



...because health matters!

Nutrition Matters

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The DASH Diet

About 1 in 5 Canadians have hypertension (high blood pressure) – 1 in 2 Canadians over the age of 65. But, a healthy diet can help prevent you from having high blood pressure. The DASH Diet (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) is rich in fruits and vegetables, low fat milk products, and fibre. It is lower in fats, sodium (salt) and cholesterol. The eating plan is based on a 2000 calorie diet and the number of servings can be adjusted up or down, depending on your needs. It is not hard to follow the DASH Diet. The foods are not unusual – nothing that you cannot buy at your grocery store.

Food Group	Servings per Day	Serving Size	Comments
Grain Products	7 - 8	1 slice bread ½ cup (125mL) dry cereal ½ cup (125mL) cooked rice, pasta, cereal	Choose whole grains (i.e. whole wheat). These are high sources of fibre.
Vegetables	4 - 5	1 cup (250mL) raw, leafy vegetable ½ cup (125mL) cooked vegetable ¾ cup (175mL) vegetable juice	Choose a wide variety of vegetables and fruit each day. These are rich sources of fibre, vitamins and minerals.
Fruit	4 - 5	¾ cup (175mL) fruit juice 1 medium fruit (i.e. apple, orange) ¼ cup (60mL) dried fruit ½ cup (125mL) fresh, frozen or canned fruit	8 - 10 servings of vegetables and fruit a day might sound like a lot, but the serving sizes are small. Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating recommends 5 - 10 and the average Canadian eats only about 3 - 5.
Low fat Dairy Foods	2 - 3	1 cup (250mL) skim or 1% milk 1 cup (250mL) low-fat yogurt 1.5 oz (45 g) low-fat cheese	These are good sources of calcium. Three servings/day will help lower your risk of osteoporosis.
Meats, Poultry, and Fish	2 or less	3 oz (90g) boiled or roasted lean meat, skinless poultry or fish	Remove all visible fat before cooking. The average Canadian eats more than 2 servings/day, often fatty choices.
Nuts, Seeds and Beans	4 - 5 (per week)	½ cup (125mL) cooked beans, like kidney beans 1/3 cup (75mL) nuts 2 tbsp (30mL) seeds	Beans can be a delicious addition to your diet and they are good sources of protein and fibre.

Fat servings: Try to limit added fat to 2 - 3 servings/day. One serving = 1 tsp (5mL) soft margarine, butter, mayonnaise, vegetable oil; 1 tbsp (15mL) low-fat mayonnaise, cream cheese or salad dressing; 2 tbsp (30mL) low-fat salad dressing.

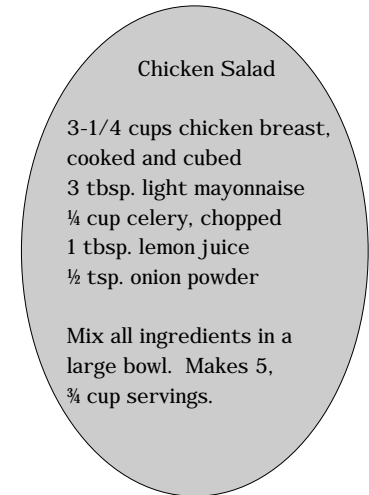
Sweets: Try to limit to less than 1 serving/day or 5 servings/week. One serving = 1 tbsp (15mL) maple syrup, sugar, jelly, jam; ½ cup (125mL) gelatin (Jell-O) or sherbert; 15 jellybeans; 3 pieces of hard candy; 1 cup (250mL) lemonade or fruit punch.

A Typical DASH Menu

Servings

Breakfast	1 cup (250mL) Shredded Wheat cereal	2 grain
	1 cup (250mL) skim milk	1 dairy
	¾ cup (175mL) orange juice	1 fruit
	1 banana	1 fruit
	1 low fat muffin	1 grain
Lunch	¾ cup (175mL) Chicken Salad *	1 poultry
	2 slices 100% whole wheat bread	2 grain
	1 tsp (5mL) Dijon Mustard	
	2 large slices tomato	½ vegetable
	1 cup (250mL) raw broccoli	2 vegetable
	2 tbsp (15mL) low fat salad dressing	1 fat
	¾ cup (175mL) apple juice	1 fruit
Dinner	3 oz (90g) grilled lean beef tenderloin	1 meat
	1 cup (250mL) green snap beans, cooked from frozen, without salt	2 vegetable
	1 cup (250mL) steamed rice	2 grain
	1 tbsp (15mL) chives	
	1.5 cups (375mL) tossed salad with mixed greens	1.5 vegetable
	2 tbsp (30mL) olive oil-and-vinegar dressing	1 fat
	1 cup (250mL) low fat chocolate milk	1 dairy
Snack	¾ cup (175mL) orange juice	1 fruit
	1/3 cup (75mL) almonds, dried, blanched, without salt	1 nuts, seeds
	1/4 cup (60mL) raisins, seedless	1 fruit
	1 cup (250mL) yogurt, fat-free	1 dairy

* see recipe to the right



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This 1-day menu provides:

7 Grains
5 Vegetables
5 Fruit
3 Low fat dairy
2 Meat/Poultry
2 Fats

The Bottom Line....

1. Achieve and maintain a healthy weight.
2. Cut sodium to less than 2400 mg/day, preferably less than 1500 mg/day. When possible, read labels and choose brands with the lower amount of sodium.
3. Keep fit. Walk briskly, jog, swim, cycle or whatever aerobic exercise you like, for 30 - 45 minutes almost every day.
4. Limit your intake of alcohol to no more than 1 - 2 drinks/day for men and 1 drink/day for women.
1 drink = 1.5 oz spirits, 1 bottle or 12 oz beer, 5oz wine.
5. Eat a healthy diet — the DASH diet is rich in fruits and vegetables, low fat milk products, and fibre. It is lower in fats, sodium (salt) and cholesterol.
6. If you are a smoker, give quitting another try. Your doctor and Public Health Unit can help.

For more information, including recipes, menus and eating tips:

DASH Study, NHLBI Information Centre, PO Box 30105, Bethesda, Maryland 20824-0105, USA

website: www.dash.bwh.harvard.edu/

Sources:

[Nutrition Action Healthletter](#), October 1997

[Nutrition Action Healthletter](#), December 2000

ADA/CDA [Manual of Clinical Dietetics](#), 2000

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