

# MARCH 2021 NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH

## MAKE EVERY BITE COUNT WITH THE DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS

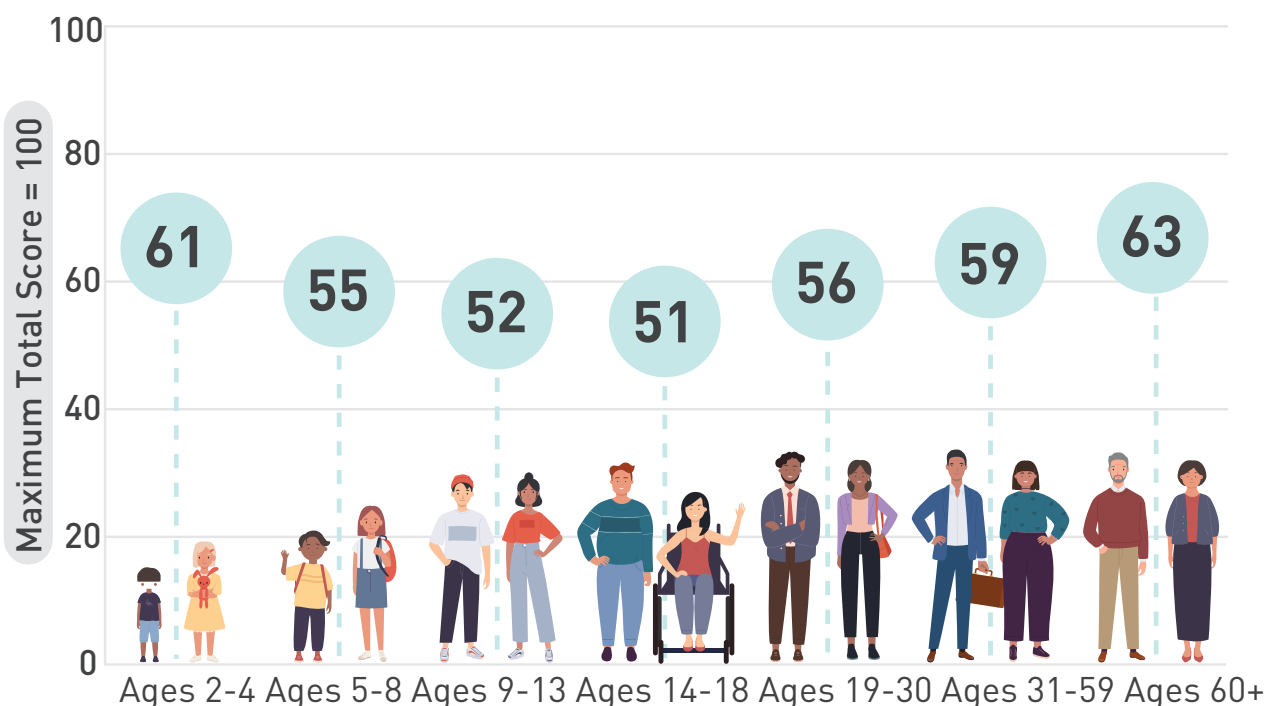


### START WITH THE FOUR GUIDELINES

1. Follow a healthy dietary pattern at every life stage.
2. Customize and enjoy nutrient-dense food and beverage choices to reflect personal preferences, cultural traditions, and budgetary considerations.
3. Focus on meeting food group needs with nutrient-dense foods and beverages and stay within calorie limits.
4. Limit foods and beverages higher in added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium, and limit alcoholic beverages.

### THE FOODS AND BEVERAGES WE CONSUME HAVE AN IMPACT ON OUR HEALTH

While the science linking food and health has only become stronger, our Healthy Eating Index (HEI) score has remained low. The HEI measures how closely food and beverage choices align with the Dietary Guidelines. Our HEI score is higher early in life and in older adulthood, but we all fall far short of following the Dietary Guidelines. Nutrient needs vary over lifespan and each life stage has unique implications for food and beverage choices and disease risk.



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## HOW DO WE “MAKE EVERY BITE COUNT”?

Focus on nutrient-dense foods and beverages, limit those higher in added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium, and stay within calorie limits.



**85%**

of calories are needed per day to meet food group recommendations healthfully, in nutrient-dense forms.



**15%**

of remaining calories are available for other uses (including added sugars and saturated fat.)



**75%**

of people have dietary patterns low in vegetables, fruits, and dairy.



**63%**

of people exceed the limit for added sugars.



**77%**

of people exceed the limit for saturated fat.



**90%**

of people exceed the Chronic Disease Risk Reduction limits for sodium.

More than half of the U.S. population meets or exceeds total grain and protein foods recommendations, but are not meeting the subgroup recommendations for each food group.

## FOLLOW THESE THREE KEY DIETARY PRINCIPLES

**1**



Meet nutritional needs primarily from nutrient-dense foods and beverages.

**2**



Choose a variety of options from each food group.

**3**



Pay attention to portion size.