

[IMAGE]

Healthy Meal Plan: Eat More of This, Less of That

By Editorial Staff

The latest guidelines from the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture and the Dept. of Health and Human Services provide a road map for better health through nutrition, but you may need to make some adjustments to make the guidelines a part of your daily eating routine. Here's a brief breakdown of some of the major recommendations in the new guidelines to help you and your family eat healthier, more nutritious meals:

Say No to Sugar

Sugar's been on the danger list for some time, but the latest guidelines go even further, particularly when it comes to sugar found in processed foods. The new recommendations suggest added sugar should constitute no more than 10 percent of daily calories, down from 15 percent in the old guidelines.

Lower Your Sodium Intake

The latest guidelines recommend we consume no more than 2,300 milligrams of sodium (salt) per day. From a visual perspective, that means no more than approximately 1 teaspoon daily. From a numbers perspective, consider that your average can of soup (2-3 servings total) contains almost that amount, if not more. Salt is also a staple of many processed foods, packaged meals, and of course, fast-food and restaurant fare.

nutrition - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark Keep the Protein Lean

The guidelines endorse lean meat, turkey, chicken, fish, eggs, nuts and seeds as elements of a healthy diet, but urge Americans to consume no more than 10 percent of their daily calories from saturated fat. That means keep the meat lean and avoid common meat- and meal-toppers such as butter, whole milk / cream and certain oils.

Stick With the Staples

While not endorsing a vegetarian diet, the updated guidelines stress that the balance of your daily diet should be heavy on whole fruits, colorful vegetables, legumes (beans and peas) and whole grains. At least

50 percent of your daily grain consumption should be of the whole-grain variety, according to the guidelines.

To review additional recommendations in the new guidelines, [click here](#).

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