

## What You Eat Matters

### Foods most Americans get too much of:

#### 1. Added sugars- *come in many forms and have a variety of names.*

- Check your food labels for: cane sugar, high fructose corn syrup, fructose, sucrose, dextrose, lactose, honey, brown sugar, turbinado sugar, beet sugar, raw sugar, malt syrup, maltose, rice syrup, agave, molasses, Florida crystals, fruit juice, others.
- Food and beverages high in added sugars: candies, desserts, sugar-sweetened beverages, condiments, sauces, ketchup, salad dressings, crackers, breakfast cereals, snack or energy bars.
- The World Health Organization recommends less than 48 grams of sugar with a goal of 24 grams per day for adults and children.

#### 2. Cholesterol- *found exclusively in animal foods.*

- High cholesterol foods include: eggs, dairy, cheese, organ meats, shellfish; and other meat including poultry and fish.
- For overall cardiovascular health, the American Heart Association (AHA) recommends overall dietary patterns that are low in cholesterol and more plant-based.

#### 3. Saturated fat - *usually solid at room temperature.*

- These foods have relatively high concentrations of saturated fats: higher fat cuts of beef; pork and lamb; salami; sausages and other processed meats; many fast foods (cheeseburgers); lard; butter; cheese; coconut and coconut oil; palm oil; palm kernel oil.
- Top sources of saturated fat in diets of US adults: cheese, beef, fats and oils, milk, sausages and luncheon meats.

#### 4. Sodium - *most sodium comes from sources outside of your home (ie those that are commercially prepared).*

- Simply limiting your table salt at dinner time may only account for ~5% and food prep at home 5.6%. The overwhelming majority is added to food outside of the home (processed foods, restaurants, etc).
- Important strategy in limiting sodium is limiting consumption of commercially processed foods.

#### 5. Trans fats - *declared by the Food and Drug Administration as unsafe for human consumption and mandated removal back in 2018.*

- Found mostly in partially hydrogenated plant oils, historically used in many processed foods; also occur naturally in some meats and dairy products.
- Reduce/eliminate the following: animal foods (especially red and processed meats), butter, refined grain products such as doughnuts, cookies, crackers, muffins, pies and cakes.



# Foods most Americans are not getting enough of:

## 1. Calcium

- a. Foods high in calcium include: ¼ cup cheese, ¼ cup tofu prepared with calcium sulfate, ½ cup soybeans, 1 cup enriched cornmeal, 4 oz fortified plant milks, or 1 cup of cooked spinach or collard greens.
- b. Other foods containing calcium include: 2 oz almonds, 1 cup cooked black beans, 1 cup cooked kale or broccoli, 1 cup many fortified cereals, or 1 cup cooked teff.

## 2. Choline

**3. Fiber-** *Fiber is exclusively found in plant foods. Most adults in the US consume half of recommended amounts of fiber.*

- a. Foods that are high in fiber include: ½ cup black beans, ½ cup split peas, ½ cup lentils, ½ avocado, ½ cup raspberries, 7 dried figs, 3 tablespoons flaxseeds, 1 cup oatmeal, and 1 cup whole-wheat pasta.
- b. Other foods containing fiber include: ½ cup blueberries, 1 cup strawberries, 1 cup or 1 piece of most other fruit, 1 cup winter squashes, 1 cup brown rice, a slice of whole-grain bread, 1 cup popcorn, ¾ cup mushrooms, 1 ounce almonds or peanuts, and 1 ounce of sunflower or sesame seeds.

## 4. Iron

## 5. Magnesium

- a. Foods high in magnesium include: 4 Brazil nuts; 1 ounce almonds, cashews or pine nuts; 2 ounces peanuts, 1 ounce cooked spinach; ½ cup amaranth; ¾ cup edamame; 2 ounces dark chocolate.

## 6. Potassium

- a. Foods high in potassium include: 1 small baked potato, ½ cup of yams, ½ avocado, and beans such as ½ cup of either white beans, soybeans, black turtle beans, or lima beans. Others include 1 mashed banana, ½ cup beet greens, 5 dried apricots, or 5 dates.

## 7. Vitamin A

- a. Foods high in Vitamin A include: ½ cup cooked sweet potato or spinach, ½ cup raw carrots, 1 cup cantaloupe or butternut squash. Beef liver is also very high.

## 8. Vitamin C

- a. Foods high in Vitamin C include: ½ cup bok choy, parsley, daikon radish, broccoli, cantaloupe, Brussels sprouts, pineapple, cabbage, cauliflower, mustard greens, papaya, green peas, kale, tomatoes, strawberries, turnip greens, 1 orange, guava, kiwi, mango, or red pepper.

## 9. Vitamin D

- a. Foods higher in vitamin D include ½ cup salmon, high-fat fish, 1 cup of fortified milks, either dairy or nondairy.
- b. Sunlight is the BEST source of vitamin D compared to dietary sources. Expose large areas of the body, including face, arms, legs, back or chest to direct sunlight between the hours of 10am and 3pm without sunscreen for 5-30 minutes at least 2 days a week.

## 10. Vitamin E

- a. Foods higher in vitamin E include 1 ounce sunflower seeds, almonds, or hazelnuts; 1 tablespoon sunflower or safflower oils; and 1 small fillet trout.

Source: American College of Lifestyle Medicine's [Foundations for Lifestyle Medicine](#)



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