With many predictions, suggestions and endless debate, the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans have finally been released, prompting further discussion and questioning from the public. This new and improved version of the document, released on January 31, 2011, made waves around the country, with content ranging from weight management to sodium intake.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans is a document released by both the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and edited and revised every 5 years, according to federal law. This process is intended to keep the health and nutrition priorities of Americans current, according to the issues effecting the population. With the understanding that “poor diet and physical inactivity are the most important factors contributing to an epidemic of overweight and obesity”, the focus of the newly released guidelines is two-fold:

1. Maintain calorie balance over time to achieve and sustain a healthy weight, and
2. Focus on consuming nutrient-dense foods and beverages.

The knowledge that about “15 percent of American households have been unable to acquire adequate food to meet their needs” was also taken into account when writing these major goals.

Diving further into the new guidelines, recommendations have been divided into four categories: “Balancing Calories to Manage Weight”, “Foods and Food Components to Reduce”, “Food and Nutrients to Increase”, and “Building Healthy Eating Patterns”. Take a look at the table on page 8 for highlights from each category.
After being bundled up indoors all winter, it’s now the time of year to take advantage of the warm temperatures approaching and use one of our most important and natural sources of vitamin D, the sun. Vitamin D helps our body absorb calcium, which is essential for our bones growth and maintenance. It helps put minerals, such as phosphorus, into our bones and teeth. It also plays a role in nerve, muscle, and immune systems function. A lack of vitamin D in our diet can lead to bone diseases, such as osteoporosis.

We get vitamin D from three sources: food, supplements, and sunlight. Your body will form vitamin D in the liver and kidneys naturally after exposure to sunlight. Although minimal sun exposure is needed for this to occur, the energy from the sun is not strong enough for the skin to make vitamin D during the coldest months in the northern half of the United States. Therefore, it is beneficial to utilize the most natural source during the winter and early spring. In warmer months, it is suggested that 10-15 minutes of direct sun on our face and arms between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. several times a week, without sunscreen, will be enough to maintain vitamin D nutrition. An SPF of 8 or higher can prevent vitamin D synthesis. Correctly applied sunscreen can reduce our ability to absorb vitamin D by more than 90 percent. A strategy to avoid this dilemma is to apply sunscreen after the suggested time has elapsed.

Darker-skinned people require longer sunlight exposure than light-skinned people, since the pigment of dark skin provides some protection from the sun’s damage. Heavily pigmented skin achieves the same amount of vitamin D in three hours as fair skin does in 30 minutes. For those people who are unable to go outdoors frequently, or who live in the northern half of the United States during the winter months, be sure to include good sources of vitamin D in their diets or take a supplement. The vitamin D stored from the summer alone are not sufficient to meet winter needs. Common sources of foods that provide vitamin D are: milk, orange juice, fatty fish, sardines, fortified cereals, and egg yolk. Some factors such as geographical location, time of day, air pollution, tall buildings, season of the year, and clothing may limit sun exposure and vitamin D production.

During the winters months, be sure to incorporate outdoor winter activities into your day such as walking, skiing, sledding, skating or building a snowman. Canoeing, hiking, and swimming are just some of the fun warm weather activities that can be included into your family’s lifestyle to provide a solid source of vitamin D. So whether it is relaxing on the beach or a 15-minute walk during your lunch break, it can be effortless to ensure that you are providing your body with an essential nutrient needed for good health.
**Eight MORE Apps for Today’s Tech Savvy Families**

Joanne Kinsey M.S., CFCS, *Family & Community Health Sciences Educator, Atlantic & Ocean Counties*

Apps, short for software applications, have become popular for today’s users of cell phones and other hand-held Internet devices. Although there are literally thousands of Apps available, the field can be narrowed to the tools most useful to you!

The contemporary consumer seeks shortcut tools that are simple and provide quick fixes. Users look for a wide range of tools that provide instant reference, ways of connecting through social networks and news sites, link to comparison-shopping venues, and first aid/CPR demonstrations. Please note: the food and medical apps listed here are for general reference purposes and does not substitute for advice provided by a dietitian, physician, pharmacist, or other licensed health care professional.

The apps mentioned in this article are free of cost or include a minimal, one-time cost ($ .99). Below you will find useful apps worthy of your review:

**Hands-Only CPR** – A free App, provided by the American Heart Association, that includes video demonstrations of the hands-only CPR technique and a timing meter designed to help the user maintain the correct pace for successful CPR.

**MyJanitor** – Have you ever wondered how to effectively treat a stain on carpet, upholstery, wood surfaces, or clothing? This incredibly useful free app provides detailed steps to treating stain or spills on most surfaces, including on devices such as keyboards, camera lens, laptop computers, scanners, LCD monitors, CD/DVDs, car interiors/exteriors.

**ShopShop** – This free App makes grocery shopping, especially creating the shopping list and remembering where you placed it, easy and at fingertips. Create your shopping list on the App, save it there for your convenience, or email it to or a family member.

**Fooducate** – Can you imagine an App that scans a food label and immediately provides a rating of the food’s healthfulness in terms of fiber, nutrients, sugar and high-fructose corn syrup, and sodium level? The site also includes information on the amount of processing the food has undergone.

**Shop to Lose: Weight, etc** – When considering the family menu for the day or week, this free App allows the user to tap in a food, locate the brand, and provides the nutrition fact label for that food. If you are a label-reader, this app will save time when grocery shopping by allowing you to do the label comparisons on your cell phone or iPad.

**WebMD** – This App features information on first aid treatments, drugs and treatments, and conditions. There is also a local health listing locator based on the users current location. The app is a guide, and not intended to replace medical care.

**eHow** – For a minimal cost of $ .99, this App provides step-by-step information on how to do most anything. The user can locate directions on how to do household chores, repair or clean an item, deal with personal finances, or investigate issues about personal health.

**Serving Sizer** – If you like to cook, this App (costs $ .99) will assist you when trying to calculate a change in the size of a recipe. It can be most helpful when doubling, tripling, or halving a favorite recipe. Simply type in the original amount of an ingredient and the tool calculates the change in measurement instantly.

Bear in mind that Apps are continually being developed and improved. Once downloaded, most App’s offer updates as they become available. It is advised that you update Apps to be afforded the most current version. Searching for Apps is interesting and fun for the family. Take time to review Apps, try using them if possible, check with friends and colleagues to see which Apps they prefer, and always read the reviews of other users. Apps can provide instant reference and useful shortcuts for consumers in a variety of situations.
Power outages are unexpected and stressful events that happen to everyone at some point. Finding furniture with your shins, finding batteries for dead flashlights, and what to do with refrigerated food, are always a source of aggravation, to say nothing of cleaning of the fridge when food spoils. Every household should have a procedure in place for food during a power outage. A power outage can be a pain (shins included), but always remember to practice food safety!

**Why is fridge safety important and how many bacteria could be in my fridge?**

According to a Tennessee State University study, more than 50% of home refrigerators have more than 1000 bacteria per cm². A University of Ulster study determined that 6% of home refrigerators contain Staphylococcus aureus, and E. coli can be found in roughly 1% of refrigerators.

**But don’t bacteria die or stop multiplying in cold temperatures?**

Bacteria do not die in home refrigerators/freezers. Some pathogens, like Listeria, can even grow at refrigeration temperatures. Some microorganisms can also survive freezing temperatures. Most often cold temperatures will only stall a microorganism’s growth.

**When my power goes out what do I do?**

According to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), a closed, well-stocked freezer will hold its frozen temperature for 48 hrs. It’s a different story with refrigerators. If the door is closed, the typical home fridge will only hold its temperature for about four hours. If your power goes out, try to keep both fridge and freezer doors closed as much as possible. If you think the power outage will last longer than 4 hours, you can use a cooler filled with ice to keep refrigerated food cold. Any food that is exposed to temperatures greater than 40ºF for more than two hours should be discarded. Foods that have been out of temperature control for only two hours are still safe to eat, but be sure to follow proper cooking procedures. Remember that restocking your fridge might be expensive, but it is still cheaper than a medical bill. On a positive note, many power companies, homeowners/renters insurance, and building management companies may cover the loss of your food. Be sure to give your fridge a good cleaning after the power comes back on.

**Is there food I should be especially careful about after a power outage?**

Raw meats should be cooked to at least 160 ºF (use a meat thermometer). Reheat all leftovers to 165ºF. As a general rule, if in doubt, throw it out.

*Be smart, be safe, and be healthy!*
You may not even realize it, but in the winter, your eyes are just as vulnerable to damage caused by the sun as they are in the summer. Preventing eye damage all year round is important to slow the progression of diseases such as macular degeneration and cataracts.

In the winter, approximately eighty percent of the UV rays from sunlight are reflected by snow. The risk of macular degeneration, the leading cause of blindness in individuals over the age of sixty-five, is increased with UV exposure. Over time, increased UV exposure to the eyes can contribute to the development of cataracts, macular degeneration, and even cancer of the eyelids and skin around the eyes.

Macular degeneration is a condition in which damage to the macula, part of the retina, results in distorted vision. To individuals with macular degeneration, objects look blurry and colors look faded. Other risk factors for macular degeneration include heredity, Caucasian race, cigarette smoking, female gender, obesity, and a high-fat diet.

Wearing sunglasses is an effective method for protecting your eyes year round. Eye exams are also essential for screening for disease and assessing eye health. The American Academy of Ophthalmology recommends that adults receive a baseline eye disease screening at age 40. Based on the results, the ophthalmologist will advise on when to return for follow-up exams. Nutrition is also effective in protecting your eyesight, particularly in lowering the risk of macular degeneration.

A well-balanced diet, particularly one that is rich in green leafy vegetables, nuts, fish, and low in starchy carbohydrates, has been shown to decrease the risk for macular degeneration. Current research has shown that vitamins C and E, zinc, lutein, zeaxanthin, and omega-3 fatty acids, found in increased amounts in the foods mentioned, can lower the risk of macular degeneration.

**Foods Rich in These Nutrients:**
- **Vitamin C:** Citrus fruits
- **Vitamin E:** Green leafy vegetables, nuts, and vegetable oils
- **Zinc:** Beans, nuts, seafood, and whole grains
- **Lutein and Zeaxanthin:** Eggs, spinach, broccoli, and brussel sprouts
- **Omega-3 fatty acids:** Salmon and fatty fish

If you do not frequently consume these foods already, you should consider adding these to your diet. In addition, diet and other lifestyle changes can make a significant difference in the health of your eyes. Maintaining your weight within a healthy range (BMI - 25) and stopping smoking are two ways in which you can significantly decrease the risk of damage to your eyes. Lifestyle changes are important and can help in slowing down the progression of vision loss and eye damage. Although your vision may change as you age, vision loss is not a normal part of aging and can be prevented!

**For More information:**


References:
For the past five years, the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Small Steps to Health and Wealth™ (SSHW) program has encouraged participants to take action to simultaneously improve their health and personal finances. In addition, SSHW provides information and conducts research about associations between individuals’ health status and financial well-being. Below are some recent research findings that indicate how both aspects of a person’s life—health and personal finances—are strongly related:

- **Two-thirds of Americans are either overweight or obese.** A per-person financial cost of obesity can be calculated that includes items such as sick days, reduced productivity, and extra costs for clothing, disability and life insurance, and even gasoline. A 2010 report pegged the annual cost of being obese at $4,879 for women and $2,646 for men. The difference between genders of the impact of obesity was largely due to differences in wages between obese and non-obese women.

- **Overweight and obesity have been shown to be associated with lower earnings in a number of studies, particularly for women in professional occupations.** One study found that a 1% increase in a woman’s body mass index (BMI) results in a 0.6% decrease in her family income. In this study and others, men experienced no negative effects of BMI on economic outcomes. In other words, wages didn’t differ for obese men versus slender ones. Specific impacts related to weight include lost job opportunities and promotions, increased absenteeism, reduced productivity, and workplace stigmatization and harassment.

- **Workplace wellness and disease prevention programs produce positive results.** One review of literature found that medical costs could fall by more than $3 and absenteeism costs more than $2 for every dollar spent on employee wellness programs. Improved employee retention was another reported positive outcome.

- **A sick economy can make people healthier.** A North Carolina economist found that, during tough economic times, such as the 2007 to 2009 “Great Recession,” the healthy living habits of Americans actually improve. Similar results have been found in studies conducted overseas. In the U.S. study, a 1% rise in the unemployment rate reduced the death rate by 0.5%. The most important reason for this decline was that people improved their health habits because they had additional free time to exercise and sleep. Fewer auto accidents due to reduced driving time were not a major contributing factor. Conversely, a 2004 study found a 3% increase in obesity rates for every 30 minutes of time spent commuting to work.

- **Increased health care costs often result in negative financial outcomes.** According to the 2010 Health Confidence Survey, as a reaction to increased health care costs, 31% of respondents decreased retirement (e.g., 401(k) plan) savings, 55% decreased other types of savings, and 24% increased credit card debt.

- **Counter to what many people might think, healthy people, on average, face higher health costs over their lifetime than those with poor health habits.** This is why financial planners, whose clients often have above-average incomes and health care resources, generally run life expectancy calculations to age 95 or 100. There are three main reasons for this seemingly counterintuitive finding that healthy people spend more money on health care:
  1. They live longer and will incur expenses over more years (e.g., age 93 versus 73),
  2. They are likely to eventually succumb to a chronic disease (e.g., diabetes) at an advanced age, and
  3. They have a higher lifetime risk of needing expensive long-term care.
Get organized

Carol Byrd-Bredbenner, PhD, RD, FADA, Nutrition Extension Specialist

Hey busy moms and dads...do you wish family meals were healthier? faster to prepare? less hectic? If so, the Shaping Jersey Kitchens series is for you! It will help you quickly, simply, and inexpensively "makeover" your kitchen so you can serve healthy meals easily and effortlessly.

The first step is to get organized! Speed your work and reduce frustration by making it easier to find and access kitchen equipment and supplies. Well-organized kitchens have these "zones".

✓ Planning and Message Zone: space for writing menus, shopping lists, and messages
✓ Food Storage Zone: refrigerator/freezer, cabinets/pantry, and counter for unpacking groceries
✓ Food Preparation Zone: sink, counter for preparing food, storage space for food preparation equipment (salad spinner, measuring cups, mixer), and supplies for storing food (containers, foil, plastic wrap)
✓ Cooking and Serving Zone: cooktop, ovens, storage space for cooking and serving equipment (pans, potholders, spatulas, serving bowls), and counters to set ingredients, hot pans, and serving dishes to be filled
✓ Clean-up Zone: sink, dishwasher, counter for stacking dirty dishes, and storage space for cleaning supplies
✓ Eating Zone: counter or table in the kitchen or another room

Zones can overlap. For instance, food preparation and clean-up zones share the sink. The same counter may be used for planning and preparation.

Zones can work in kitchens of all sizes—even small ones!

Take Action: Make Zones Work for You
1. Take a good look at your kitchen.
2. Identify the equipment (small appliances, tools), major appliances, counter, and storage space for each zone.
3. Pick a zone that needs the most attention and analyze your situation.

Q. Is everything related to the zone’s activities located close together?
A. If not, think about how you can adjust things. You probably cannot move major appliances, but you could rearrange storage space so that the closest space matches the zone’s activities and clears the counters of clutter.

Q. Does the zone overflow into another zone?
A. If a zone has "no vacancy", ask yourself:
   • Is everything in the zone directly related to its activities?
   • Is everything stored there used often?
   • Can you quickly find all of the zone’s appliances and equipment? Can you easily reach it?

If you answered "no" to any question, it’s time to weed out unneeded equipment and supplies and rearrange what remains.

If you are still short on space, consider
• Using rolling carts or storage bins to move equipment into a zone when you need it and out when you don’t!
• Adding tiered or expanding shelves to reclaim underutilized vertical space in cabinets.
• Hanging storage racks on the back of doors.
• De-cluttering the sink by hanging a towel rack inside a cabinet, adding a pump soap dispenser, and and corralling sponges in a recycled plastic tub.
• Moving seldom used items (bread machine, mixers) off the counter to a closet or basement shelf.
• Claiming space under the wall cabinets--hang paper towel rack, magnetic knife holder, spice rack, can opener, microwave oven, mugs, and wine glasses under them.
• Taking a look at your ceiling. Could you hang a pot rack? Think of all the cabinet space you’ll save!
• Adding drawer dividers to tame jumbled drawers.

If you aren’t familiar with the many types of organizational items, take a walk through the nearest kitchen store, office supply, or home improvement center.

Set some goals
What are the top 3 organizational changes that would most benefit your kitchen? What supplies do you need to make the changes? What strategies will you use to overcome barriers to shaping up your kitchen? Resolve to spend 10 minutes a day to reach your goals. Then, enjoy the benefits of the improvements.

Make it easy for your family to help you keep the kitchen organized—label shelves and drawers to indicate where items should be stored.

Find Organizational Items At:
Free: Shoe boxes or other containers you have
$: Dollar stores, Garage sales
$$: Discount retailers
$$$: Kitchen or Office, Home Improvement stores
### Key Recommendations

| Balancing Calories to Manage Weight | • Control total calories to manage body weight.  
|                                   | • Maintain appropriate calorie balance during each stage of life. |
| Foods and Food Components to Reduce | • Reduce daily sodium intake to less than 2,300mg and further reduce intake to 1,500mg among persons who are 51 and older, and those of any age who are African American or have hypertension, Diabetes, or Chronic Kidney Disease  
|                                   | • Limit the intake of refined carbohydrates.  
|                                   | • Keep trans-fat intake as low as possible, best if none included in the diet.  
|                                   | • Reduce the intake of solid fat and added sugars. |
| Food and Nutrients to Increase | • Increase fruit and vegetable intake.  
| | • Especially focus on dark green, orange and red fruits and vegetables.  
| | • Increase intake of fat-free or low-fat milk, cheese, and yogurt.  
| | • Make half of all your grains whole grain.  
| | • Choose a variety of lean protein foods.  
| | • Replace solid fats with oils |
| Building Healthy Eating Patterns | • Fit each food into the diet to meet, not exceed, the appropriate calorie level for each stage of life. |

With a focus on eating fewer calories, making informed choices and increasing physical activity, the USDA and HHS have emphasized one common point: Americans need to achieve a healthy weight in order to improve their general health.

Reference: