



DGA: 2015

New Nutrition Guidelines

Every five years, the Dietary Guidelines for Americans are updated to reflect the latest in nutrition research. With the 2015 guidelines expected later this year, will we see any big changes?



What are the Dietary Guidelines?

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) include advice about nutrition and physical activity for Americans ages 2 years and over. Recommendations from the DGAs are based on a review of the current science and provide the basis for federal food and nutrition policy and education initiatives. The DGAs are updated every five years by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).



Will we see anything new?

The expert committee selected to review the latest research and make recommendations for this year's guidelines recently submitted their report. Many of the committee's recommendations are ones we have heard before - eat more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low fat dairy, seafood, legumes and nuts; eat less red and processed meat, sugar-sweetened foods and refined grains. Some new areas addressed included topics in food safety, sustainability and individual nutrients. The committee reported potential benefit from moderate coffee drinking for healthy adults. They also expressed safety concerns with consumption of high caffeine food or drinks by children as well as the risks of combining high-caffeine beverages and alcohol. Eating styles that meet both goals of improved health and environmental sustainability were recommended. For heart health, the committee suggested a focus on limiting saturated fat and sodium and not necessarily on the amount of cholesterol in a food.



What's next?

After the public comments are considered, HHS and USDA will release the official Dietary Guidelines for Americans sometime late in 2015. The new DGAs will be used to update many federal programs including MyPlate, the Nutrition Facts label, school breakfast and lunch as well as other nutrition assistance and public health programs.

REFERENCES:

1. Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Available at <http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/>.

Written by Jennifer M. Ignacio, MS, RD.