

OLDWAYS
AFRICAN HERITAGE DIET
**GOODNESS REDISCOVERED THROUGH THE HEALTHY AND DELICIOUS CULTURAL
EATING TRADITIONS OF AFRICAN ANCESTRY.**

The African Heritage Diet is a way of eating based on the healthy food traditions of people with African roots. This healthy way of eating is powerfully nutritious and delicious and naturally meets the guidelines that health professionals promote today.

Good health is not just about food.

Good Health = healthy eating + healthy living. Healthy living doesn't mean joining a gym. Rather, find simple and fun ways to fit physical activity in every day—a walk alone or with family, gardening, or dancing.

Consider adding creativity to your life through art and music, writing, cooking, or other fulfilling hobbies. Family meals and family time, plus community activities add to well-being. Also, get plenty of sleep every night.

In other words, activate your body, mind, and heart each day to keep your body working at its best.

10 STEPS FOR YOUR HEALTH THROUGH HERITAGE

1. Make Vegetables the Star of Your Plate. Steamed, sauteed, roasted, grilled, or raw, enjoy veggies like okra, cabbage, green beans, or eggplant in larger portions than the other parts of your meal.
2. Change the Way You Think About Meat. Use lean, healthy meats in smaller amounts for flavor, or try some meat-free meals. With the zesty flavors of African heritage, you may not even notice the meat's not there. There are plenty of vegetarian recipes and a guide to help you on OldwaysPT.org.
3. Boost Flavor with Spice. Curries, peppers, coconut, fresh herbs, garlic, onions, fresh lemon, and all spices are low sodium ways to add incredible flavors to grains, beans, vegetables, and seafood.
4. Make Rice & Beans Your New Staple. Fiber-filled rice and beans are favorites all over the world. Add African heritage whole grains like millet, sorghum, and teff to your soups, or partner them with peas.

5. Mashes & Medleys. Bake or boil sweet potatoes, yams, and potatoes, or mash them with eggplants, beans, grains, onions, and seasonings. One-pot cooking lets flavors sing together! Let okra, corn, and tomatoes collide in a “mix up”, or add extra color and flavor to your greens with purple cabbage and leeks.
6. Jazz Up Fruits for Dessert. Fresh or frozen fruits like melons, peaches, berries, and mangoes—plain or sprinkled with chopped nuts or coconut—add a sweet taste at the end of a meal.
7. Drink to Your Health. A splash of flavor can make water your go to drink. As a refreshing alternative to soda and other sugary drinks, add crushed fruits or small amounts of 100% juice to water or sparkling water to make refreshing “-Ades” (like lemonade). Or garnish unsweetened iced tea with fruit.
8. Make Room for Celebration Foods. We all have special foods that have always been in our families. Some of these foods may fall outside the guidelines of the African Heritage Diet pyramid. Save these foods of meaning and memory for special occasions and enjoy them wholeheartedly then.
9. Family Support & Food Fellowship. Food is meant to be shared, and so is good health. Think of your dinner table as a “healing table”, a place where people come to share beautiful, fresh foods and reinforce a long, happy, and healthy life.
10. Find Real Foods Everywhere. At a corner store, buy peanuts or fruit; at a lunch buffet, load your plate with salad, veggies, fruit, and beans. Look to African heritage whole foods, in their natural state, to crowd out processed and packaged “convenience foods.”

AFRICAN HERITAGE DIET PYRAMID

The African Heritage Diet pyramid is a visual guide to the healthy traditional diets of African American ancestors. Base your meals mostly on a variety of foods closest to the bottom of the pyramid.

- Greens like spinach, collards, mustards, and turnip greens are a big part of African heritage cuisine. Cook them lightly to retain more of their extraordinary nutrients.
- Every day, enjoy vegetables, fruits, whole grains and cereals, beans, herbs and spices, peanuts, and nuts, and healthy tubers like sweet potatoes. These are the core African heritage foods to shop for, prepare, and eat most often.
- Tuna, mackerel, sardines, and salmon are rich in heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids. Enjoy grilled, broiled, or lightly pan-cooked in water and a small amount of oil.

- Replace lard, butter, and margarine with healthy oils like olive oil, canola oil, sesame oil, or extra-virgin coconut oil in moderation.
- Eat eggs, poultry, and other meats in small portions, or use them on dishes as garnishes.
- Consume dairy in small portions. If you are lactose intolerant, enjoy calcium containing foods like greens, beans, and almonds.
- Limit sweets to once a week or special meals.
- Drink plenty of water throughout the day. If you drink alcohol, stop at one drink per day for women, two drinks for men.

HEALTH THROUGH HERITAGE

The chronic diseases we know today, like diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and obesity, were much less common in earlier times when people ate traditional diets.

The African Heritage Diet pyramid is based on scientific research that show eating traditional diets, more like your ancestors, can help you:

- Lower your risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, and stroke
- Avoid or help treat diabetes
- Achieve a healthy weight and avoid obesity
- Improve digestive health
- Reduce risk factors for colon cancer

For detailed recipes and additional resources on the African Heritage Diet, visit OldwaysPT.org

Rediscover goodness

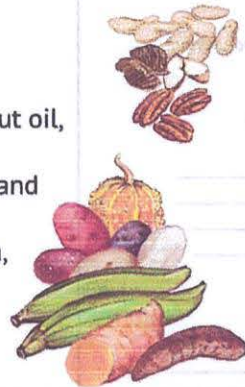
OLDWAYS

Setting up Your AFRICAN HERITAGE DIET KITCHEN

Give your kitchen a healthy uplift by adding delicious staples of the African Heritage Diet. It's not necessary to have everything on this list. Use it to help you keep a variety of items on hand so you can always make a healthy meal.

In the Pantry

- ✓ **Beans (low-sodium canned or dried):** Black-eyed peas, kidney beans, pigeon peas, fava or broad beans, butter beans, black beans, chickpeas, and lentils
- ✓ **Whole Grains & Flour:** Barley, millet, oats, sorghum, brown rice, wild rice, cornmeal, teff, and whole-grain flours
- ✓ **Breads:** Flatbreads—Injera (Ethiopia/Eritrea), and other breads (mostly whole grain)
- ✓ **Light Coconut Milk** (canned)
- ✓ **Canned Seafood:** Dried shrimp, saltfish, anchovies, clams, salmon, sardines, and tuna
- ✓ **Cereals:** Oatmeal, plus other hot or cold cereals using rice, Kamut®, corn, and other whole grains. The best choices list the first ingredient as “whole grain.”
- ✓ **Preserves & Pickles:** Jams and pickled fruits, like mango, and vegetables, like okra and chow chow.
- ✓ **Garlic & Onions:** Keep a garlic bulb or two within easy reach. Red, yellow, and Vidalia onions keep best in a cool, dark pantry.
- ✓ **Coffee and Teas** (for iced or hot): Sorrel (Hibiscus), Moringa Tea, Bay Leaf Tea, Rooibos
- ✓ **Herbs & Spices:** Berbere, cinnamon, cloves, coriander, crushed red pepper, cumin, curry powder, dill, garlic powder, ginger, harissa, oregano, paprika, rosemary, saffron, sage, thyme, turmeric, dried peppers, or blends like Caribbean seasonings.
- ✓ **Low-Sodium Soups & Stocks:** Lentil, Vegetable, Red Bean and Rice, Gumbo, Mafé (Groundnut) Soup
- ✓ **Nuts:** Peanuts, cashews, pecans, brazil nuts, almonds
- ✓ **Honey, Molasses, and/or Brown Sugar**
- ✓ **Oil:** Red palm oil, extra-virgin olive oil, sesame oil, peanut oil, and coconut oil
- ✓ **Pastas:** Whole wheat couscous and pastas; rice, quinoa, and corn pastas and macaroni.
- ✓ **Tubers & Plantains:** Sweet potatoes, yams, yuca, cassava, breadfruit, potatoes
- ✓ **Seeds:** Sesame, pumpkin, sunflower seeds
- ✓ **Tomatoes:** Canned, paste, sauce



In The Refrigerator

- Certain Fruits**
(berries, watermelon)
- Condiments: Hot sauce and Salsas** (e.g., peri peri)
- Hummus • Pickles**
- Eggs • Cheese**
- Vegetables**
(cooking greens & salad greens)
- Fresh Herbs**
- Natural Peanut or Almond Butter**
- Fresh Seafood**
- Yogurt • Milk**
(nut, soy, rice or lactose-free milk are available alternatives)
- Water, Sparkling Water and Iced Tea** (unsweetend)
- Leftovers!**

In The Freezer

- Frozen Fruit**
- Frozen Poultry**
- Frozen Seafood**
- Frozen Beans & Peas**
- Frozen Vegetables**

On the Counter or Kitchen Table

- ✓ **Fresh Fruit:** Select favorites from the African Heritage fruit list, including: avocados, apricots, cherries, grapefruit, lemons, limes, oranges, melons, bananas, mangos, apples, peaches, or papayas. These fruits keep best at room temperature.



- ✓ **Squashes & Tomatoes:** Squashes (such as butternut squash and pumpkin) are healthy and filling, and best stored at room temperature, as are tomatoes.

Setting up Your AFRICAN HERITAGE DIET KITCHEN

African Heritage Diet Grocery List

Grains

Choose mostly whole grains. These contain the word "whole" as the first ingredient. Ex: "whole wheat." Some products also have the Whole Grain Stamp on their packages.

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Couscous | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rice and Wild Rice | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Millet | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain Grits | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oats or Oatmeal | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Barley | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Whole Wheat Flour | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Whole Wheat Bread | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teff (grain or flour) | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sorghum | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Whole Cornmeal | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |

Seafood

Salmon and other oily fish contain healthy Omega-3s. White fish is a great lean protein.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Red Snapper | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Catfish | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cod | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scallops | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clams | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tilapia | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tuna | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Salmon | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sardines | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |

Healthy Oils, Vinegars and Sauce Bases

Store oils in a cool, dark place to make them last longer.

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Olive Oil (Extra-Virgin) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Apple Cider Vinegar |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canola Oil | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other Favorite Vinegars |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unrefined Red Palm Oil | <input type="checkbox"/> | Light Coconut Milk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coconut Oil (Extra Virgin) | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sesame Oil | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |

Herbs and Spices

Fresh and dried herbs and spices are a great way to add flavor without adding fat or salt.

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cilantro | <input type="checkbox"/> | Coriander |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parsley | <input type="checkbox"/> | Dried Peppers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mint | <input type="checkbox"/> | Cumin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ginger | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dill | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cayenne Pepper | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cinnamon | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |

Beans

Beans are a great way to add fiber and protein to meal.

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black-eyed Peas | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Butter Beans | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black Beans | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kidney Beans | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fava Beans (Broad Beans) | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lima Beans | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chickpeas (Garbanzos) | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pigeon Peas | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |

Eggs, Dairy & Meats

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low-fat Milk (or Milk Alternatives) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Chicken & Poultry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yogurt | <input type="checkbox"/> | Fresh Lean Meats |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eggs | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tofu | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |

African Heritage Diet Grocery List

Nuts and Seeds

Both are a great source of protein, fiber, and healthy fats.

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peanuts | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Almonds | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cashews | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brazil Nuts | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunflower Seeds | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pumpkin Seeds | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Peanut Butter | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |

Fruits

Fresh fruits are important for weight control and good health. Frozen fruit and canned varieties without added sugars are also good choices.

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peaches | <input type="checkbox"/> | Dates |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cherries | <input type="checkbox"/> | Avocado |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blackberries | <input type="checkbox"/> | Grapefruit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oranges | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Watermelon | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blueberries | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mangoes | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bananas | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Papaya | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pineapples | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lemons & Limes | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |

Vegetables & Tubers

Fresh veggies are important for weight control and good health. Frozen and low-sodium canned veggies are also good choices.

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tomatoes (fresh, canned, pastes) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Cassava |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Okra | <input type="checkbox"/> | Potatoes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cabbage (Green or Purple) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sweet Potatoes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Red / Green Bell Peppers | <input type="checkbox"/> | Pumpkin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Green Beans | <input type="checkbox"/> | Plantains |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eggplant | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Broccoli | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beets | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Radishes | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brussels Sprouts | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Zucchini | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Squash | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carrots | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Onions (yellow, red or Vidalia) | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Garlic | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |

Leafy Greens

Greens are a staple food of African Heritage. Choose from a wide variety and experiment with ways of preparing them. Cook them lightly to retain all of their valuable nutrition.

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Collard Greens | <input type="checkbox"/> | Lettuce |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mustard Greens | <input type="checkbox"/> | Watercress |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spinach | <input type="checkbox"/> | Dandelion Greens |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kale | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beet Greens | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Turnip Greens | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |

Miscellaneous

Including other pantry essentials and home goods like cleaning supplies so you don't forget!

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low-Sodium Soups | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sea Salt | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tea | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coffee | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hummus | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low-Sodium Pickles | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |

Common Foods & Flavors of the **AFRICAN HERITAGE DIET**

••• eat most often

•• eat moderately

• eat less often

Vegetables •••

artichoke, asparagus, avocado, beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, corn, cucumber, eggplant, garlic, green beans, jicama (yam bean), mushrooms, okra, onions, peppers, pumpkin, shallot, squash, tomato, zucchini

Beans •••

black-eyed peas (cowpeas), chickpeas, fava (broad) beans, kidney beans, lima (butter) beans, lentils, pigeon peas

Herbs, Spices, & Sauce Ingredients •••

allspice, apple cider vinegar, basil, bay leaf, berbere, cinnamon, cilantro, cloves, coconut milk, coriander, cumin, curry, dill, ginger, harissa, mint, mustard, oregano, paprika, parsley, peppers, ras el hanout, sage, sesame, thyme, turmeric

Poultry, Eggs, & Meat ••

chicken, chicken eggs, beef, lamb, turkey

Fruits •••

ackee, apple, apricot, banana, baobab, blackberries, blueberries, cantaloupe, cherries, dates, figs, grapefruit, grapes, guava, honeydew, kiwi, lemon, lime, mango, orange, papaya, peach, pear, pineapple, plum, pomegranate, raisins, watermelon

Starches & Whole Grains •••

amaranth, barley, cornmeal, couscous, fonio, injera, Kamut®, millet, oats, quinoa, rice, sorghum, teff, wild rice

Fish & Seafood ••

bream (porgy), catfish, cod, crappie, crayfish, dried fish, mackerel, mussels, oysters, perch, prawns, rainbow trout, salmon, sardines, shrimp, tuna

Oils ••

coconut oil, olive oil, palm oil, peanut oil, sesame oil, shea butter

Leafy Greens •••

beet greens, callaloo, chard, collard greens, dandelion greens, kale, mustard greens, spinach, taro greens, turnip greens, watercress

Tubers •••

breadfruit, cassava (yuca), plantains, potatoes, sweet potatoes, taro (dasheen), yams

Nuts & Seeds •••

almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, coconuts, flax seeds, groundnuts, peanuts, pecans, pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds, sunflower seeds, walnuts

Dairy ••

buttermilk, milk, yogurt
non-lactose: almond milk, rice milk, soy milk

Sweets •

cakes, custards, cobblers, and pies made with fruits, nuts, whole grains, and minimal sugars

AFRICAN HERITAGE DIET PYRAMID



Nourish Your Mind, Body, and Soul
Be Physically Active and Enjoy Meals with Others

Use Herbs and Spices Instead of Salt



Eating less salt and sodium can help protect your heart. Try these herbs and spices instead of salt to season your food. Start with small amounts to see if you like them.

Allspice: for meats, fish, poultry, soups, stews, and desserts

Anise: for breads, snacks, soups, stews, vegetables, meats, and poultry

Annatto Seeds: for vegetables, meats, poultry, and rice

Basil: for soups, salads, vegetables, fish, and meats

Bay Leaf: for soups, stews, meats, poultry, seafood, and sauces

Cayenne Pepper: for meats, poultry, stews, and sauces

Celery Seed: for fish, salads, dressings, and vegetables

Chili Powder/Chile Pequeño: for meats, poultry, vegetables, fish, and stews

Cilantro: for meats, sauces, stews, and rice

Cinnamon: for salads, vegetables, breads, and snacks

Clove: for soups, salads, and vegetables.

Cumin: for meats and poultry

Curry Powder: for meats, shellfish, and vegetables

Dill Weed and Dill Seed: for fish, soups, salads, and vegetables

Garlic: for soups, stews, salads, vegetables, meats, poultry, seafood, and sauces

Garlic Powder: for meats, poultry, fish, vegetables, salads, soups, and stews

Ginger: for soups, salads, vegetables, and meats

Lemongrass: for soups, stews, meats, poultry, seafood, and sauces

Marjoram: for soups, salads, vegetables, beef, fish, and poultry

Nutmeg: for vegetables and meats

Onion Powder/Green Onion: for meats, poultry, soups, and salads

Oregano: for soups, salads, vegetables, meats, and poultry

Paprika: for meats, fish, poultry, and vegetables

Parsley: for salads, vegetables, fish, and meats

Rosemary: for salads, vegetables, fish, and meats

Saffron: for breads, snacks, soups, stews, poultry, seafood, sauces, and rice

Sage: for soups, salads, vegetables, meats, and poultry

Tamarind: for soups, poultry, sauces, and rice

Thyme: for salads, vegetables, fish, and poultry

Vinegar: for soups, salads, vegetables, meats, and poultry

Find more tips to help you reduce salt and sodium see www.nhlbi.nih.gov/resources/tips-reduce-salt-sodium.



Tips To Reduce Salt and Sodium

Studies have found that the DASH eating plan can lower blood pressure in as fast as 2 weeks. Eating less sodium creates even bigger heart healthy benefits.



zucchini

Swiss cheese

bread

Eat your veggies.

Choose plain fresh, frozen, or canned (low-sodium or no-salt-added) vegetables and season them yourself.

Fresh is best.

Choose fresh or frozen skinless poultry, fish, and lean cuts of meat rather than those that are marinated, canned, smoked, brined, or cured.

Go "low or no."

Check the Nutrition Facts labels to compare sodium levels in foods. Choose low- or reduced-sodium, or no-salt-added versions of foods.

Pay attention to preparation.

Limit cured foods (such as bacon and ham); foods packed in brine (such as pickles, pickled vegetables, olives, and sauerkraut); and condiments (such as mustard, horseradish, ketchup, and barbecue sauce). Limit even lower sodium versions of soy sauce and teriyaki sauce, which should be used as sparingly as table salt.

Subtract, don't add.

Canned foods such as tuna and beans can be rinsed to remove some of the sodium. Cook rice, pasta, and hot cereals without salt. Cut back on instant or flavored rice, pasta, and cereal mixes, which usually have added salt.

Limit salty processed foods.

Skip or limit frozen dinners and mixed dishes such as pizza, packaged mixes, canned soups or broths, and salad dressings, which often have a lot of sodium. Prepare and eat more foods at home, where you can control how much sodium is added.

Spice it up.

Boost flavor with herbs, spices, lemon, lime, vinegar, or salt-free seasoning blends instead of salt or salty seasonings like soy sauce, spice blends, or soup mixes. Start by cutting salt in half and work your way toward healthy substitutes.

EASY TIPS FOR DINING OUT

Move the salt shaker away.

This simple first step could become second nature.

Research the restaurant's menu before going out.

Check online nutrition information and then avoid these on the menu: pickled, cured, smoked, soy sauce.

Make special requests.

Ask that your meal be prepared without added salt, MSG, or salty ingredients such as bacon, pickles, olives, and cheese.

Easy does it on the condiments.

A little goes a long way for mustard, ketchup, horseradish, pickles, and sauces with salt-containing ingredients.

Go for healthy appetizers and side dishes.

Choose fruit or vegetables instead of salty snacks, chips, or fries.

Where's the sodium?



brown rice



green beans



strawberries



milk



black-eyed peas



tuna

Most of the sodium we eat comes from added salt in packaged or prepared foods. Only a small amount occurs naturally in foods. Check Nutrition Facts labels and choose foods with lower sodium levels.

Grains	Serving Size	Milligrams of Sodium
Cooked cereal, rice, pasta (unsalted)	½ cup	0-15
Ready-to-eat packaged cereal	½ cup	0-360
Bread	1 slice	120-210
Vegetables		
Fresh or frozen, cooked without salt	½ cup	0-70
Canned or frozen with sauce	½ cup	190-430
Pasta sauce, jarred	½ cup	270-490
Fruits		
Fresh, frozen, canned	½ cup	0-5
Dairy		
Milk	1 cup	110
Yogurt	1 cup	85-190
Natural cheeses	1 ½ oz	90-480
American cheese, processed	1 slice	200-240
Nuts, Seeds, and Legumes		
Nuts, unsalted	⅓ cup	0-5
Nuts, salted	⅓ cup	70-260
Beans, cooked from dried or frozen (unsalted)	½ cup	0-10
Beans, canned	½ cup	130-450
Meats, Fish, and Poultry		
Fresh or frozen meat, fish, poultry	3 oz	55-75
Fresh or frozen poultry, with broth	3 oz	100-170
Tuna, canned, water pack	3 oz	140-180
Turkey breast, lunch meat	3 oz	540-810
Ham, lean, roasted	3 oz	920-950

FOOD SAFETY

Food Safety: Protecting Health from Farm to Table

Food safety refers to the practices and conditions necessary to prevent foodborne illnesses and ensure that the food we eat is safe, wholesome, and fit for consumption. Because food passes through many steps—from production and processing to transportation and preparation—each stage must follow proper safety standards to reduce the risk of contamination.

Why Food Safety Matters

Every year, millions of people worldwide become sick from contaminated food. Foodborne illnesses can result from bacteria, viruses, parasites, chemicals, or physical hazards. Symptoms often include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and fever, but severe cases can lead to hospitalization and long-term health problems.

Common causes of foodborne illness include:

- Improper food storage
- Cross-contamination between raw and ready-to-eat foods
- Undercooked meats
- Poor personal hygiene
- Unsanitary kitchen environments

Because many foodborne pathogens are invisible to the eye, food safety practices are essential even when food *looks* safe.

The Four Core Principles of Food Safety

1. Clean

Keeping surfaces, equipment, and hands clean reduces the spread of harmful microorganisms.

- Wash hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
 - Clean cutting boards, utensils, and countertops after each use.
 - Rinse fruits and vegetables under running water.
-

2. Separate

Cross-contamination happens when germs transfer from one item to another.

- Keep raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs separate from other foods.
 - Use separate cutting boards for raw proteins and produce.
 - Store raw foods below cooked or ready-to-eat items in the refrigerator.
-

3. Cook

Proper cooking temperatures kill harmful bacteria.

- Use a food thermometer to check internal temperatures:
 - Poultry: 165°F (74°C)
 - Ground meats: 160°F (71°C)
 - Seafood & whole cuts: 145°F (63°C)
 - Reheat leftovers to 165°F (74°C).
-

4. Chill

Cold temperatures slow bacterial growth.

- Refrigerate perishable foods within **2 hours**, or **1 hour** if outdoors above 90°F (32°C).
 - Keep refrigerators at 40°F (4°C) or below.
 - Thaw food safely in the refrigerator, microwave, or under cold running water—never on the countertop.
-

Common Food Safety Hazards

Biological Hazards

- Bacteria such as *Salmonella*, *E. coli*, and *Listeria*
- Viruses like norovirus and hepatitis A
- Parasites including *Giardia* and *Trichinella*

Chemical Hazards

- Cleaning agents
- Pesticide residues
- Food allergens (e.g., peanuts, shellfish)

Physical Hazards

- Glass pieces
 - Metal fragments
 - Hair or plastic
-

Food Safety in the Home

Even though restaurants and food manufacturers follow regulations, many foodborne illnesses begin at home. To keep food safe:

- Avoid preparing food when sick.
 - Follow expiration dates and “use by” labels.
 - Store leftover foods in shallow containers for faster cooling.
 - Discard foods left out too long—**when in doubt, throw it out.**
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Conclusion

Food safety is a shared responsibility. By following proper handling, cooking, and storage practices, individuals and food service workers can significantly reduce the risk of foodborne illnesses. Good habits such as washing hands, using thermometers, preventing cross-contamination, and respecting temperature rules help keep food safe from the moment it is prepared until it is served.

4 STEPS TO FOOD SAFETY

How do you prevent food poisoning?

Food poisoning not only sends thousands of Americans to the hospital each year—it can also cause long-term health problems. You can help keep your family safe from food poisoning at home by following these four simple steps: clean, separate, cook and chill.

CLEAN: Wash Hands, Utensils, and Surfaces Often

Germs that can make you sick can survive in many places around your kitchen, including your food, hands, utensils, cutting boards, and countertops.

Wash your hands the right way:

- Use plain soap and water—skip the antibacterial soap—and scrub the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.
- Rinse hands, then dry with a clean towel.
- Wash your hands often, especially during these key times when germs can spread:
 - Before, during and after preparing food
 - After handling raw meat, poultry, seafood, or their juices, or uncooked eggs
 - Before eating
 - After using the toilet
 - After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
 - After touching an animal, animal food, or animal waste
 - After touching garbage
 - Before and after treating a cut or wound
 - After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
 - After handling pet food or pet treats

Wash surfaces and utensils after each use:

- Wash cutting boards, dishes, utensils, and countertops with hot, soapy water especially after they've held raw meat, poultry, seafood, or eggs.
- Wash dish cloths often in the cycle of your washing machine.

Wash fruits and vegetables, but not meat, poultry, or eggs:

- Rinse fruits and vegetables under running water without soap, bleach, or commercial produce washes.
- Rinse fruits and vegetables before peeling, removing skin, or cutting away any damaged or bruised areas.
- Scrub produce like melons or cucumbers with a clean produce brush.
- Dry produce with a paper towel or clean cloth towel.
- Don't wash meat, poultry, eggs, or seafood to avoid spreading harmful germs around your kitchen.
- Produce labeled as "prewashed" does not need to be washed again.

SEPARATE: Don't Cross Contaminate

Use separate cutting boards and plates for produce, meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs:

- Use one cutting board for fresh produce and other foods that won't be cooked before they're eaten, and another for raw meat, poultry, or seafood. Replace them when they are worn.
- Use separate plates and utensils for cooked and raw foods.
- Use hot, soapy water to thoroughly wash plates, utensils, and cutting boards that touched raw meats, poultry, seafood, eggs, or flour.

Keep certain types of food separate:

- In your shopping cart, separate raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs from other foods and place packages of raw meat, poultry, and seafood in plastic bags if available. When you check out, place raw meat, poultry, and seafood in separate bags from other foods.
- At home, keep eggs in their original carton and store them in the main compartment—not in the door.

COOK to the Right Temperature

Food is safely cooked when the internal temperature is high enough to kill germs that can make you sick:

- Use a food thermometer to be sure your food is safe. When you think your food is done, place the food thermometer in the thickest part of the food, making sure not to touch bone, fat, or gristle.
- Refer to the minimum cooking temperature chart to be sure your foods have reached a safe temperature.

Keep food hot (140* F) or above after cooking:

If you're not serving food right after cooking, keep it out of the temperature danger zone (between 40* F to 140*F) where germs grow rapidly by using a heat source like a chafing dish, warming tray, or slow cooker.

Microwave food thoroughly (165*F or above):

- Read package directions for cooking and follow them exactly to make sure food is thoroughly cooked.
- If the food label says, "Let stand for x minutes after cooking", follow the directions—letting microwaved food sit for a few minutes allows food to cook thoroughly as colder areas absorb heat from hotter areas.
- Stir food in the middle of heating. Follow package directions for commercially prepared frozen food; some are not designed to be stirred while heating.

CHILL: Refrigerate and Freeze Food Properly

Refrigerate perishable foods within 2 hours:

- Bacteria that cause food poisoning multiply quickest between 40*F and 104* F.
- Your refrigerator should be set to 40* F or below and your freezer to 0* F or below. Use an appliance thermometer to be sure.
- Never leave perishable foods out of refrigeration for more than 2 hours. If the food is exposed to temperatures above 90* F (like a hot car or summer picnic), refrigerate it within 1 hour.
- Leftovers should be placed in shallow containers and refrigerated promptly to allow quick cooling.
- Never thaw or marinate foods on the counter. The safest way to thaw or marinate meat, poultry, and seafood is in the refrigerator.
- Freezing does not destroy harmful germs, but it does keep food safe until you can cook it.
- Know when to throw out food by checking the safe storage times chart. Be sure you throw food out before harmful bacteria grow.