

# GENERAL NUTRITION RECOMMENDATIONS

These guidelines have been adapted from jointly issued recommendations by the **United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)**, **National Cancer Institute**, **American Heart Association**, and other nutrition experts. It is recommended that you meet these basic nutritional goals before moving forward with more specific or targeted nutritional supplementation. It also must be understood that the individual who is to gain the greatest benefit from these nutritional and healthy lifestyle changes is not doing anything which would be detrimental to their health; such as smoking or taking any medications that inhibit the proper absorption or utilization of nutrients. Use the scale below to rank how well you are currently meeting these basic nutritional recommendations (Range is 0 = not at all to 5 = meet all of the recommendation). Statements ranked as less than four (4) should be seen as areas worthy of review. Adjustments should be made to your diet in those areas identified as low ranking before seeking supplementation.

Ranking	General Nutritional Recommendations
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Stay within your calculated daily caloric needs (from average daily energy expenditure calculations).</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Limit consumption of “processed” carbohydrates to 75 grams (300 calories) per day. Processed carbohydrates are found in foods that are not consumed in their natural state. For example, eating an apple would not count against the total carbohydrates allowed as it is in its’ natural state, but a slice of apple pie is considered “processed” and therefore would count toward the 75 gram total carbohydrates allowed.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Balance the foods you eat (calories in) with physical activity and exercise (calories out).</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Eat at regular times throughout the day (whether you prefer to consume several small meals or three regular meals spread throughout the day).</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Eat at least three times a day: It is not a good idea to consume all of your calories in one or two meals. Eating several smaller meals spread throughout the day may be preferred and has the added benefit of reducing fluctuations in blood sugar levels to provide uniform energy.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Avoid automatic eating; such as, eating while watching television, driving, working at your desk, or grocery shopping. There is a tendency to overeat simply because you are not paying attention.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Portion out all food before eating. Making sure that there is only one serving available of each entree or side per setting should eliminate overeating and excess calorie consumption. You can always go back for “seconds” if you are below your caloric recommendations and still hungry.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Eat slowly: It takes approximately 20 minutes for the satiety reflex to kick in and to inform you consciously that you are full. Eating too quickly overrides the satiety reflex and encourages you to overeat before “feeling” full.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Limit desserts or snacks to occasionally and in moderation; there is room in a healthy diet for <b>all</b> foods. Making some foods forbidden may actually increase your desire for that food and possibly lead to feelings of deprivation; both of which would be counterproductive. Just remember that these types of “snacks” contribute to your daily total of 75 grams of “processed” carbohydrates per day.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Eat a variety of minimally processed and, wherever possible, seasonally fresh and locally grown foods. A wide variety of foods is necessary to get the more than 40 nutrients essential for good health. Relying on vitamin and mineral supplementation to get essential nutrients is discouraged; that is called “nutrient replacement” and is not healthy. Eating healthy foods and supplementing for occasional shortfalls in nutrient balance is the idea of balanced nutrition.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Eat a well-balanced breakfast each morning, including at least one protein; this will provide uniform energy levels throughout morning, reducing the need to “munch.”</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Eat at least 2-3 servings of dark green leafy vegetables each day.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Eat larger meals earlier in the day when activity level is higher and smaller meals at the end of the day when physical activity levels are dropping and you are winding down. This principle is true most of the time; exceptions may exist for those working late shifts or recovering from injuries.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Choose complex (natural) carbohydrates over simple (processed) sugars or high glycemic foods. Your diet should consist of no more than 75 grams (300 calories) of processed carbohydrates. Simple sugars (processed carbohydrates) provide mainly “<b>empty calories</b>” to the diet and contribute significantly to weight gain and other health related problems.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Choose plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables each day. These provide nutrients, as well as enzymes, necessary for healthy digestion. It is suggested that you get 5-9 servings of fresh vegetables per day.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Limit dried or sweetened fruits, potatoes, and corn products as these items contribute significantly to your total calorie intake and count toward your 75 gram daily allowable carbohydrates.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Consume between 20 to 30 grams of fiber each day. Fiber serves as roughage and helps keep the intestine clean. Fiber is found in fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains.</i>

0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Choose complete proteins - Complete proteins are those proteins that contain all of the essential amino acids needed by the body and which cannot be made or converted from other nutrients. This should make up a significant part of the daily caloric intake and are found in fish, chicken, pork, red meat, and some vegetables.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>As there is no healthy level of hydrogenated fats, you should avoid all foods containing these products.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Moderate consumption of polyunsaturated, monounsaturated and saturated fats are well tolerated and supportive of healthy body function; essential fatty acids and fat soluble vitamins (Vitamin A, D, E, and K) are found in these fats. Diets should not be completely devoid of fats, just the “bad” ones.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Limit cholesterol intake to less than 300 mg/day.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Avoid foods which have been deep fried or cooked excessively (Often found on food bars/buffets).</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Assure a balanced intake of omega 3 and omega 6 fatty acids; these are found in balance naturally in cold water fish (such as salmon, mackerel, herring, and like).</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Consume moderate amounts of fresh fish and poultry throughout the week.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Limit the consumption of red meat to just a few times per week.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Choose a diet low in added salt and sodium. Be aware of sources of sodium such as canned foods, processed meats, pre-prepared foods and convenience foods. Added sodium (not naturally occurring in the fruit or vegetable) intake should be less than 1500 mg/day.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Drink alcohol moderately, if at all. Consumption of red wine (about one to two glasses per day for men and one glass per day for women) preferred over other types of alcohol; purple grape juice may offer the same benefits of red wine without the concerns of alcohol.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Consume 6-8 cups of fresh spring or filtered water each day; Citrus (lemon or orange) or cucumber may be added for flavoring.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Limit fruit juices to 100%, “not from concentrate” juice and dilute to 50% juice and 50% water your self.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Avoid or limit drinking sodas, fruit flavored drinks (including low level “fruit juices”), and other sugary beverages.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Occasionally, you may want to add a full-spectrum electrolyte to your drinking water for enhanced cellular health; especially if you are sweating a great deal (following exercise or work).</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Assure balanced intake of fat-soluble vitamins through supplementation; especially if frequently consuming “low” or “no fat” foods.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Take digestive enzymes each day; especially if consuming significant amounts of pre-prepared and/or other processed foods.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Take a daily whole-food multi-vitamin each day; especially if eating nutrient devoid, pre-prepared, or other processed foods regularly.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Add probiotics to the diet as a way of restoring intestinal flora and vitamin K balance; especially following any period of antibiotic use.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Monitor acid/base balance and supplement as necessary.</i>
0 1 2 3 4 5	<i>Monitor digestive transient time and adjust diet to increase roughage (fiber) as necessary.</i>

Please note that the above suggestions will help most individuals achieve a higher degree of health. For many, this also means reducing undesired body weight. I strongly recommend instituting these basic principles before attempting to add nutritional supplements so that you can achieve the greatest benefit from those supplements. I do not encourage the use of supplements as replacements for a poor diet, however; doing so will most likely lead to frustration in terms of desired outcome and potentially a false sense of health. Additionally, the body, being efficient, but somewhat lazy, will adapt to the poor nutrition by pulling stored nutrients to fill the void. Not having stored nutrients from which to pull will lead to declining health and disease. I also recommend whole-food supplements when available, since this is real food and the body will be better able to utilize the nutrients provided. Lastly, notice that I allow for more carbohydrate consumption compared with other “low-carbohydrate” diets. This is because I recognize that “natural” sugars are utilized by the body in a healthier manner than “processed” carbohydrates; the body metabolizes an apple differently than a slice of apple pie, for example. The nutrient plan described above, while being somewhat simplistic, is worth the minimal effort required to see success. Just remember these 4 key principles:

- Restrict all “processed” carbohydrates to less than 75 grams (300 calories) per day.
- Eat as much of any other food as you wish, up to the remainder of your caloric recommendations.
- Remember the **quality** of food eaten is as important as the **quantity**; therefore, everything that you eat should contribute to your overall health and nutrient balance. If in doubt, don't eat it!
- Physical activity (including exercise) is essential for balanced health and nutrition; therefore, it should be an integral part of your daily habits as well.