

# Guidelines for a Healthful Eating Style

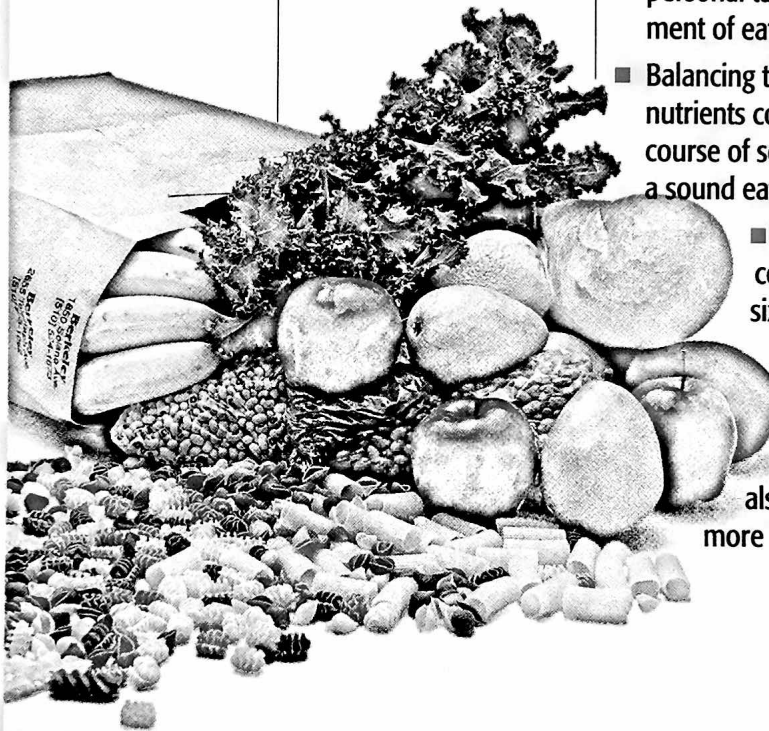
Having information about nutrition is an important and necessary step toward healthful eating. Yet, it is only a start. Think about the thousands of food products lining supermarket shelves. Which of these items will you choose to get the nutrients and food energy your body needs? How do you make healthy food choices?

## HEALTH TERMS

### Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA)

## HEALTH CONCEPTS

- The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* help you make healthful food choices.
- Varying the foods you eat based on availability, affordability, and personal taste adds to the enjoyment of eating.
- Balancing the types of foods and nutrients consumed over the course of several days is part of a sound eating plan.
- Moderation—the controlling of portion size as well as the fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, sugars, and sodium in your food choices—can also make you a more healthful eater.



## Dietary Guidelines for Americans

To help you meet this challenge to healthful eating, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), with the support of the Department of Health and Human Services, has published a booklet titled *Nutrition and Your Health: Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. This booklet spells out the **Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA)**—the amounts of nutrients that will prevent deficiencies and excesses in most healthy people—for Americans two years old and older. These recommendations may be seen as nutritional standards against which you can evaluate—and, where needed, modify—your eating habits.

Following the *Dietary Guidelines* will help decrease your risk of getting eating-related chronic diseases now and in the future. It will also help ensure variety, balance, and moderation among the foods you choose.

## Eat a Variety of Foods

No single food provides all of the nutrients your body needs in the right amounts. To eat healthfully, you need to eat a variety of foods. Varying your food choices based on what is available, affordable, and personally enjoyable to you also helps make eating a more pleasurable experience.

### THE FOOD GUIDE PYRAMID

The Food Guide Pyramid on page 114 is a graphic tool for expressing the *Dietary Guidelines*. The Food Guide Pyramid categorizes foods into five food groups, indicating a range of servings for each that a person is advised to eat daily. Notice that these recommendations are not meant to apply just to one food or to a single meal but to all the foods you eat over the course of several days—your eating pattern.

The Pyramid's food groups are presented in different sizes. In general, the greater the number of servings recommended from a food group, the larger the group in the Pyramid.

Notice that the ranges of servings are broad. This is because specific nutritional needs vary depending on age, gender, physical condition, body size, and activity level. Teenage boys and active men usually need the most servings, whereas young children generally require less. Except for additional iron and calcium needed by females (ages 12–50), eating the recommended number of servings should supply all the nutrients most healthy people need.

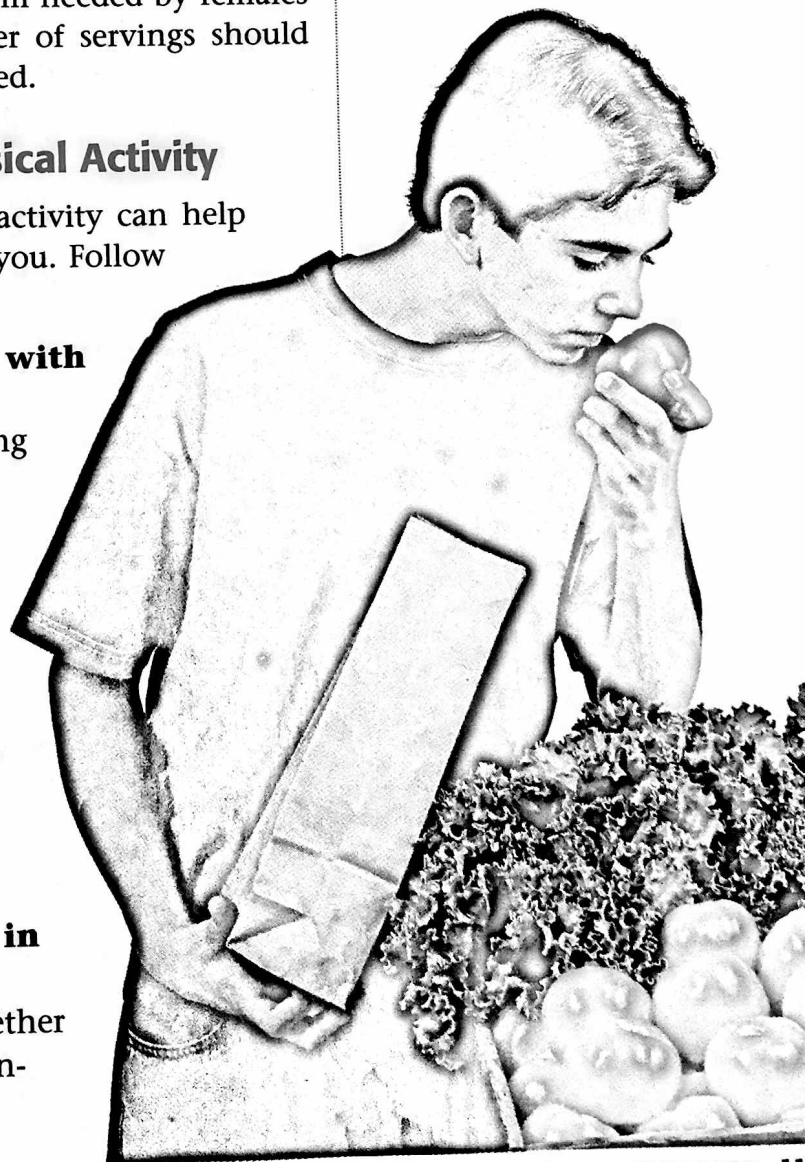
## Balance the Foods You Eat with Physical Activity

Balancing the foods you eat with physical activity can help you stay at or reach a weight that is right for you. Follow these guidelines:

- **Balance the amount of energy in food with the amount of energy your body uses.** Many teens lead a too-sedentary life, spending far too much time in front of the television or the computer. Counter some of this inactivity by getting enough physical activity.
- **Be aware that controlling body fat is more important to health than controlling body weight.** The location of body fat can be a risk factor. In particular, excess fat in the abdomen poses a greater health risk than excess fat in the hips and thighs.
- **Keep in mind that all calories add up in the same way, no matter what their source.** Calories count. Excess calories, whether from carbohydrates, fats, or proteins, are converted into fat for storage.

▼ **Good nutrition habits are important throughout life.**

**ACTIVITY Name and list some good nutrition habits that you can follow.**



# Food Guide Pyramid

A GUIDE TO DAILY FOOD CHOICES

**FATS, OILS,  
AND SWEETS**  
Nutrients: Fats,  
Carbohydrates

**MILK, YOGURT,  
AND CHEESE**  
Nutrients: Protein,  
calcium, Vitamins A,  
D, B<sub>2</sub>, and phosphorus

**MEAT, POULTRY,  
FISH, BEANS, EGGS,  
AND NUTS**  
Nutrients: Protein, iron,  
B vitamins, and  
phosphorus

**VEGETABLES**  
Nutrients: Vitamins A,  
C, and K, calcium, iron,  
magnesium, fiber, and  
carbohydrates

**FRUITS**  
Nutrients:  
Vitamins A, C,  
magnesium, and  
potassium, fiber, and  
carbohydrates

**BREAD, CEREAL,  
RICE, AND PASTA**  
Nutrients:  
Complex carbohydrates,  
fiber, iron, B vitamins

## Daily Serving Equivalents

### FATS, OILS, AND SWEETS

Servings: Use sparingly.

Found in: candy, soft drinks, butter, margarine, salty snack foods such as chips, mayonnaise, salad dressing, jams and jellies

### MILK, YOGURT, AND CHEESE

Servings: 2–3

SINGLE SERVING EQUIVALENTS:


- 1 cup of milk or yogurt
- 1½ ounces of natural cheese
- 2 ounces of processed cheese

### MEAT, POULTRY, FISH, BEANS, EGGS, AND NUTS

Servings: 2–3

SINGLE SERVING EQUIVALENTS:

- 2–3 ounces of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish
- 1 egg
- ½ cup of cooked dry beans
- 2 tablespoons of peanut butter

 **The Food Guide Pyramid shows the types of foods you need and in which amounts.**

**ACTIVITY** Determine single serving equivalents within particular sections of the pyramid.

## Choose Plenty of Grain Products, Vegetables, and Fruits

Why do vegetables, fruits, and grain products get special attention? It is because they are excellent sources of complex carbohydrates and fiber. They are usually low in fats and calories, and they provide essential vitamins and minerals.

A high intake of fiber and complex carbohydrates has been shown to decrease the risk for heart disease, obesity, and some cancers. The National Cancer Institute recommends 20 to 35 grams of fiber a day, in contrast to the 10 to 15 grams currently consumed daily by most Americans.

## Choose an Eating Style Low in Fat, Saturated Fat, and Cholesterol

The top section of the Food Guide Pyramid contains foods you are advised to use sparingly—fats, oils, and sweets. At present, fat makes

### VEGETABLES

Servings: 3–5

SINGLE SERVING EQUIVALENTS:

- 1 cup of raw leafy vegetables
- ½ cup of other vegetables, cooked or raw
- ¾ cup of vegetable juice

### FRUITS

Servings: 2–4

SINGLE SERVING EQUIVALENTS:

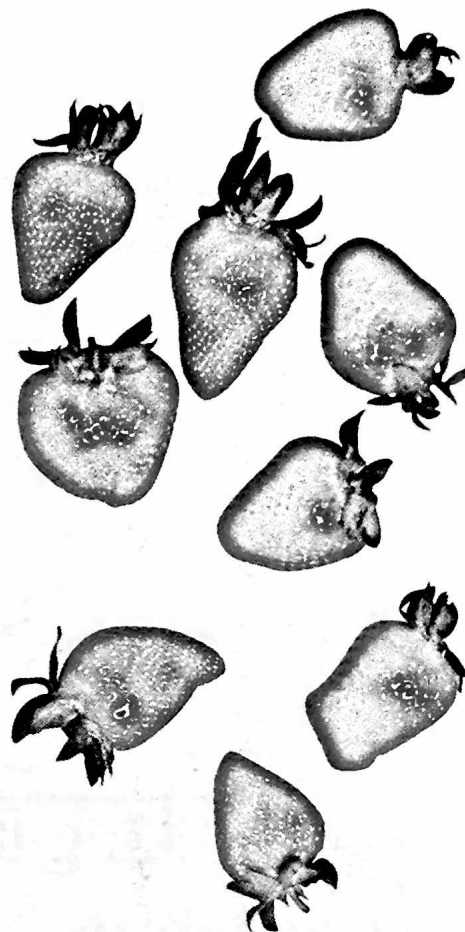
- 1 medium apple, banana, or orange
- ½ grapefruit or melon wedge
- ¾ cup of 100-percent fruit juice
- ½ cup of berries
- ½ cup of canned fruit, water or natural juice pack
- ½ cup of dried fruit

### BREAD, CEREAL, RICE, AND PASTA

Servings: 6–11

SINGLE SERVING EQUIVALENTS:

- 1 slice of bread
- ½ hamburger bun or English muffin
- 1 small roll or biscuit
- 3 to 4 small crackers
- 1 ounce of ready-to-eat breakfast cereal
- ½ cup of cooked cereal
- ½ cup of cooked rice
- ½ cup of cooked pasta



**HEALTH**  
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Visit [health.glencoe.com](http://health.glencoe.com) to learn about the five food groups and the Food Guide Pyramid.

## Did You Know?

- The number of food shoppers claiming that fat content in food is their biggest concern rose 600 percent—from 8 percent to 48 percent—in the last eight years.
- A 12-ounce carbonated soft drink contains 9 to 12 teaspoons of sugar. Diet drinks are exceptions.
- Americans consume 20 pounds (9.1 kg) of sugar on average from soft drinks alone each year.
- Foods containing sugar substitutes are not necessarily lower in calories than similar products made with sugar. You need to read the label to find out the number of calories.

up about 34 percent of the calories in the average American diet. This is well in excess of the no more than 30 percent of calories from fat called for in the *Dietary Guidelines*. Eating styles high in fat are linked to obesity and some cancers. A diet high in saturated fat and cholesterol also contributes to increased cholesterol levels, a risk factor for heart disease.

To control the amount of fat you eat:

- Cut off the fat you see on meat.
- Eat lean meat and poultry.
- Remove the skin from chicken and turkey.
- Eat more fish, including oilier fishes such as salmon or halibut. Omega-3 fatty acids, a polyunsaturated fat in fish, have been linked with a decreased risk of heart disease.
- Occasionally, perhaps one or two times a week, have a meal based on dried beans or other legumes instead of meat.
- Choose lower-fat milk, cheese, and yogurt.
- Eat less salad dressing and mayonnaise. Spread only a little margarine or butter on bread or potatoes.
- Substitute vegetables, fruits, and whole-grain snacks for foods with a high fat content.
- Cut down on fried foods, including french fries. Eat roasted, baked, broiled, or grilled meat, poultry, or fish instead. Choose vegetables that are steamed, boiled, or baked.

For most people, including teens, many of the above tips help control cholesterol as well as fat. For individuals with a tendency toward

## Making Responsible

### Decisions

#### Valuing and Helping Friends

Denise is watching her intake of fat, added sugars, and salt. Yet, every time she goes out with her closest friends, Rae and Yvonne, the three end up at the same fast-food restaurant. Rae



and Yvonne always order shakes and fries, and Denise feels pressured to order



the same as her friends. Denise wants to suggest a different plan, but she has known Rae and

Yvonne since the second grade and doesn't want to seem like a troublemaker. At the same

time, she doesn't want to compromise her health and nutrition goals.

What can Denise do?

#### What Would You Do?

Apply the six steps of the decision-making process to Denise's problem.

1. **State the situation.**
2. **List the options.**
3. **Weigh the possible outcomes.**
4. **Consider your values.**
5. **Make a decision and act.**
6. **Evaluate the decision.**

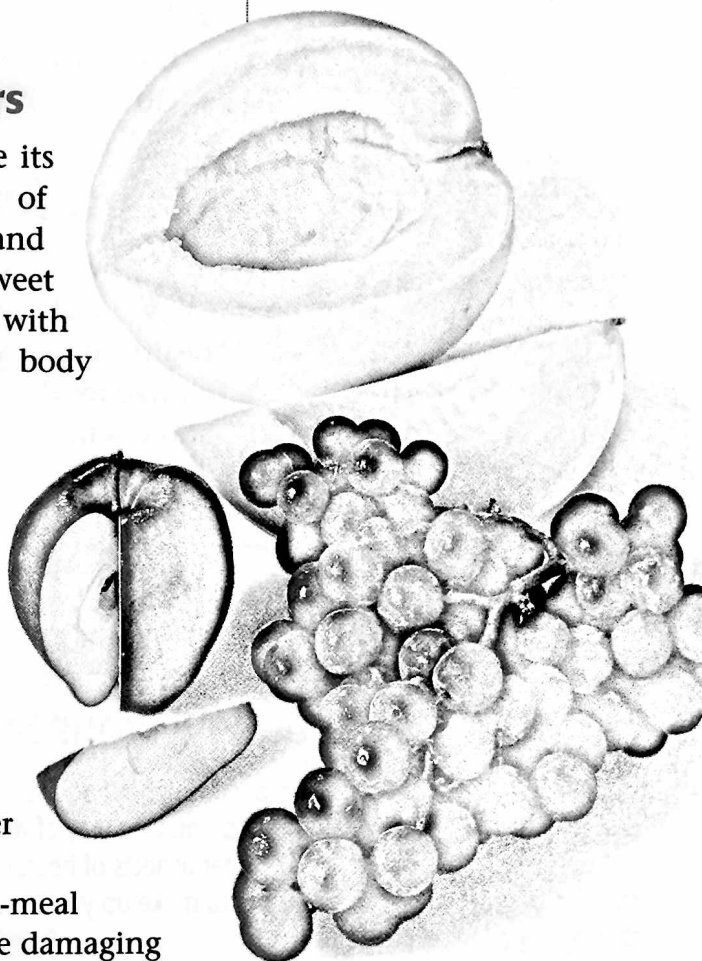
high blood cholesterol levels, additional precautions may need to be taken. These include increasing one's awareness of and limiting foods high in dietary cholesterol such as egg yolks, organ meats like liver, and even some low-fat foods, such as shellfish.

## Choose an Eating Style Moderate in Sugars

Americans eat sugar in many forms, and most like its taste. Healthy people can eat a moderate amount of sugar. As with fats, the guideline is to watch the size and frequency of foods with added sugars, such as sweet desserts, candy, and soft drinks, and to balance these with foods that provide the amounts of nutrients your body needs.

Some tips for using sugar in moderation are:

- Become aware of your intake of foods with added sugars but few nutrients. If you drink a lot of soda, reach instead for a natural fruit juice or even plain water. Substitute fruit for doughnuts, candy, or other sweets made with added sugar.
- Learn to identify added sugars by their names on product packages, such as corn syrup, honey, and sucrose.
- Choose canned fruits packed in water or juice rather than in heavy syrup.
- Eat sweets as part of a meal, rather than as between-meal snacks. Other foods in the meal may help neutralize damaging acids from carbohydrates that build up on the teeth. When sweets are eaten, be sure to brush your teeth afterward, using a fluoride toothpaste, and floss daily.



▲ *Sweet deserts and sugary snacks provide little nutritional value. Instead, substitute with melon, grapes, and other fresh fruits.*

**ACTIVITY** *What nutrients are found in these fruits?*

## Choose an Eating Style Moderate in Salt and Sodium

Sodium is one of the body's essential minerals. It helps transport nutrients into your cells and helps wastes move out. It also helps maintain normal blood pressure and nerve function. Yet, most Americans consume far more than the amount advised: 2,400 mg or less sodium a day.

Where does all the sodium come from? About 10 percent is naturally present in foods. The remainder comes from table salt—sodium chloride—and processed foods. In fact, about 75 percent of the sodium we eat is derived from processed foods. The remainder comes from the salt shaker. Too much sodium may put some people at risk of high blood pressure, although body weight, genetics, and amount of physical activity are some other factors that affect this condition.

Follow these tips to ensure a moderate intake of sodium and salt:

- Become "sodium-literate." The Nutrition Facts panel on food labels identifies the sodium content. Learn to look for and read this information when you buy processed foods.

- Season foods with herbs and spices rather than salt, and encourage the family member who prepares meals at home to use less salt in cooking.
- Taste foods before you salt them. If you must add salt, shake once, then taste again.
- Go easy on the salty snacks you eat—such as chips and pretzels.

## Healthful Eating Patterns

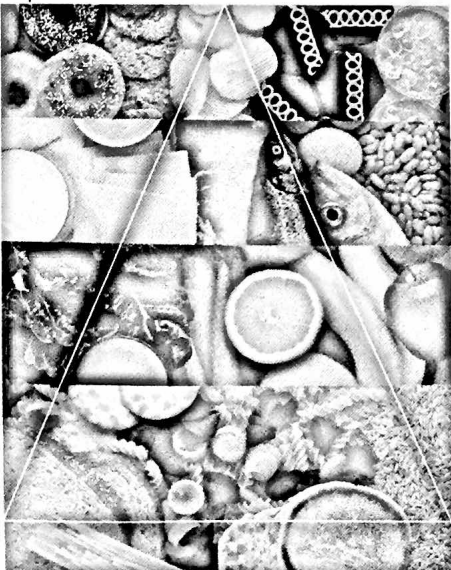
Whether you eat three meals a day, or four, five, or six “mini-meals,” *variety, moderation, and balance* are the foundation of a healthful eating plan. Meals and snacks with adequate servings from all five food groups in the Food Guide Pyramid provide the nutrients and energy you need.

## Building Health Skills

### Setting Goals: Improving Your Snacking Habits

BECAUSE THE BODY continues to grow throughout adolescence, your nutritional and caloric needs right now are at a high point. One way of meeting the increased needs is through smart snacking. As with other aspects of health, you can become a smarter snacker. In order to do this, you have to make up your mind that a change is in order, then follow a logical plan of action.

- 1. Make a list of your current favorite snacks.** Divide a page of your private Health Journal into three columns. Write the names of your favorite snacks in the first column. Include any food consumed between meals, including beverages such as soda or milk. Be as thorough as possible.
- 2. Determine where each listed item belongs on the Food Guide Pyramid.** Fruits and vegetables are self-evident. Yogurt and cheese belong in the Milk, Yogurt, and Cheese group. Crackers, pretzels, and popcorn belong in the Bread, Cereal, Rice and Pasta group. Soft drinks and candy belong with the Fats, Oils, and Sweets group. Write this information in the second column next to the corresponding items in Column 1.
- 3. Identify the nutrients the snack provides.** Again, refer to the Food Guide Pyramid on page 114. Look in particular for foods that provide calcium, iron, protein, and vitamins A and C. All of these are nutrients that are especially important to consume in adequate amounts. Note your findings in Column 3.
- 4. Review your list.** Which snacks belong with the Fats, Oils, and Sweets group? To what food groups are your combined snacks contributing most? What foods might you change to moderate fat, sugar, or sodium intake or to add more food variety?



## Some Sensible Snacks

FOOD	FAT (in grams)	% CALORIES FROM FAT
Air-popped popcorn, 1 cup	0	0
Applesauce, ½ cup	0	0
Bagel, 1	0.8	11
Bread sticks, 1	1	15
Frozen fruit bar, 4 ounces	0	0
Fruit roll-ups, 1	0.5	9
Gelatin with sliced banana, ½ cup	0	0
Graham crackers, 2	1	15
Popcorn cake, 2	0	0
Pretzel sticks, 1 ounce	1	10
Skim milk, 1 cup	0	0
Yogurt, plain, low-fat, 4 ounces	1.8	23

When planning menus, remember that there are no good or bad foods. Any food that supplies calories and nutrients can be part of a nutritious eating style. Nutrition guidelines apply to all your food choices for a day or more, not for just a single meal or food.

### Breakfast

Breakfast may be your most important meal. After 10 to 14 hours without fuel, your body needs to be recharged. According to breakfast studies, eating a nutritious morning meal is linked with better mental and physical performance in late morning. Those who ate breakfast also reacted faster and experienced less muscle fatigue than those who skipped breakfast.

As with other meals, a key to successful breakfast planning is variety. This helps break some of the monotony of the same traditional breakfast foods; a varied meal provides a variety of nutrients. You might choose peanut butter on toast, pizza, or even a stuffed tomato for a healthful and eye-opening beginning. To get enough vitamin C during the day, add a citrus juice or fruit or tomato juice for breakfast. Breakfast is also a good time to get one calcium-rich serving of milk, cheese, or yogurt and a perfect opportunity to add needed fiber by eating a high-fiber cereal.

▲ **What other foods that you enjoy eating would make healthful snacks?**

**ACTIVITY** Which of the foods listed contain the least fat? Which contain the lowest percentage of calories from fat? Which do you think are sources of the following nutrients: Carbohydrates? Calcium? Protein?



## Lunch and Dinner

Typically, Americans eat a sandwich or something similar for lunch and then a large dinner. Other cultural groups follow a reverse pattern, eating their large meal at midday. Either way, the focus of lunch and dinner should provide a variety of foods from several food groups in the Food Guide Pyramid. The protein at lunch or dinner might come from eggs, a lean meat, poultry, fish, some form of legumes, or a dairy food. Again, including pasta, rice, or bread at both these meals will help ensure that you satisfy the 6 to 11 servings

of grain from the Food Guide Pyramid that many active teenagers need. A turkey and cheese sandwich piled high with lettuce and tomato provides one serving each from the protein, dairy, and vegetable sections of the pyramid and two from the grain group. A slice of vegetarian pizza with steamed or grilled vegetables provides similar nutrient benefits.

