

# Basic Nutrition Information

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- **CALORIES:** energy/fuel for our body. The number of calories a person needs depends on age, height, weight, gender, and activity level.

|                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| Fat:           | 1 gram=9 calories |
| Protein:       | 1 gram=4 calories |
| Carbohydrates: | 1 gram=4 calories |
| Alcohol:       | 1 gram=7 calories |

- **FAT:** 30% or less of daily calorie consumption; saturated fat should account for no more than 10% of the total fat intake.
  - Saturated Fat: most are solids at room temperature
    - Can increase cholesterol levels
    - found mostly in meat and dairy products; some vegetable oils (coconut and palm oil)
  - Monounsaturated Fat: tends to lower LDL cholesterol
    - found in plant and animal products, olive oil, canola oil, peanut oil
  - Polyunsaturated Fat: tends to lower LDL cholesterol
    - found mostly in plant products (safflower, sunflower, soybean)
- **CHOLESTEROL:** 300 milligrams per day or less
  - Dietary Cholesterol: only found in foods from animal sources (meat, fish, eggs, cheese, butter, milk)
  - LDLs: thought to deposit cholesterol in artery walls, thus increasing risk of heart disease (atherosclerosis)
  - HDLs: help to remove cholesterol from the blood; high levels help to prevent against heart disease (atherosclerosis)
- **PROTEIN:** 10%-20% of total calorie consumption; helps aid in growth and repair of tissues
  - Complete Proteins: eggs, milk, meat, cheese
  - Incomplete Proteins: whole grains, corn, rice, beans, legumes, oatmeal, peanut butter (combinations of rice and beans, milk and wheat cereal, corn and beans make complete proteins)

- **CARBOHYDRATES:** major source of energy; account for 50-60% of total calorie consumption
  - *Sugars:* monosaccharides/disaccharides; found in fruits (sucrose, glucose, fructose, pentose), milk (lactose), soft drinks, and sweets
  - *Complex Carbohydrates:* polysaccharides; found in whole grains (cereals, flour, rice, oats), potatoes, and legumes
  
- **DIETARY FIBER:** sources of fiber are grain products, nuts, legumes (kidney, navy, black, pinto beans), vegetables, and fruits
  - *Soluble Fiber:* could help lower blood cholesterol levels by inhibiting the absorption/digestion of fat and cholesterol; helps control blood sugar (diabetics); found in beans, oats, barley, some fruits and vegetables (apples, oranges, carrots)
  - *Insoluble Fiber:* helps aid in the prevention of constipation, hemorrhoids, and diverticulosis; found in bran (wheat, rice, and oats), wheat germ, cauliflower, green beans, potatoes, and celery
  
- **SODIUM:** 1500 -2400 milligrams per day (1 teaspoon of salt contains about 2000 milligrams of sodium); sodium is not the same as salt; sodium is a mineral found in various foods including salt (sodium chloride); table salt is 40% sodium
  
- **POTASSIUM:** essential for maintaining fluid balance, muscle function, cardiac (heart) function
  - Sources include: bananas, raisins, apricots, oranges, avocados, cantaloupe, watermelon, broccoli, spinach, carrots, and dried beans
  
- **VITAMINS/MINERALS:** required for regulation of the body's metabolic functions; found naturally in foods; large doses of vitamin/mineral supplements can be harmful.
  - *Fat Soluble:* stored in the body for long periods of time
  - *Water Soluble:* excess amounts are excreted in the urine