

## **BASIC NUTRITION, MY PYRAMID, AND THE DIETARY GUIDELINES**

**Anna** is marrying **Bill**. He has two children. **Bill's** son is 5 years old. His daughter is 13 years old. Now **Anna** will shop to feed a family. Now **Anna** will **cook** to feed a family.

**Anna** wants her family to be **healthy**. She goes to the town library. She tells the librarian what she wants to do.

A librarian gives **Anna** information about **nutrition**. **Nutrition** means eating for **health** and growth. The librarian gives **Anna** information about the **MyPyramid**. It shows groups of **food** to eat each day. The librarian gives her information about **dietary guidelines**. The **dietary guidelines** help **Anna** plan for **healthy** eating.

This information is what **Anna** needs. She can use the information to buy and **prepare healthy meals** for her new family. She takes the information home. She reads it carefully.

## **MYPYRAMID**

**Anna** looks at **MyPyramid**. It has colored stripes. She sees that her family needs to eat from five **food** groups each day: **grains, vegetables, fruits, milk, and meat and beans**. The number of **servings** needed from each food group of **MyPyramid** depends on a person's **age, gender, and physical activity level**. The steps on the side of the pyramid show the importance of being physically active.



## **Grains Group**

The **Grains Group** is found in the orange stripe next to the steps of **MyPyramid**. It is the largest part of the **MyPyramid**. This group includes **bread, cereal, rice,** and **pasta**. Some **grains** are **whole grains**. These items include **whole-wheat bread, oatmeal, whole grain cereal, brown rice, and popcorn**. These **whole grain breads** have more **fiber** than **breads** that are made from **processed flour**. **Breads** made with enriched **flour** have the **vitamins** and **minerals** added back. The big difference is **fiber**.

**Anna's** family needs to eat plenty of **foods** in this group. These **foods** contain **carbohydrates** that give the **body energy**. **Anna** finds a list (See Table 1) of **foods** and **serving** sizes for the **grains group**. Servings for the **grains group** are listed in ounces.

Different people need different numbers of **servings** from the **grains group**. Teenage boys and active men need about 10 **ounces** each day. Older children, teenage girls, active women, and most men need about 9 **ounces** each day. Children ages 2-6, most women, and some older adults need only 6 **ounces** each day. **Anna** should serve at least half of the foods from the grain group as **whole-grain** products.

**TABLE 1**

<b>FOOD</b>	<b>SIZE OF A ONE-OUNCE SERVING</b>
bread	1 slice
biscuits, rolls, muffins	1 small
tortillas	1 tortilla (7 inches)
waffles or pancakes	1 (4-5 inches)
crackers	5 small or 2 large
bagel, hamburger or hot dog bun	1/2
boxed ready-to-eat cereal	1 ounce (about 1 cup)
cooked cereal such as oatmeal or grits	1/2 cup
macaroni, spaghetti, or noodles	1/2 cup
rice	1/2 cup

## **Vegetable Group**

The next food group is the **vegetable** group. It is the green stripe in **MyPyramid**.

A **vegetable** is a kind of **plant** grown for **food**. **Vegetables** provide **dietary fiber, vitamins, minerals,** and other **nutrients**. Different **vegetables** provide different **nutrients**. **Anna** needs to give her family a **variety** of **vegetables**.

**Anna** knows that there are many **vegetables**. Some **vegetables** are **plant leaves**. These **vegetables** include **lettuce, greens, cabbage, spinach,** and **Brussels sprouts**. Some **vegetables** are **plant flowers**. These **vegetables** include **broccoli** and **cauliflower**. Some **vegetables** are **plant roots**. These **vegetables** include **beets, onions, carrots, turnips, radishes, potatoes,** and **sweet potatoes**. Some **vegetables** are **plant stems**. These **vegetables** include **celery, asparagus,** and **mushrooms**. Some **vegetables** are the **seeds** or  **pods**. These **vegetables** include **peas, beans, okra, bell peppers** and **corn**.

**Anna** knows that the way a **vegetable** is prepared affects the **nutrients** in it.

When possible, **raw vegetables** are best. For **cooked vegetables, steamed** or **baked vegetables** are better than **fried**. **Fried vegetables** such as **fries** or **onion rings** have too much **fat**. **Cooking** with **butter, cheese, bacon, lard, shortening** or other **oils** also adds too much **fat**.

How much of a **vegetable** should **Anna** prepare? A **serving** of **vegetables** depends on the way it is **prepared**. **One cup** of **raw leafy vegetables** is a

**serving. One-half cup of cooked or raw chopped vegetables is a serving.**

**Three-fourths cup of vegetable juice is a serving.**

Different people need different numbers of **servings** from the **vegetable group**.

Teenage boys and active men need about 4 cups each day. Older children, teenage girls, active women, and most men need 2 ½ - 3 cups each day.

Children ages 2-6 need only 1 ½ cups each day.

## **Fruit Group**

The red stripe in **MyPyramid** stands for the **fruit group**. **Foods** in the **fruit group** are the **edible seed-bearing parts of plants**. Many **fruits** taste **sweet**. **Fruits** give the **body** important **vitamins** and other **nutrients**.

**Anna** knows that **fruits** are very different. Some are small. These **fruits** include **grapes, blueberries, cranberries, strawberries, raspberries, cherries,** and **blackberries**. Some **fruits** are large. These include **watermelons, honeydew melons,** and **cantaloupe**. Some **fruits** are called **citrus fruits**. **Citrus fruits** include **lemons, oranges, limes,** and **grapefruit**.

Some **fruits**, like **apricots, pears, peaches, plums, figs,** and **apples**, can be eaten with their skins. Other **fruits** like **mangos, bananas, kiwis, pineapples,** and **papayas** are **peeled** before eaten. Some **fruits** get different names when they are dried. For instance, dried **grapes** are called **raisins**. Dried **plums** are called **prunes**. **Anna** needs to buy a **variety** of **fruits** for her family.

**Anna** also knows that **fruits** are available in different forms. Some **fruits** are **fresh**. Other **fruits** are **canned, frozen,** or dried. Some **fruits** are made into **juice**. **Anna** reads that **fresh fruits** are the best to eat. **Fresh fruits** are better choices because they contain more **dietary fiber** than do **canned fruits**, especially if eaten with the **peels** left on. Some **fruits** are **canned** or **frozen** in **sugar syrup**. Some **juices** have added **sugar**. These **fruits** are not as **healthy**

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for her family as **fresh fruits** or **canned fruits packed** in their own **juice** or **water**.

A **serving** of **fruit** depends on the way it is prepared. One **medium raw apple**, **banana**, **orange**, or **pear** is a **serving**. **One-half cup** of **chopped**, **cooked**, or **canned fruit** is a **serving**. **One-fourth cup** of a dried **fruit** (like **raisins**) is a **serving**. **Three-fourths cup** of **fruit juice** is a **serving**.

Different people need different numbers of servings from the **fruit group**.

Teenage boys and active men need 2 ½ cups each day. Older children, teenage girls, women, and most men need about 1 ½ cups each day. Children ages 2-6 need only 1 ½ cups each day.

## **Milk Group**

The blue stripe stands for the **milk group**. The **milk group** consists of **milk** and **foods** made from **milk**. These choices include **cheese** and **yogurt** as well as **milk**. **Foods** in the **milk group** give the **body calcium** and other **nutrients**.

Many **milk products**, also called dairy products, contain **fats**. **Anna** knows that **sour cream**, **cream cheese** and **ice cream** are **milk products**. They provide **calcium**, but **sour cream** and **cream cheese** contain too much **fat**. **Ice cream** contains **fat**, as well as added **sugar**. **Anna** will choose **low-fat milk** and **cheese** for her family. She will watch how much **ice cream** she serves.

A **serving** size in the **milk group** depends on the type of food that is purchased. **One cup** of **milk** or plain **yogurt** is one **serving**. **Whole milk** has more fat than low-fat or **skim milk**. A **cup** of **chocolate milk** is also one **serving**, but it also contains **sugar**. **Cottage cheese** and **ice cream** do not contain as much **calcium** as does **milk**. One and one-half **ounces** of natural **cheese** is a serving. Two **ounces** of **processed cheese** is a serving.

Different people need different numbers of servings from the **milk group**. Most people need 3 cups per day. Children ages 2-6 need only 2 cups each day.

### **Meat and Beans Group**

The purple stripe represents the **Meat and Beans Group**. **Anna** knew that **poultry** (such as **chicken** or **turkey**), **beef**, **pork**, and **lamb** were **meats**. She was surprised to find that **eggs**, dry **beans**, and **nuts** were also in the **meat and bean group**. **Fish** (like **catfish** and **tuna**) and **shellfish** (**oysters**, **shrimp**, **crawfish**, **crab**, and **clams**) are in the **meat and beans group**, too. **Foods** in the **meat and beans group** provide the **body** with **protein**.

**Anna** knows that **foods** in the **meat and beans group** differ in the amount of **fat** they have. **Fish**, **shellfish**, and **beans** have the most **protein** and the least **fat**. **Beef** and **pork** should be **lean** with little **visible fat**. **Poultry** should be served without skin. **Bacon** and **nuts** are high in **fat**.

The way **meats** are **prepared** also affects the amount of **fat** they have. **Fried meats** are high in **fat**. **Meats** with **gravy** and **sauces** are high in **fat**. **Boiled**, **grilled**, **broiled**, and **baked poultry**, **meat**, and **fish** are lowest in **fat**.

**Anna's** family needs to eat enough **foods** from the **meat and beans group**. But, the family should not eat too many **foods** from the **meat and beans group**. Eating the right amount of **food** is called eating in **moderation**. Each person should eat three to seven ounces per day from the **meat and beans group**. In Table 2, **Anna** finds a list of **foods** and **serving** sizes in the **meat and beans group**. **Anna** looks at the information in Table 2.

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Different people need different numbers of **servings** from the **meat and beans group**. Teenage boys and active men need seven ounces each day. Older children, teenage girls, active women, and most men need about five ounces each day. Children ages 2-6, most women, and some older adults need only four ounces each day.

**TABLE 2**

<b>FOOD</b>	<b>SIZE OF SERVING</b>
cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish without bones	2-3 ounces (about the size of a deck of cards)
eggs	1 = 1 ounce of meat
cooked dried beans or peas	1/2 cup = 1 ounce meat
peanut butter	2 tablespoons = 1 ounce meat

## Oils

The yellow stripe stands for oils. It is the smallest stripe on **MyPyramid**. Oils are not a food group, but everyone needs some. It is the smallest part of the **MyPyramid**. It reminds **Anna** that she should serve the fewest number of **foods** from this part of **MyPyramid**. It reminds **Anna** that her family should eat **oils sparingly**. **Sparingly** means not very much and not very often.

Liquid oils such as olive, corn, soybean, and canola oils are good sources.

**Butter, margarine, shortening, lard, mayonnaise, cream sauces, and some gravy** are high in fat.

Some **foods** are cooked in **oil**. Some **foods** are high in **hidden fats**. For instance, **Anna** knows that many **fast foods** and **fried foods** are high in **fat**. She knows that **hot dogs, sausage, and lunch meat** can be high in **fat**. She also knows that **pastries, cookies, and potato chips** are high in **fat**. She was surprised to find that **nuts, avocados, and peanut butter** were high in **fat**. She had never thought of **chocolate** as being high in **fat**. Within each food group there are low-fat and high-fat food choices.

**SWEETS.** Anna knows her family likes **sweets--foods** made with **sugar**. They like **desserts** such as **cookies, cakes, and pies**. These foods can fit into the food groups of **MyPyramid**, but should be eaten sparingly. Her family likes **carbonated soft drinks** and **candy**. These **foods** have lots of **calories**. These **foods** do not provide many **nutrients**. That is why they should not be eaten very often. There is no place on **MyPyramid** for **carbonated soft drinks** and **candy**. These foods can be eaten as extra calories only if the basic calories are met and a person needs extra calories.

## DIETARY GUIDELINES

**Anna** reads the following list of recommendations from the **dietary guidelines**.

1. Make smart choices from every food group.
2. Focus on fruits and vary your vegetables.
3. Find a balance between food and physical activity.
4. Get your calcium-rich foods.
5. Make half your grains whole.
6. Play it **safe** with food.
7. Choose a **lowfat diet**, especially **meats and beans**.
8. Know the limits on fats, salt, and sugars.
9. Adults who drink **alcoholic beverages**, should do so in **moderation**.

**Anna** will use the **guidelines** to help her choose **healthy foods** for her family.

She will buy and prepare different kinds of **foods** that will give her family **variety**.

**Anna** knows that some **foods** are high in **fat** or **cholesterol**. She also knows that the way **foods** are **prepared** can affect the amount of **fat** and **cholesterol** they contain. She will choose **foods** carefully. She will serve some **fresh vegetables raw**. She will **boil, grill, broil** or **bake foods**. She will limit **fried** and **fast foods**. She will use the **MyPyramid** to give her family a strong foundation of **grains, vegetables, and fruits**. It will remind her to help the family limit the **sweets** and **oils** they eat. **Anna** will limit how many **salty snacks** her family eats. She will make sure her family doesn't eat too much **ketchup** and **mayonnaise** because they have lots of **sodium** or salt. She will leave the **salt**

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shaker in the cabinet. Many **foods**, such as **canned vegetables**, have lots of added **salt**. Not all **foods** with added **salt** taste **salty**. A little **salt** is OK. Too much can sometimes cause **health** problems such as high **blood pressure**. Finally, if **Anna** and **Bill** drink **alcohol**, they will not drink too much. Children under 18 years old and pregnant women should not drink **alcohol**. These rules will help **Anna** and her family maintain **healthy weights** and enjoy **healthy** lives.