



The Bottom Line...

Use a food pyramid that's actually based on the latest and best science.

We can't look at a pyramid these days without thinking of food and healthy eating. There was the U.S. government's Food Guide Pyramid, followed by its replacement, My Pyramid, which was basically the same thing, just pitched on its side. The problem was that these efforts, while generally well intentioned, have been quite flawed at actually showing people what makes up a healthy diet. Why? Their recommendations have often been based on out-of-date science and influenced by people with business interests in their messages.

But, there's a better alternative: the [Healthy Eating Pyramid](#), built by the faculty in the Department of Nutrition at the Harvard School of Public Health.

Download this pyramid @ <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/files/Healthy-Eating-Pyramid-handout.pdf>

Based on the latest science, and unaffected by businesses and organizations with a stake in its messages, the Healthy Eating Pyramid is a simple, trustworthy guide to choosing a healthy diet. Its foundation is daily exercise and weight control, since these two related elements strongly influence your chances of staying healthy. The Healthy Eating Pyramid builds from there, showing that you should eat more foods from the bottom part of the pyramid (vegetables, whole grains) and less from the top (red meat, refined grains, sugary drinks, and salt).

Here is the site URL which has the active links from underlined sections below:

<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/what-should-you-eat/pyramid/index.html>

1. Start with exercise. A healthy diet is built on a base of regular exercise, which keeps calories in balance and weight in check. Read five quick [tips for staying active](#) and [getting to your healthy weight](#), and a dozen ideas for [fitting exercise into your life](#).

2. Focus on food, not grams. The [Healthy Eating Pyramid](#) doesn't worry about specific servings or grams of food, so neither should you. It's a simple, general guide to how you should eat when you eat.

3. Go with plants. Eating a plant-based diet is healthiest. Choose plenty of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and healthy fats, like olive and canola oil. Check out these [delicious healthy recipes](#) that bring the Healthy Eating Pyramid into your kitchen.

4. Cut way back on American staples. Red meat, refined grains, potatoes, sugary drinks, and salty snacks are part of American culture, but they're also really unhealthy. Go for a plant-based diet rich in non-starchy vegetables, fruits, and whole grains. And if you eat meat, fish and poultry are the best choices.

5. Take a multivitamin, and maybe have a drink. Taking a multivitamin can be a good nutrition insurance policy. Moderate drinking for many people can have real health benefits, but it's not for everyone. Those who don't drink shouldn't feel that they need to start. Read about [balancing alcohol's risks and benefits](#).