

# Choose an Eating Plan with Plenty of Vegetables, Fruits and Grains

Adults should eat at least 2½ cups of vegetables, 2 cups of fruits, and 6 ounces of grain products every day. These foods contain lots of carbohydrates and dietary fiber. There are two kinds of carbohydrates—simple sugars and complex carbohydrates such as starch. Foods high in complex carbohydrates also supply vitamins and minerals and add fiber to your eating plan.

Dietary fiber comes from the parts of plants that humans cannot digest. Many different types of fiber are found in a variety of foods. For this reason it is important to get fiber from a variety of whole grains, fruits and vegetables.

Although it is not clear exactly how much and what type of fiber we need in our eating plan, the current recommendation is 25 to 35 grams of dietary fiber each day or 14 grams per 1,000 calories. Most Americans can reach this goal by eating more fiber-containing foods such as:

- Whole-grain breads
- Whole-grain breakfast cereals
- Whole-wheat pasta
- Vegetables, especially with edible skins, seeds and stems

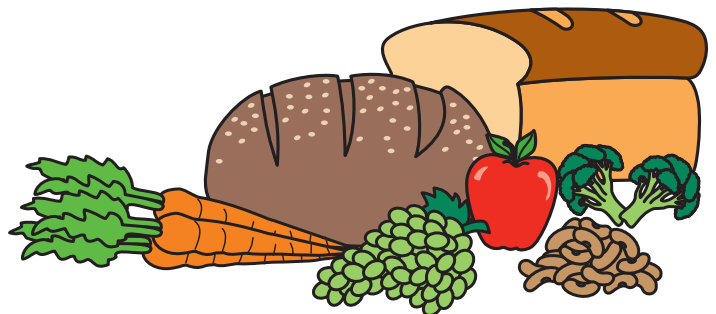
- Dry beans and peas
- Whole fruits, especially with edible skins and seeds
- Nuts and seeds

## What are whole grains?

Whole grains are products that contain the entire grain, or all the grain that is edible. They include the bran and germ portions which contain most of the fiber, vitamins and minerals as well as the starchy endosperm. Some examples of whole grains are whole wheat, cracked wheat, bulgur, whole cornmeal, popcorn, brown rice, whole rye, scotch barley, and oatmeal.

## Isn't all this starchy food fattening?

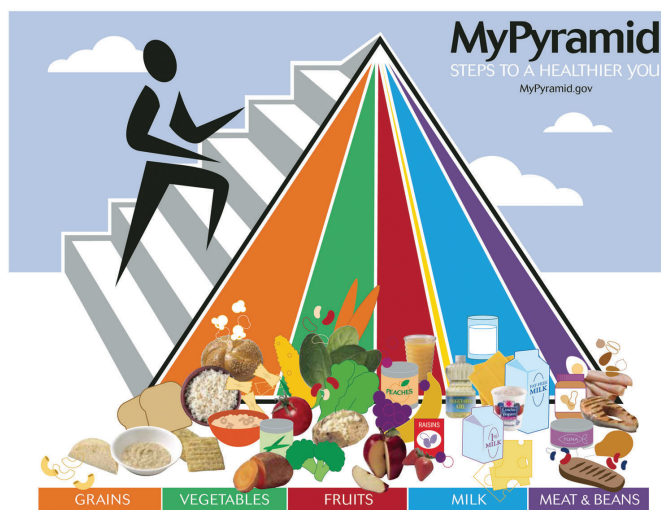
Many people think that foods high in complex carbohydrates ("starchy" foods such as bread and pota-



toes) are fattening. In fact, most of the calories come from the company these foods keep – butter or margarine, sour cream, gravies, jam or jellies. Starches contain only 4 calories per gram, while fat contains 9 calories per gram. Eating more starchy foods is a good way to fill up with fewer calories, provided you don't add on a lot of extras.

### Why eat foods with starch and fiber?

- They provide energy.
- They provide vitamins and minerals.
- They provide a feeling of fullness with fewer calories.
- Most are low in fat.
- Fiber helps the digestive system work properly.
- They taste good!



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