never any sugar-added drinks) a day (4-8 oz max!) Choose fat-free milk or water instead. Limit sports drinks as these also contain added sugar, as well as extra salt.
4. Take only 1 trip to a fast food restaurant each week. Choose healthier options and smaller portions at these visits.
5. Exercise 30-60 minutes every day. These can be fun things like shooting baskets, walking your dog, or taking a walk with your kids.
6. Watch no more than 1 hr of TV per day—two hours of “screen time.” This includes the weekends and holidays too! However, screen time needed to finish work for your job is ok.

Here are your “targets” for adults aged 19-30.

First decide how active you are compared to others your age.

Next find your targets for calories and fat intake per day

	Not very active calories	Fat grams	Moderately Active calories	Fat grams	Active calories	Fat grams
Women	1800-2000	50-56	2000-2200*	56-62*	2400*	67*
Men	2400-2600*	67-72*	2600-2800*	72-78*	3000*	83*

Now look at the suggestions below to get an idea of how many servings (watch those portion sizes!) would make up a meal plan for you. Try to follow these guidelines:

	1800	2000	2200*	2400*	2600*	2800*	3000*	Benefits of Group
Grains	6 per day	6-8 per day	8+ per day*	8+ per day*	10-11+ per day*	10-11+ per day*	10-11+ per day*	Good source of energy and fiber
Vegetables	4-5 per day	4-5 per day	5 per day	5-6 per day	5-6 per day	6-7 per day	7-8 per day	Rich in potassium, magnesium and fiber
Fruits	4-5 per day	4-5 per day	5-6+ per day*	4-5+ per day*	5-6+ per day*	5-6+ per day*	5-6+ per day*	Provides essential potassium, magnesium and fiber
Fat-free or low-fat milk and dairy products	2-3 per day	2-3 per day	3 per day	3 per day	3 per day	3 per day	3 per day	Major source of calcium and protein
Lean meats, poultry and fish	6 or fewer per day	6 or fewer per day	6+ per day*	6+ per day*	6+ per day*	7+ per day*	7+ per day*	Important source of protein and magnesium
Nuts, seeds and beans	4 per week	4-5 per week	1 per day	5-6 per week	1 per day	1 per day	1 per day	Rich in energy, magnesium, protein and fiber
Fats and oils	2-3 per day	2-3 per day	3 per day	2-3 per day	3 per day	4 per day	5 per day	

Serving Sizes and Examples:

Grains

1 slice bread, ½ cup cooked rice, pasta or cereal. For cereals, serving sizes may vary. Be sure to check the nutrition label. Select foods that are labeled “whole grain” when possible.

Vegetables

1 cup raw lettuce or spinach, ½ cup raw or cooked vegetable (like broccoli, carrots, green beans, tomatoes, sweet potatoes), or ½ vegetable juice.

Fruits

1 apple, orange or other fruit (baseball sized or ½ cup), ¼ cup dried fruit, or ½ cup juice

Milk Products

1 cup milk or yogurt or 1 ½ oz cheese

Meats

1 oz cooked meats, chicken or fish. 1 egg or 2 egg whites. Limit egg yolks to 4 or less per week. Opt for lean cuts, and trim away any visible fat or skin. Select baked, boiled or poached recipes.

Nuts, Seeds and Beans

1/3 cup or 1 ½ oz nuts, 2 Tbsp peanut butter or seeds, ½ cup cooked beans or peas.

Fats and Oils

1 tsp margarine or vegetable oil. 1 Tbsp mayonnaise or 2 Tbsp salad dressing. Choose low-fat varieties when you can. Limit fats such as pan drippings, butter, bacon grease and other fats that come from animals.

Sweets and added sugars

Use sparingly, generally less than 3 times per week. 1Tbsp sugar, jelly or jam. ½ cup sorbet or gelatin or 1 cup lemonade.