

Current Compliance with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans contain evidence based nutrition information and advice for Americans two years of age or older and are the cornerstone of Federal Nutrition Policy. They are updated and issued every five years by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

The key messages in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010 were translated into the new USDA meal patterns for the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs. The chart below summarizes the 2010 Dietary Guidelines key recommendations, the current status of the population's compliance with those recommendations, and current requirements of schools participating in the National School Lunch Program.

Current Dietary Guideline Recommendations	Current Population Compliance with Dietary Guideline Recommendations	USDA National School Lunch Program Meal Pattern Requirements
Reduce Sodium Intake to 1,500 – 2,300 mg per day.	The average American two years of age or older consumes 3,400 mg of sodium each day.	School lunches require a 32% reduction in sodium by school year 2017-2018 and a total reduction in sodium of 54% by school year 2022-2023.
Monitor Saturated Fat Intake	The average American consumes 11% of their calories from saturated fats.	School lunches require that over a one week period, less than 10% of total calories come from saturated fats.
Reduce Trans Fat Intake	Since the inclusion of trans fats on the food label in 2006, there has been a significant decrease in trans fatty acid consumption.	School lunches require that nutrition labels and manufacturer specifications must indicate zero grams of trans fat per serving.
Increase Whole Grain consumption and make half of your grains whole grain	Less than 5% of Americans consume the minimum level of whole grains recommended per day. On average, less than one serving of whole grain rich foods are eaten by Americans daily.	School lunches require that by 2014-2015, all grains offered in school nutrition programs be whole grain rich (containing at least 51% whole grains), achieving half of recommended grains offered in schools being whole grains.
Increase Fruit and Vegetable consumption and variety	<p>Despite their wide array of nutrients that are under consumed in the US and typically being low in calories when prepared without added fat or sugar, Americans do not meet the minimum recommendations for consumption.</p> <p>Consumption of 2 ½ cups per day or more is associated with a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and may protect against cancer.</p>	<p>School lunches require ½ - 1 cup of fruit be offered with lunch that is: fresh, frozen without added sugar, canned in light syrup or fruit juice, or dried.</p> <p>School lunches require a minimum of ¼ c – 1 cup of vegetables be offered daily and over a week must include: dark green, red/orange, starchy legumes, and other vegetables.</p>

