

The Food Groups of MyPyramid¹

Glenda L. Warren²

Plan your food group choices. Use foods rich in nutrients that are fat-free or low-fat and low in added sugars.

Grains Group: Includes all foods made from wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, and barley, such as bread, pasta, oatmeal, breakfast cereals, tortillas, and grits. Daily amounts are recommended as “ounce equivalents.”

These each count as one ounce equivalent:

- 1 slice of bread
- 1 cup of ready-to-eat cereal
- ½ cup of cooked rice, pasta or cooked cereal

Nutrients provided may include dietary fiber, several B vitamins (thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, and folate) and minerals (iron, magnesium, and selenium).

Key message: Choose whole grains for at least half of all grains that you eat each day.

Vegetable Group: All fresh, frozen, canned or dried vegetables and vegetable juices whether fresh, frozen, canned or dried. *Daily amounts are recommended as “cups.”*

These each count as one cup of vegetables:

- One cup of raw or cooked vegetables
- One cup of vegetable juice
- Two cups of raw leafy greens

Nutrients provided may include potassium, dietary fiber, folate (folic acid), vitamin A, vitamin E, and vitamin C.

Key message: Eat more vegetables! Especially eat more orange and dark green leafy vegetables as well as beans and peas such as pinto, kidney, black and garbanzo beans, split peas, and lentils.

Fruit Group: All fresh, frozen, canned and dried fruits and 100% fruit juices. Daily amounts are recommended as “cups.”

These each count as one cup of fruit:

- 1 cup of fruit
- 1 cup of 100% fruit juice
- ½ cup of dried fruit

Nutrients provided by fruits may include potassium, dietary fiber, vitamin C, and folate.

Key message: Eat a variety of fruits rather than fruit juice for most of your fruit choices. Choosing whole fruit more often than fruit juice helps you get enough fiber in your daily diet.

Milk Group: All fluid milk products and foods made from milk that keep their calcium content, such as yogurt and cheese. Some foods made from milk such as cream cheese, cream, and butter are not part of the milk group because they have little or no calcium. Daily amounts are

1. This document is FCS8873, one of a series of the Family Youth and Community Sciences Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Original publication date December 2008. Visit the EDIS website at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.

2. Glenda L. Warren, M.S., R.D., CFCS, associate professor, Extension nutritionist, EFNEP, Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville 32611.

recommended as “cups.” These each count as one cup from the milk group:

- 1 cup of milk or yogurt
- 1 ½ ounce of natural cheese, or two ounces of processed cheese

Nutrients provided may include calcium, potassium, vitamin D, and protein.

Key message: Make fat-free or low-fat choices from the milk group.

Meat and Beans Group: All meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, eggs, seeds, and nuts. Daily amounts are recommended as “ounce equivalents.”

These each count as one ounce equivalent:

- 1 ounce of lean meat, poultry, or fish
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon peanut butter
- ¼ cup cooked dry beans
- ½ ounce of nuts or seeds

Nutrients provided may include protein, B vitamins (niacin, thiamin, riboflavin, and vitamin B6), vitamin E, iron, zinc, and magnesium.

Key message: Choose lean meats and poultry and choose low-fat cooking methods such as baking, broiling, grilling, or braising. Make your meat group varied by choosing more fish, beans, peas, nuts and seeds.

Resources: To learn more about nutrition and health, contact your local Extension office and visit MyPyramid.gov