

What is the DASH Diet?

The DASH Diet is an eating plan designed to lower sodium content in the diet, lower saturated fat, trans fat, and cholesterol, and increase foods rich in nutrients, such as potassium and magnesium, all of which **can help lower blood pressure.**

The DASH diet plan is rich in fruits and vegetables, fat-free/low-fat milk and milk products, whole grains, fish, poultry, beans, seeds, and nuts. The plan includes less excess sodium, sweets and added sugar, added fat, and red meats than a typical American diet.



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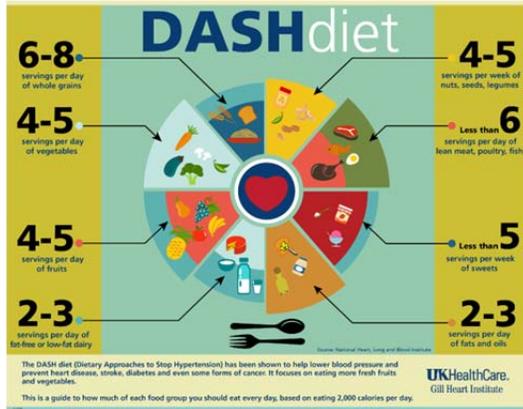
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The *DASH* Diet

Dietary Approaches to Stop
Hypertension





The DASH Eating Plan

An average DASH diet plan is based on about 2,000 calories a day, and aims to not exceed 2,300 mg of sodium a day. The DASH diet recommends specific servings of food groups in order to achieve this.

- ❖ 6-8 servings of grains a day, with a focus in whole grains rich in fiber
- ❖ 4-5 servings of vegetables a day
- ❖ 4-5 servings of fruit a day
- ❖ 2-3 servings of dairy a day (low fat/fat free)
- ❖ 6 servings or fewer a day of lean meat, poultry, and fish
- ❖ 4-5 servings a **week** of nuts, seeds, and legumes
- ❖ 2-3 servings of fats/oils a day
- ❖ 5 servings or fewer a **week** of sweet

Helpful Hints!

- ❖ To cut back on sodium, try not to use excess salt while cooking, and avoid bringing the salt shaker to the table! Use other seasonings that are sodium-free or have less sodium, such as herbs, spices, lemon/lime, vinegar, wine, or other salt-free seasoning blends.
- ❖ Try to avoid excess canned and processed foods, which can hide large amounts of sodium! Rinse all canned foods to remove some packaged sodium, and try to purchase foods labeled “no salt added”, “sodium-free”, or “low sodium”.
- ❖ The core of the DASH diet is naturally low sodium, so try and stick to the allotted serving sizes for each food group and include more meatless, vegetable and grain based meals into your diet.

For more information, go to https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/files/docs/public/heart/dash_brief.pdf

Getting started and How to be Successful on the *DASH* Diet!

Change gradually!

- No change happens overnight! Try to gradually add more servings of fruit and vegetables into your diet, such as a piece of fruit at lunch or a serving of vegetables at dinner. If your diet does not consist of mostly whole grains, don't switch it all in one day, rather change 1 or 2 servings a day and gradually change your diet to include more whole grains. Make these changes over a couple of days or weeks to give yourself a chance to adjust and make them part of your daily routine.

Add Physical Activity!

- To boost your blood pressure lowering efforts even more, consider increasing your physical activity in addition to following the DASH diet. Combining both the DASH diet and physical activity makes it more likely that you'll reduce your blood pressure, and helps to maintain the DASH lifestyle in the long term.