

The DASH Diet

Eating to Control Blood Pressure

The DASH diet (or “Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension”) has been shown to be the most effective diet to lower blood pressure. The DASH diet is rich in fruits, vegetables and dairy. The diet limits red meat, fried foods and refined grains.

	Number Servings	Serving Size	DASH Recommended Foods	Notes
Grains	6-8 per day	1 slice of bread or ½ cup	Whole wheat bread, pasta or couscous Brown rice Bulgur, wheat berries, kamut, quinoa Whole grain cereals (oatmeal, bran flakes)	Look for products with at least 3 grams servings of fiber per serving
Vegetables	4-5 per day	1 cup raw or ½ cup cooked	All vegetables! Try carrots, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, onions, eggplant, asparagus, zucchini, Brussels sprouts, peppers, squash, potatoes, bean sprouts, kale, green beans, yellow squash, tomatoes, cucumber, celery, turnips, corn	Choose roasted, grilled or steamed vegetables. Avoid fried or pickled vegetables and vegetables with sauce.
Fruit	4-5 per day	1 cup raw or ½ cup cooked	All fruits! Try oranges, apples, bananas, berries, grapes, grapefruit, kiwi, pineapple, peaches, pears, apricots, cherries, melon, mango	Choose fresh or frozen fruit. Canned fruit in “light syrup” or “juice” is also a healthy choice.
Dairy	2-3 per day	1 cup milk, ¾ cup yogurt	Skim or low fat milk Non-fat or low fat yogurt	Avoid yogurt with large amounts of added sugar; choose plain or vanilla.
Poultry, Meat & Fish	2 per day	3 oz (a deck of cards)	Salmon, cod, tilapia, tuna Boneless, skinless chicken or pork; pork loin Lean ground beef or steak	Choose meats that are baked or grilled. Avoid fried meats. Choose lean cuts of meat.
Nuts, Seeds & Legumes	4-5 per week	½ cup or ¼ cup nuts, 2 tablespoons seeds	Unsalted nuts. Try almonds, cashews and walnuts Dried or low-sodium canned beans (black, pinto, garbanzo, kidney) Lentils and peas Unsalted sunflower, pumpkin and other seeds	Choose unsalted nuts and seeds. Pay close attention to portion sizes of nuts and seeds.
Fats & Oils	2-3 per day	1 teaspoon	Olive, canola or avocado oil Margarine	Avoid large amounts of butter and trans fat. Look for margarine without trans fat.
Sweets	5 or less per week	1 teaspoon jelly, ½ cup frozen treat, 1 piece candy	Low fat frozen yogurt, sorbet, Italian ice, sherbet Hard candy Fruit jelly and jam Graham crackers or rice krispie treats	Avoid high fat desserts such as cake, cookies and ice cream.
Alcohol & Caffeine	Limit		Excessive alcohol and caffeine can increase blood pressure in large amounts. Try to limit alcohol, coffee and cola as much as possible.	

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Example DASH Meal Plan

Breakfast	1 cup oatmeal 1 cup blueberries 2 tablespoons almonds 1 pear 1 cup skim milk	2 slices whole wheat toast 1 tablespoon peanut butter 1 apple 1 cup skim milk	1 cup bran flakes 1 grapefruit 1 cup skim milk	2 scrambled eggs w/ 1 cup spinach & red peppers 1 slice whole wheat toast 1 teaspoon margarine 1 cup pineapple 1 cup skim milk	¾ cup plain low fat yogurt w/ 1 cup strawberries 2 tablespoons walnuts ¼ cup granola
Lunch	3 cups salad ½ cup garbanzo beans 1 tablespoon oil & vinegar 1 whole wheat roll 1 teaspoon margarine	½ cup chicken salad made with yogurt 1 cup grapes 1 slice whole wheat bread	3 cups spinach salad w/ 3 oz chicken 1 tablespoon oil & vinegar 1 whole grain roll 1 teaspoon margarine 1 pear	1 cup bean & pepper chili 1 whole wheat roll 1 teaspoon margarine 1 peach ¾ cup low fat vanilla yogurt	1 cup vegetable lentil Soup 1 cup salad 1 tablespoon oil & vinegar 1 whole wheat roll 1 teaspoon margarine 1 apple 1 cup milk
Dinner	3 oz baked salmon 1 cup steamed green beans 1 cup brown rice 1 whole wheat roll 1 teaspoon margarine	2 stuffed bell peppers w/ 3 oz ground sirloin & rice 1 cup side salad 1 tablespoon oil & vinegar 1 whole wheat roll 1 teaspoon margarine	2 cups whole wheat spaghetti 1 cup tomatoes, garlic w/ 1 teaspoon olive oil 1 cup steamed broccoli 1 cup melon	3 oz pork loin 1 small baked potato 1 teaspoon low fat sour cream ½ cup green peas 1 whole wheat roll 1 teaspoon margarine 1 cup watermelon	3 oz baked cod 1 cup sautéed kale in olive oil 1 cup whole wheat couscous 1 kiwi
Snacks	¾ cup plain low fat yogurt 1 orange 1 kiwi	½ cup sorbet 1 banana	¾ cup plain low fat yogurt 1 cup cherries ¼ cup granola	¼ cup almonds 1 cup raspberries	2 graham crackers 1 apricot

Average Daily Nutrient Totals*:

Calories: 1669
Carbohydrate: 243 g
Protein: 84 g
Fat: 47 g

Saturated Fat: 9.5 g
Cholesterol: 167 mg
Fiber: 37 grams
Added Sugar: 15 grams

Sodium: 1394 mg
Potassium: 3691 mg
Calcium: 1023 mg

*Nutrient Totals assume food is cooked without salt or fat unless indicated