

Lesson 4: Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015

Instructions

To complete the lesson follow these steps:

Step 1: Read the purpose of the lesson and consider the learning outcomes for the lesson. The learning outcomes specify what you should know and be able to do when you have completed the lesson.

Step 2: Read the rest of the information in this lesson. This page contains external links to important lesson content. After reading any linked content return to this page to continue the lesson. There are also helpful review questions included throughout the lesson page. Utilize the questions as a guide to help you review the readings and prepare you for the lesson quiz.

Step 3: If you need clarification of any information in the lesson, post your questions on the discussion board for Lesson 4 or contact the instructor for assistance.

Purpose of Lesson

This lesson explores the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGAs) 2015 and explores how the recommendations can help consumers maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Lesson Outcomes:

1. Identify the agencies that help produce the DGAs, when they were first introduced, and how often they are updated.
2. Explain and interpret the five key dietary guidelines described in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2015.
3. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2015 suggest shifting to healthier food and beverage choices. Discuss how you could apply this idea to your own diet.
4. Estimate daily energy needs using the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2015.
5. Compare and contrast the three Healthy Eating Patterns outlined in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2015.

Introduction

Begin the lesson by viewing the short video below (video time: 1 minute 30 seconds) from The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics to get a brief introduction to the DGAs.

Understanding the Dietary Guidelines for Americans



The DGAs provide evidence-based food and beverage recommendations for Americans ages 2 and older. The recommendations aim to promote health, prevent chronic disease and help individuals reach and maintain a healthy weight. Public health agencies, health care providers, and educational institutions all rely on Dietary Guideline recommendations and strategies. These guidelines help form nutrition policy across the U.S., help guide health promotion and prevention initiatives, and inform organizations and industries on the most up-to date nutrition information.

The DGAs are meant to be used for professional use, and not for the general consumer. However, for learning purposes we will be navigating through a the Executive Summary and Appendices. The full DGA document includes three chapters, including:

- Chapter 1: Key Elements of Healthy Eating Patterns
- Chapter 2: Shifts Needed to Align with Healthy Eating Patterns
- Chapter 3: Everyone Has a Role in Support Healthy Eating Patterns

Executive Summary

Navigate through the [Executive Summary](#).

[\(https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/executive-summary/\)](https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/executive-summary/)

- Explain the 5 main guidelines outlined in the DGAs, 2015 in your own words.
- True/False: There is only one way to put the key recommendations from the DGAs into action.
- Define the following terms: eating pattern, nutrient dense, and variety.
- Provide an example of how you could make a “shift” to healthier food and beverage choices. How would this “shift” benefit your personal health outcomes.
 - The DGAs outline some examples of "shifts" in Chapter 2- review some of the examples here, [Figure 2-2](#) [_ \(https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/chapter-2/current-eating-patterns-](https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/chapter-2/current-eating-patterns-)

Estimate Daily Energy Needs

Utilizing [Appendix 2](#) [\(https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/appendix-2/\)](https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/appendix-2/)

- A sedentary, female, age 22 would need how many calories per day?
- How many calories do you need on a daily basis?
- Notice how your calorie needs will change in the years to come (5 years, 10 years, etc.).
- Reflect on how your physical activity, workouts, and daily activity influences the amount of calories you need.

Healthy Eating Patterns

- Compare and contrast the eating patterns for a [Healthy US –Style Eating Pattern](#) [\(https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/appendix-3/\)](https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/appendix-3/) [Healthy Mediterranean-Style Eating Pattern](#) [\(https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/appendix-4/\)](https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/appendix-4/) [Vegetarian Style Eating pattern](#) [\(https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/appendix-5/\)](https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/appendix-5/)
- Which eating pattern best fits with your dietary choices?
- What changes could you make to better align with one of the eating patterns?

Resources

A PDF version of the entire DGA document can be found [here](#)
https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/resources/2015-2020_Dietary_Guidelines.pdf)