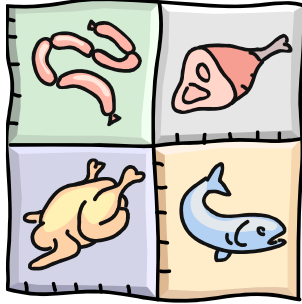




Get Up & Move!

Parent Newsletter

Series 2: May



Meat and Beans

The meat and beans group of MyPyramid includes foods such as meat, poultry, fish, dry beans or peas, eggs, nuts, and seeds. Dry beans and peas are considered to be part of this group and the vegetable group. You and your children should try to make most of your food choices from this group lean and low-fat. Fish, nuts and seeds contain healthy oils, so choose these items more frequently than meat and poultry.

Selection Tips

- Choose lean or low-fat meat and poultry.
- Avoid using solid fats when cooking poultry and meat.
- Select fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids, such as salmon, trout and herring, more often.
- Eat less of liver, organ meats, and egg yolks because they are high in cholesterol.
- Purchase deli meats that are low-sodium.
- Chose vitamin E rich sunflower seeds, almonds, and hazelnuts.

How Much is Needed

Girls and boys ages 9-13 need a five ounce equivalent of the meat and beans group daily. One ounce equivalents would be one egg, $\frac{1}{4}$ cups of cooked dry beans, $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce of nuts or seeds, 1 tablespoon of peanut butter, or 1 ounce of meat or poultry.

Health Benefits and Nutrients

Meat, poultry, fish, dry beans and peas, eggs, nuts, and seeds supply many nutrients. These include protein, B vitamins, vitamin E, iron, zinc, and magnesium.

- Protein functions as building blocks for bones, muscles, cartilage, skin and blood. It is also building blocks for enzymes, hormones, and vitamins.
- B vitamins found in this food group serve a variety of functions in the body. They help the body release energy, play a vital role in the function of the nervous system, aid in the formation of red blood cells, and help build tissues.
- Vitamin E is an anti-oxidant that helps protect vitamin A and essential fatty acids from cell oxidation.
- Magnesium is used in building bones and in releasing energy from muscles.
- Zinc is necessary for biochemical reactions and helps the immune system function properly.

Importance of Fish, Nuts and Seeds

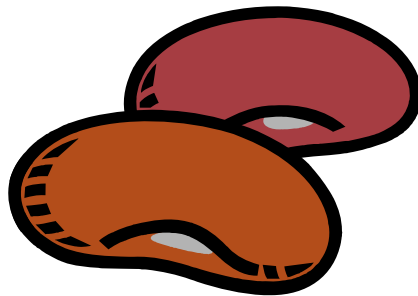
- Fish, nuts and seeds can boost the intake of healthy unsaturated fatty acids. Most of the fats in the diet should come from these sources. Some of these fatty acids need to come from food because the body cannot make them on its own.
- Some fish (salmon, trout, and herring) are high in a type of fatty acid called “omega-3 fatty acid.” Some studies have shown that eating omega-3 fatty acids may reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease.
- Some nuts and seeds (flax, walnuts) are excellent sources of essential fatty acids, and some (sunflower seeds, almonds, hazelnuts) are good sources of vitamin E.

Tips for Making Good Choices

- Go lean with protein by choosing lean beef, skinless chicken and turkey, low-fat and low-sodium deli meat.
- Trim and skim all fats while preparing and cooking meats and poultry.
- Try to vary your protein by choosing fish more often for lunch and dinner.
- Choose dry beans or peas as a main dish or part of a meal more often.
- Choose nuts as a snack, on salads, or in main dishes. Use nuts to replace meat or poultry in dishes.

Keep it Safe

- Separate raw, cooked, and ready-to-eat foods.
- Wash cutting boards, knives, utensils and counter tops in hot soapy water after preparing meats and poultry.
- Cook meat and poultry to a safe temperature to kill harmful microorganisms. Use a meat thermometer to measure the internal temperature to make sure the meat is cooked all the way through.
- Refrigerate perishable foods and leftovers within two hours.
- Defrost meats in the refrigerator or on a plate in the microwave. Do not defrost foods on a kitchen counter at room temperature.



Source: (www.mypyramid.gov)