

DASH Diet – Dietary Approaches To Stop Hypertension

The DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) eating plan is rich in whole grains, vegetables, fruits, and low in fat and fat-free dairy products. These foods are also naturally low in sodium and contain nutrients that may help lower blood pressure. Even if you don't have high blood pressure, eating this way can help prevent increases in blood pressure that occur as you get older.

Getting started

Start small. Make gradual changes in your eating habits.

- If you eat one or two vegetables a day, add a serving at lunch and another at dinner.
- If you don't eat fruit now or have only juice at breakfast, add a serving to your meals. Eat fruit as a snack.
- Use only half the butter, margarine, or salad dressing as you do now.
- Gradually increase dairy products to two or three a day. Choose low-fat or fat-free dairy products.

Treat meat as one part of the whole meal, instead of the focus.

- If you eat large portions of meat, cut back gradually—by a half or a third at each meal. Increase servings of vegetables, rice, pasta, and dry beans at meals.
- Include two or more vegetarian-style (meatless) meals each week.

Use fruits or low fat foods as desserts and snacks.

- Fruits and low fat foods offer great taste and variety. Use fruits canned in their own juice. Fresh fruits need little or no preparation. Dried fruits are easy to carry with you.

| Food group | Servings | 1 serving equals | Healthy examples and notes |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|--|--|
| whole grains and grain products | 7 to 8 per day | 1 slice bread 1/2 cup dry cereal 1/2 cup cooked rice, pasta, or cereal | whole wheat bread, English muffin, pita bread, whole grain cereals, grits, oatmeal, tortillas, pasta, brown rice |
| vegetables | 4 to 5 per day | 1 cup raw, leafy vegetables 1/2 cup cooked vegetable 6 oz. low sodium vegetable juice | tomatoes, potatoes, carrots, peas, broccoli, turnip greens, collard greens, kale, spinach, artichokes, green beans, sweet potatoes |
| fruits | 4 to 5 per day | 6 oz. fruit juice 1 medium fruit 1/4 cup dried fruit 1/2 cup fresh, frozen, or canned fruit | apricots, bananas, dates, grapes, oranges, orange juice, grapefruit, grapefruit juice, mangoes, melons, peaches, raisins, strawberries, tangerines |
| low-fat or fat-free dairy foods | 2 to 3 per day | 8 oz. milk 1 cup yogurt 1 1/2 oz. cheese | fat-free or 1% milk, fat-free or low-fat buttermilk, fat-free or low-fat yogurt, part skim mozzarella cheese, fat-free cheese |
| meats, poultry, or fish | 2 or less per day | 3 oz. cooked meat, poultry, or fish | lean meats, poultry, or fish. Trim away visible fat. Broil, roast, or boil instead of frying. Remove skin from poultry. |
| nuts, seeds, and legumes | 4 to 5 per week | 1 1/2 oz. (1/3 cup) nuts 2 Tbsp. seeds 1/2 cup legumes | kidney beans, garbanzo beans, lentils, almonds, filberts, peanuts, walnuts, sunflower seeds |

Reduce salt and sodium.

- Read food labels to select foods lower in sodium.
- To flavor foods when cooking, use herbs and spices (like oregano, thyme, paprika, nutmeg, tumeric, and coriander) instead of salt.

- Limit or avoid high sodium foods (like smoked, cured, or processed foods; convenience foods or fast foods; high sodium condiments; highly salted snacks; and sauces, mixes and “instant” products).
- Use fruit juices or vinegar to marinate foods.



The DASH Diet – Sample Menu

| Day 1 | Day 2 | Day 3 |
|--|--|--|
| Breakfast Apple juice – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Bran cereal – $\frac{2}{3}$ cup Fat-free milk – 1 cup Banana – 1 small Whole wheat bread – 1 slice Soft margarine – 1 tsp. | Breakfast Orange juice – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Oatmeal – 1 cup Fat-free milk – 1 cup Melon slices – 3 medium | Breakfast Orange juice – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Whole grain cereal – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Fat-free milk – 1 cup Banana – 1 medium |
| Lunch Chicken sandwich: Chicken breast, no skin – 3 oz. Swiss cheese – 1 oz. Whole wheat bread – 2 slices Loose leaf lettuce – 2 leaves Tomato slices – 2 ($\frac{1}{4}$ inch slices) Carrot slices – 5 Orange juice – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Lunch Soft shell taco: Lean ground beef or turkey – 3 oz. Tortillas – 2 Cheese – 1 oz. Loose leaf lettuce – 2 leaves Tomato slices – 2 ($\frac{1}{4}$ inch slices) Mango slices – 4 | Lunch Stir fry: Lean chicken breast – 3 oz. Broccoli – 1 cup Noodles – 1 cup Orange – 1 medium Low-fat yogurt – 1 cup |
| Snack Apple – 1 medium | Snack Orange – 1 medium Low salt crackers – 6 | Snack Grapes – 2 cups |
| Dinner Vegetarian spaghetti sauce – $\frac{3}{4}$ cup Spaghetti – 1 cup Parmesan cheese – 2 Tbsp. Dinner roll (whole wheat) – 1 small Steamed broccoli and carrots – 1 cup | Dinner Baked chicken with fresh salsa – 3 oz. Steamed green beans – 1 cup Kidney beans, boiled – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Brown rice – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Green salad with sliced tomatoes – $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups Oil and vinegar dressing – 2 Tbsp. | Dinner Baked fish – 3 oz. Steamed rice – 1 cup Steamed broccoli – 1 cup Steamed spring rolls – 2 |
| Snack Low-fat yogurt – 1 cup Strawberries – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Snack Low-fat ice cream – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | Snack Low-fat yogurt – 1 cup Fresh or canned peaches – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup |

Other resources

- Connect to our Web site at members.kp.org. Here you'll find the Health encyclopedia, which offers more in-depth information on this and many other topics.
- Check your *Kaiser Permanente Healthwise Handbook*.
- Listen to the Kaiser Permanente Healthphone at 1-800-332-7563. For TTY, call 1-800-777-9059.
- Visit your facility's Health Education Department for books, videos, classes, and additional resources.

This information is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your physician or other medical professional. If you have persistent health problems, or if you have further questions, please consult your doctor.