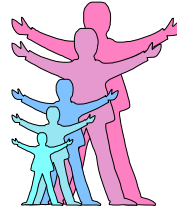


# Helpline



March 2009

## National Nutrition Month® 2009

National Nutrition Month® is a nutrition education and information campaign created annually in March by the American Dietetic Association (ADA). The campaign focuses attention on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits. National Nutrition Month® also promotes the ADA and its members to the public and media as the most valuable and credible source of timely, scientifically based food and nutrition information.



Initiated in March 1973 as a week-long event, “National Nutrition Week” became a month long observance in 1980 in response to growing public interest in nutrition.

The theme of this year’s campaign is “Eat Right.” The American Dietetic Association reminds consumers that eating right and being physically active are the keys to a healthy lifestyle and a healthier you.

## Nutrition Month Key Messages

### Eating Right Messages for Everyone

Eating right and staying fit are important no matter what your age. Help yourself to feel your best by making healthy food choices and being physically active every day.

Eating right doesn’t have to be complicated. Start with these recommendations from the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

### A healthy eating plan:

- Emphasizes fruit, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat or fat-free milk and milk products.
- Includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs and nuts.
- Is low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium) and added sugars.

**Make Your Calories Count.** Think nutrient-rich rather than “good” or “bad” foods. The majority of your food choices should be packed with vitamins, minerals, fiber and other nutrients—and lower in calories.

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Making smart food choices can help you stay healthy and manage your weight and be physically active.

**Focus on Variety.** Eat a variety of foods from all food groups to get the nutrients your body needs. Fruits and vegetables can be fresh, frozen or canned. Include more dark green vegetables such as leafy greens and broccoli, and orange vegetables like carrots and sweet potatoes. Vary your protein choices with more fish, beans and peas. Eat at least 3 ounces of whole grain cereals, breads, crackers, rice or pasta every day.

**Know Your Fats.** Look for foods low in saturated fats, trans fats and cholesterol to help reduce the risk of heart disease. Most of the fats you eat should be monosaturated and polyunsaturated fats. Check the Nutrition Facts panel on food labels for total fat and saturated fat.

**Physical Activity for Fitness and Health.** Balancing physical activity and a healthful diet is your best recipe for managing weight and promoting overall health and fitness. Set a goal to be physically active at least 30 minutes every day. You can break up your physical activity in 10 minute sessions throughout the day. If you are currently inactive start with a few minutes of activity such as walking, then gradually increase the minutes as you become stronger.

### Special Nutrient Needs for Older Adults

\* *Calcium and Vitamin D*—Older adults need more vitamin D and calcium to help maintain bone health. Include three servings of vitamin D-fortified, low-fat or fat-free milk and yogurt each day. Other calcium-rich foods are fortified cereals and juices, dark green leafy vegetables and canned fish with soft bones. If you take calcium supplement or multi-vitamin, choose one that contains vitamin D.



- \* *Vitamin B12*—Many people over 50 years old do not get enough vitamin B12. Fortified cereal, lean meat and some fish and seafood are sources of vitamin B12. Ask your doctor or dietitian if you need a B12 supplement.
- \* *Fiber*—Eat more fiber-rich foods to help stay regular. Fiber also can help lower risk for heart disease, control your weight and prevent type-2 diabetes. Choose whole grain breads and cereals and include more beans and peas. Fruits and vegetables also provide fiber.
- \* *Potassium*—Increasing your intake of potassium along with reducing sodium (salt) may lower your risk of high blood pressure. Fruits, vegetables and low-fat or fat-free milk and yogurt are good sources of potassium. Also, choose and prepare foods with little or no salt.

### Healthy Eating Habits for Kids

Healthy eating and physical activity don't become habits overnight. Parents can help children improve their eating habits by making healthy changes a part of the daily routine.



Make the most of family mealtime. Eating meals together provides the opportunity to help children develop a healthy attitude toward food. It also enables parents to serve as role models, introduce new foods and establish a regular meal schedule.

Active kids need planned, healthy snacks. Think of them as mini-meals that contribute nutrient-rich foods. Keep a variety of nutritious ready-to-eat fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy foods on hand.

Every child needs appropriate amounts of calories, protein, minerals and vitamins to grow.

**MyPyramid.gov** offers personalized eating plans for healthy adults and children over the age of two, and interactive tools to track food choices, stay active and eat right.

## Tips for a Healthy Heart

Eating well and being physically active are important for a healthy heart. Try these tips from the American Dietetic Association—your heart will thank you.



1. **Lighten up.** Losing even a few extra pounds helps unburden your heart.
2. **Be fat-savvy.** Trim saturated fat and cholesterol by choosing lean meats, skinless poultry and low-fat or fat-free milk products. Look for foods with little or no trans fat.
3. **Slash sodium.** Look for reduced-salt and no-added-salt versions of canned soups, vegetables and prepared foods. Add less salt to foods.
4. **Load up on produce.** Enjoy colorful fruits and vegetables—their fiber, vitamins and minerals are great for your heart and blood pressure.
5. **Go for whole grains.** Eat at least three ounces daily of whole-grain foods such as whole-grain cereals, whole-wheat bread and pasta, and brown rice.
6. **Get hooked on fish.** Eat omega-3 rich fish such as salmon, trout and herring at least twice a week.
7. **Go a little nuts.** Choose modest portions of foods with unsaturated fats such as vegetable oils, nuts and seeds.
8. **Focus on Fiber.** The fiber in oatmeal, barley, fruits, vegetables—and yes, beans—is good for your heart.
9. **Be label conscious.** The Nutrition Facts label can help you manage the calories, fiber, fat, cholesterol, sodium and other nutrients in the foods you eat.
10. **Move to the beat.** Get at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity each day. Time strapped? Do 10-minutes at a time. Try brisk walking, jogging, dancing, biking, gardening—even vacuuming with vigor!

## Lemony Lentil Salad with Salmon

Salmon and lentils are a familiar combo in French bistro cooking;



here they combine in a quick and easy salad. For the best presentation flake the salmon with a fork, then stir gently into the salad to keep it in chunks, not tiny bits.

Makes 6 servings, 1 cup each

Active Time: 30 minutes Total Time: 30 minutes

- 1/3 cup lemon juice
- 1/3 cup chopped fresh dill
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- Freshly ground pepper to taste
- 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 medium red bell pepper, seeded and diced
- 1 cup diced seedless cucumber
- 1/2 cup finely chopped red onion
- 2 15-ounce cans lentils, rinsed, or 3 cups cooked brown or green lentils (see Tip)
- 2 7-ounce cans salmon, drained and flaked, or 1 1/2 cups flaked cooked



Whisk lemon juice, dill, mustard, salt and pepper in a large bowl. Gradually whisk in oil. Add bell pepper, cucumber, onion, lentils and salmon; toss to coat. Refrigerate before serving.

**NUTRITION INFORMATION:** Per serving: 354 calories; 18 g fat (3 g sat, 12 g mono); 31 mg cholesterol; 25 g carbohydrate; 24 g protein; 9 g fiber; 194 mg sodium; 743 mg potassium.

Nutrition bonus: Vitamin C (80% daily value), Folate (49% dv), Selenium (40% dv), Iron (25% dv), Potassium (21% dv), Calcium (20% dv).

**TIP:** To cook lentils: Place in a saucepan, cover with water and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer and cook until just tender, about 20 minutes for green lentils and 30 minutes for brown. Drain and rinse under cold water.

Source: American Dietetic Association, Food & Health Communications

## Healthy Heart Quiz



Have you had your cholesterol checked lately? High blood cholesterol is one of the major risk factors for heart disease. Heart disease is the number one killer of women and men in the United States.

Take the quiz below to test your knowledge of heart-healthy eating. The answers and test results are on the next page.

### 1. Consuming too much saturated fat and cholesterol has which of the following effects on your cholesterol level?

- a) They may make it go up.
- b) They may make it go down.
- c) They won't have much effect.

### 2. Where is saturated fat found?

- a) Animal products including dairy foods, meat and lard
- b) Tropical oils including cocoa butter, palm oil and coconut oil
- c) Both a and b

### 3. Switching from whole milk to skim milk will save how many grams of saturated fat per 8-ounce glass?

- a) 4 grams
- b) 5 grams
- c) 8 grams



### 4. Which entrée contains the least artery-clogging saturated fat?

- a) 6 oz fried chicken breast
- b) 8-ounce slice roasted prime rib of beef
- c) 3-ounce tenderloin of beef, marinated and grilled

### 5. How will an increase in consumption of soluble fiber affect your cholesterol?

- a) It will make it go up.
- b) It will make it go down.
- c) It won't have much effect.

### 6. Where is soluble fiber found?

- a) Oranges, apples and pears
- b) Corn, barley and oats
- c) Beans and legumes
- d) Brussels sprouts, carrots and sweet potatoes
- e) All of the above



### 7. Eating more high-fiber, lowfat foods will help you lower your cholesterol. Which of the groups listed below fit this description?

- a) Whole plant foods such as whole grains, fruits, vegetables and beans/legumes.
- b) Lean animal products such as chicken, fish and egg whites.

### 8. The American Heart Association recommends two servings of this animal per week due to the fact that it contains heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids:

- a) chicken breast
- b) lean pork
- c) fish

### 9. Which of the following foods are high in dietary cholesterol?

- a) wheat crackers
- b) doughnut holes
- c) organ meats
- d) cereal



## What's Your Score?

### Answers:

- A** – Both saturated fat and cholesterol make your serum cholesterol levels rise. You should consume no more than 7% of your calories from saturated fat and no more than 200 mg of dietary cholesterol per day.
- C** – Both a and b
- B** – 5 grams. If you do not like skim milk, consider trying Skim Plus or fortified soymilk.
- C** – The 3 ounce portion of beef tenderloin has the least. The chicken does not win because it contains 8 grams of saturated fat. This is because it contains skin and is fried.
- B** – By increasing your soluble fiber, you can lower your cholesterol.
- E** – All of the above.
- A** – Unprocessed plant foods are high in fiber and low in fat. Try to eat more of these every day.
- C** – Fish – go for cold water fatty fish such as salmon, mackerel, herring, tuna, trout and sardines. Make sure it is prepared with a low-fat cooking method.
- C** – Organ meats. Egg yolks and squid (calamari) are also very high in cholesterol. Crackers and donuts may be high in trans-fat which raises cholesterol.

### How did you do?

- 1-3 right – Read a little more – see <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/>
- 4-6 right – You are getting there
- 7-9 right – Excellent job!



## Consumer News Corner Maximize Your Tax Return

(ARA) - There are two approaches to doing taxes. One is to wait until the last minute and rush through them, crossing your fingers that you don't owe the government an unexpectedly large chunk of money. Judging from the lines at post offices across the country at midnight on April 15, there are many, many people who take this approach.



Considering that a little advance planning can save you money and headaches, the second approach—being organized and taking control of your taxes—is a better way to go.

“It's also important to know that when taxes go unpaid, the IRS can place a lien on your assets. Unpaid tax liens can remain on your credit report for seven years from the date paid. Both have a negative impact on your credit score,” said Maxine Sweet, vice president of public credit reporting company.

Having time to pull together the information you need, analyze it and calculate your taxes means you won't be frantically scrambling to find your W-2 form the day before taxes are due. Starting early also gives you time to double check your tax return for any mathematical errors, and to make sure you've claimed all the deductions for which you qualify.

Tax laws and people's tax situations change from year to year, so you may be entitled to different deductions this year than last year. Major life changes often trigger a modification of deductions, or there may be deductions that you have missed in past years.

### Five Important Changes for Taxpayers

Here are a few tax law changes you may want to note before filing your 2008 federal tax return:

- Expiring Tax Breaks Renewed**  
The following popular tax breaks were renewed for tax-years 2008 and 2009:

- Deduction for state and local sales taxes on Form 1040 Schedule A, Line 5
- Educator expense deduction on Form 1040, Line 23 or Form 1040A, Line 16
- Tuition and fees deduction on Form 8917

In addition, the residential energy-efficient property credit is extended through 2016. In general, solar electric, solar water heating and fuel cell property qualify for this credit. Starting in 2008, small wind energy and geothermal heat pump property also qualify.

## 2. Standard Deduction Increased for Most Taxpayers

The 2008 basic standard deductions all increased. They are:

- \$10,900 for married couples filing a joint return and qualifying widows and widowers
- \$5,450 for singles and married individuals filing separate returns
- \$8,000 for heads of household

Beginning this year, taxpayers can claim an additional standard deduction based on the state or local real-estate taxes paid in 2008. Also new for 2008, a taxpayer can increase his standard deduction by the net disaster losses suffered from a federally declared disaster.

## 3. Contribution Limits Rise for IRAs and Other Retirement Plans

This filing season, more people can make tax-deductible contributions to a traditional IRA. The deduction is phased out for singles and heads of household who are covered by a workplace retirement plan and have modified adjusted gross incomes between \$53,000 and \$63,000. For married couples filing jointly, the income phase-out range is \$85,000 to \$105,000.

## 4. Standard Mileage Rates Adjusted for 2008

The standard mileage rates for business use of a vehicle:

- 50.5 cents per mile from Jan. 1 to June 30, 2008
- 58.5 cents per mile driven during the rest of 2008

The standard mileage rates for the cost of operating a vehicle for medical reasons or a deductible move:

- 19 cents per mile Jan. 1 to June 30, 2008
- 27 cents from July 1 to Dec. 31, 2008

The standard mileage rate for using a car to provide services to charitable organizations remains at 14 cents a mile. Special rates apply to the Midwest disaster area.

## 5. Kiddie Tax Revised

The tax on a child's investment income previously only applied to children younger than age 18. It now applies if the child has investment income greater than \$1,800 and is:

- Younger than 18
- 18 years of age and had earned income that was equal to or less than half of his or her total support in 2008
- Older than 18 and younger than 24, a student and during 2008 had earned income that was equal to or less than half of his or her total support.

Check with your financial advisor if you have questions, or you can get more information from the IRS website ([irs.gov](http://irs.gov)) or by calling 1-800-829-3676.

## The Earned Income Tax Credit

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) helps low income, working taxpayers get more money back when they file their federal income tax forms. A tax credit means that you will be eligible for a larger tax refund because it reduces the amount of money you may owe the federal government. If you are an eligible taxpayer with children, you can ask your employer to include advance EITC payments in your paycheck.

You must file a federal income tax return in order to claim the EITC—even if your income is so low that



you normally would not file a tax return. You can get a check back even if you don't owe any taxes.

The income guidelines are more generous for people who have dependent children, but very low income singles and married couples without children may also benefit. Foster parents and working grandparents who are raising their grandchildren also qualify. Even parents of babies born on the last day of the tax year can qualify if one or both parents were employed during the year and meet income guidelines.

EITC income guidelines are changed each year to keep pace with inflation and vary widely depending on whether you file as a parent, how many children you claim and whether you're single or married.

For the 2008 tax year, EITC credits can be as high as \$438 for childless taxpayers or up to \$4,824 for taxpayers with more than one child. You can spend your credit any way you want or put the money in a savings account.

To qualify for the EITC, you must have income from a job and your income must be at or below the required levels. (Child support does not need to be included when figuring your income.) Small business owners also qualify.

To claim the EITC, you must have a Social Security number (SSN) and be a U.S. citizen. You also are eligible if you are a "permanent resident," but only if you lived in the U.S. for the full tax year.

Your eligibility for the EITC depends on your "adjusted gross income" (AGI). If your income is about the same as in previous years, the easiest way to find your AGI is to look at last year's income tax return. The amount shown at the bottom of the first page of your return was your AGI. If you filed Form 1040EZ last year, your AGI can be found on Line 4, under the "Income" section.

Even if your salary last year was too high, you may qualify for the EITC this year if you have been laid off or if you have had your work hours cut back.

Taxpayers with "married filing separately" status or those who claim income from another country ("foreign income") can't claim the EITC.

If you have income from investments (such as stocks, mutual funds, bonds, etc.) of more than \$2,950, you are not eligible for the EITC.

### Guidelines for parents

If you are claiming the EITC because you have children, attach Schedule EIC to your tax return to provide SSNs and other information about them.



EITC income guidelines are changed each year to keep pace with inflation. The 2008 adjusted gross income ceilings for parents are:

- Single parent with one qualifying child: \$33,995. Couples with one child filing jointly: \$36,995. You are eligible for a credit of up to \$2,917.
- Single parent with two or more qualifying children: \$38,646. Couples with two or more children filing jointly: \$41,646. You are eligible for a credit of up to \$4,824.



### Do your children qualify?

Children being claimed for the EITC must be under 19, or, if they are full-time students, under 24. There is no age limit for permanently disabled dependents. The child must be your:

- √ Son, daughter, adopted child, stepchild or a grandchild.
- √ Brothers, sisters or eligible foster children, whether or not you care for them as you would your own child.
- √ Stepbrother, stepsister, niece or nephew whom you care for as you would your own child.

### Where to Apply for Food Stamps?

Apply for the state's food stamp program at [www.myflorida.com/accessflorida/](http://www.myflorida.com/accessflorida/)  
Call 866-762-2237.

Families who qualify must make less than:

Household	Gross Monthly Income
1 person	\$1,127
2 people	\$1,517
3 people	\$1,907

For each additional person, add \$390.

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**Mark your calendars for the 2009  
Miami International Agriculture & Cattle Show as  
it stampedes into town Friday, March 20 through  
Sunday, March 22, 2009**

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**Happy 100th Birthday to Florida 4-H**

The Miami-Dade 4-H Youth Program will be celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary at the Miami-Dade County Fair & Expo Center, 10901 Coral Way (SW 24 Street) in the Arnold Hall, on Saturday, March 28 at 12:30 p.m. To commemorate the event, there will be a fashion and talent show, public speaking presentations and more than 1,500 student exhibits on display. The exhibits include holiday and home decorations, creative writing samples, photos, sewn garments, baked goods and other arts and crafts.



A record number of 4-H members have signed up to participate in the 58<sup>th</sup> year of the Miami-Dade County Youth Fair, with a total of 225 students registered. During this year's fashion show, participants will receive special modeling instructions and hair-styling tips courtesy of a local modeling agency. 4-H participants will also showcase their sewing skills by creating different types of garments, such as sports wear and formal wear.

Participants are eligible to win ribbons in the different categories and as much as \$100 in prize money. In the past, "4-Hers" have used this money to help pay for 4-H summer camp and personal computers.

Over the last 100 years, the 4-H Youth Program in Miami has expanded its focus from agricultural education to include technology, marine science, healthy life-styles, and finance as it keeps pace with the changing needs of society. However, the 4-H program remains successful by providing the same fun, hands-on and "learn-by-doing" approach. Its club-setting fosters relationships with caring adult leaders and increases life skills in public speaking, leadership and citizenship. More than 9,000 4-H members, ages 5 through 18, are enrolled in Miami-Dade County.

- WHO:** Miami-Dade 4-H Youth Program  
**WHAT:** 4-H Centennial Anniversary / Youth Fair Student Exhibits  
**WHEN:** Saturday, March 28  
 12:30 p.m.  
**WHERE:** Miami-Dade County Fair & Expo Center  
 E. Darwin Fuchs Pavilion  
 10901 Coral Way (SW 24 Street)  
 Miami

4-H is a volunteer-led youth development program managed by Miami-Dade Cooperative Extension, a partnership of the Miami-Dade Consumer Services Department and the University of Florida. For more information on the 4-H program, visit <http://miami-dade.ifas.ufl.edu/4h>

Source: Press release by Sonya Perez, Miami-Dade Consumer Services Department

**Free 4-H Horse Show**



Miami-Dade County 4-H will host the South Florida, 10 County, horse show and competition on May 2 and 3rd at Tropical Park Equestrian Center,



7900 SW 40 Street, Bring your family out to enjoy this free entertaining and educational show.