

Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH)

Getting Started on DASH

- 1 **Where you are now.** The DASH eating plan does use special foods and recipes. One way to start is by using the free Body Weight Planner (<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/bwp>) to find out how many calories you need per day to be healthy.
- 2 **Discuss medicine with your doctor.** If you take medicine for high blood pressure or cholesterol, keep taking it. Follow the DASH eating plan and talk with your doctor about your medicine as part of your overall wellness plan.
- 3 **Make DASH a part of your healthy life.** The DASH eating plan, along with other lifestyle changes, can help you control your blood pressure and lower cholesterol. Important lifestyle changes include: being at a healthy weight and regular physical activity.
- 4 **DASH is for everyone in the family.** Your entire family can eat meals using the DASH eating plan. Find the link below to a sample DASH diet.
- 5 **Don't worry.** Even when trying your best, it can be easy to eat too much. Just try your best to keep most days close to the DASH eating plan and the sodium level recommended for you.

Making the Move to DASH

Start with small changes and healthy substitutions.

- If you start out eating one or two servings of vegetables a day, add another serving at lunch or dinner. Try adding vegetables into a casserole or pasta dish.
- If you don't eat fruit now, add a serving of fruit to your meals or have it as a snack.
- Slowly increase use of milk, yogurt, and cheese to three servings a day. For example, drink milk with lunch or dinner, instead of soda, sugar-sweetened tea, or alcohol.
- Choose fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk, yogurt, and reduced-fat cheese to reduce the amounts of saturated fat, cholesterol, and calories you eat and increase your calcium.
- Read the Nutrition Facts label on all foods to choose those lowest in saturated and trans fats.
- Aim to fill ½ your plate with vegetables and fruits, ¼ with whole grains, and ¼ with fish, lean meat, poultry, or beans.
- Choose whole grain cereals and whole wheat bread or pasta to get more minerals and fiber.

Vary your proteins.

- Choose lean meats and remove skin from poultry or try meatless options.
- Check labels for ground meats and poultry with lower saturated fat.
- Try having fish once or twice each week.

Select nutritious, tasty snacks.

- Fruits offer great taste and variety. Use fruit canned in juice or packed in water. Fresh fruits are fast and easy, and dried fruits are a good choice to carry with you or have in the car.
- Snack ideas: nuts mixed with raisins; graham crackers; fat-free or lowfat yogurt; popcorn with no salt or butter added; raw vegetables.

For more information, try these links
 More info on DASH diet: <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/education/dash-eating-plan>
 Sample DASH Diet: <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/all-publications-and-resources/week-dash-eating-plan>



Using the Nutrition Facts Label

Four Easy Steps

Using the Nutrition Facts label on packaged foods and drinks to make healthy choices. Follow these key steps and tips!

1 Size up Servings

The serving size tells you how much and how many servings are in the package. Eating 2 servings of this food means you ate 14% of your total sodium.
 $2 \text{ servings} \times 160 \text{ mg (7\%)} = 320 \text{ mg (14\%)} \text{ total sodium}$

3 Caution: Sodium

Talk to your doctor about how much sodium is right for you.

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size 2/3 cup (55g)	
Amount per serving	
Calories	230
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 240mg	6%

*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

2 Consider the Calories

Is it worth it? Keep in mind how many calories per day you need to meet your body weight goals.

4 Choose Nutrition Wisely

Use % Daily Value to see if a serving of food is high or low in recommended nutrients and to compare foods.

- Try to get 100% DV of these on most days:
 - Dietary Fiber
 - Iron
 - Vitamin D
 - Potassium
 - Calcium
- Try to get less than 100% DV of these each day:
 - Saturated Fat
 - Added Sugars
 - Trans Fat*

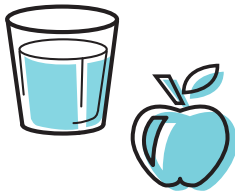
*Try to keep trans fat as low as possible.

Your "handy" portion guide



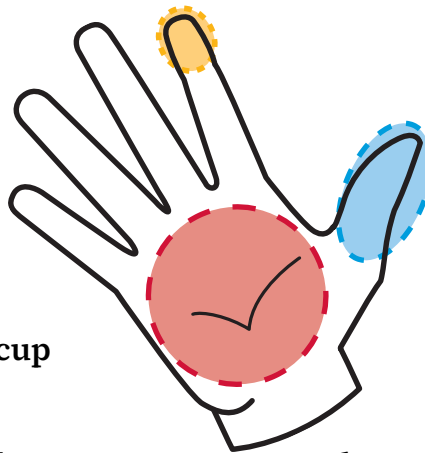
Fist = 1 cup

A 1 cup serving equals:
 - 8 oz. of milk or yogurt
 - medium apple



Fingertip = 1 teaspoon

Choose 1 tsp. servings for oils & fats like mayonnaise or a pat of butter.



Thumb = 1 tablespoon

One serving of peanut butter equals 2 Tbsp.



Cupped Hand = 1/2 cup

A 1/2 cup serving equals:
 - Cooked whole grains (brown rice, whole wheat pasta, grits, hot cereal, etc.)
 - Dried fruits
 - Cooked beans



Palm = 3 ounce serving

Choose 3 oz. servings for lean meats, fish and poultry.

