Most people are surprised when they see My Pyramid and the large amount of food that is recommended from the Grains group. This group is the largest slice of the pyramid and should be the foundation of eating. The average healthy person needs 6-11 ounces of grains each day and half of those ounces should be whole grains. “Whole grains” include oatmeal, cornmeal, brown rice and whole-wheat bread.

The Grains group is your best source of carbohydrates. More than half of your calories per day should come from carbohydrates. Carbohydrates are the major sources of energy for the central nervous system . . . brain food!

Carbohydrates are supplied by food in three forms: starches, sugars and fiber. Starches and sugars supply energy. Fiber is the third source, but it does not provide energy because it is not broken down by the body. It provides the roughage needed for proper removal of waste from the body. The Grains group also provides B vitamins (thiamin, riboflavin and niacin), iron, and some protein.
GET MOVING . . .

Experts say adults should accumulate 30 minutes or more of moderate-intensity physical activity on most days of the week. Children should be physically active at least 60 minutes each day. Experts now say you don’t have to go to the gym or jog every day or participate in aerobics classes to get the benefits of physical activity. Using more effort in your usual daily activities might be a much more realistic way to help you reach your goal.

Modern conveniences have made our lives much less active; remote controls, elevators, drive-thru windows, riding mowers, computers, cell phones, etc. Find ways to increase your activity in everyday chores, work-related tasks, and leisure-time activities.

DID YOU KNOW . . . ?

✓ You can eat twice as many carbohydrates as fat for less calories. One gram of carbohydrates contains 4 calories. One gram of fat contains 9 calories.

✓ Carbohydrates help the body use fat.

✓ Fiber helps prevent constipation and might help prevent some types of cancer.

✓ A grain is a single seed of cereal grass. Grains grown in the U.S. are wheat, corn, rye, rice, barley and oats.

WHAT’S IN A 1-OUNCE PORTION?

The 6-11 ounces of grains recommended daily from this food group sounds like a lot but it is really easy to get! One 1-ounce portion equals:

1 slice of bread

1/2 hamburger bun, bagel, or English muffin

1/2 cup cooked rice, pasta, cereal

1 ounce dry, ready to eat cereal

4 small crackers

1 large tortilla
FAMILY ACTIVITY

For several weeks, as part of your weekly food shopping trips, try a bread eaten in a different country of the world, such as pita bread from the Middle East, English muffin from Great Britain, rye bread from Sweden, and bread sticks from Italy. Try your hand at making your own bread with the kids with the Bread In A Bag recipe below.

CLIP AND COOK

Bread In A Bag

2 cups all-purpose flour  3 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 teaspoon salt   3 tablespoons nonfat dry milk
1 package rapid rise yeast  1 cup whole-wheat flour
1 cup hot water (125°F)  1 gallon size heavy-duty zip top
3 tablespoons sugar  lock-freezer bag

1. Combine one cup all-purpose flour, yeast, sugar, dry milk and salt in freezer bag. Squeeze upper part of the bag to force out air and then seal the bag.
2. Shake and work the bag with fingers to blend the ingredients.
3. Add hot water and oil to the dry ingredients in the bag. Reseal the bag and mix by working with fingers.
4. Add whole-wheat flour. Reseal the bag and mix ingredients thoroughly.
5. Gradually add remaining cup of all-purpose flour to the bag. Reseal and work with fingers until the dough becomes stiff and pulls away from sides of the bag.
6. Take dough out of the bag and place on floured surface.
7. Knead dough 2 to 4 minutes, until smooth and elastic.
8. Cover dough with a moist cloth; let dough stand for 10 minutes.
9. Roll dough to 12-inch X 7-inch rectangle. Roll up from narrow end. Pinch edges and ends to seal.
10. Place dough in a greased glass loaf pan; cover with a moist cloth.
11. Find a baking dish larger than the loaf pan and half fill it with boiling water. Place a cookie sheet over the baking dish with water. Now place the loaf pan on top of the cookie sheet; cover and let dough rise 20 minutes or until dough doubles in size.
12. Preheat oven to 375°F while dough is rising (about 15 minutes).
13. Bake at 375°F for 25 minutes or until baked.