



Background for Balancing Your Diet

A balanced diet can adequately meet nutrient needs. A little knowledge goes a long way to maximize your energy level and provide your body with appropriate fuels to function. It can also result in an enjoyable and satisfying eating experience. Any food can fit into a healthy diet. However, it is important to choose a variety of foods, since your overall diet is what matters.

What exactly is a balanced diet?

Total caloric needs depend on several factors: body weight, activity level, age, and basal metabolic rate. The following chart will help you estimate your personal needs.

Estimated Male Caloric Need			Activity Level	Estimated Female Caloric Need		
Sedentary	Moderate	Active		Sedentary	Moderate	Active
2400	2800	3200	Age 17-18	1800	2000	2400
2600	2800	3000	Age 19-20	2000	2200	2400
2400	2800	3000	Age 21-25	2000	2200	2400

Approximately 45-65% of your total calories should come from carbohydrates (CHO).

Therefore, $0.55 \times \text{total calories} = \text{_____} = \text{_____}$ calories divided by four calories per gram
 $= \text{_____}$ grams of carbohydrates.

Following are examples of carbohydrate sources:

Food	CHO (grams)	Food	CHO (grams)
Rice, 1 cup	44	Raisins, ¼ cup	29
Potato, Baked, 1 large	49	Banana, 1 large	31
Pasta, 1 cup cooked	39	Orange juice, 1 cup	26
Bagel, 1 regular	56	Pretzels, 1 cup	32
Corn, 1 cup	32	Lowfat yogurt, 1 cup with fruit	47

Approximately 10-35% of your total calories should come from protein.

Therefore, $0.15 \times \text{total calories} = \text{_____} = \text{_____}$ calories divided by four calories per gram
 $= \text{_____}$ grams of protein.

Following are examples of protein sources:

Food	Protein (grams)	Food	Protein (grams)
Chicken, cooked, 4 oz.	35	Milk, 1 cup	8
Hamburger, cooked, 4 oz.	28	Egg, 1	6
Tuna, 3 oz.	22	Cheese, ¼ cup shredded	7
Cottage cheese, ½ cup	14	Peanut Butter, 2 Tbsp.	8
Yogurt, 1 cup	12	Black beans	6

Approximately 20-35% of your total calories should come from fat.

Therefore, $0.30 \times \text{total calories}$ _____ = _____ calories divided by nine calories per gram
= _____ grams of fat.

Following are examples of fat sources:

Food	Fat (grams)	Food	Fat (grams)
Ranch dressing, 2 Tbsp.	14	Mayonnaise, 1 Tbsp.	11
Italian dressing, 2 Tbsp.	8	Milk, whole, 1 cup	8
Vegetable oil, 1 Tbsp.	14	Butter or margarine, 1 Tbsp.	11
Almonds, ¼ cup	18	Olive oil, 1 Tbsp.	14
Walnuts, ¼ cup chopped	20	Avocado, 1 cup sliced	21

Does your diet add up?

Do _____ CHO Kcal + _____ Prot. Kcal + _____ Fat Kcal = _____ total Kcal?

Remember, eating healthy requires variety in your diet. No foods are “taboo” and all foods fit into a healthy eating plan. Focusing on eating mostly nutrient-dense foods is the key, but it’s okay to have a treat from time to time.

If you are a registered University of Illinois student and you have questions or concerns, or need to make an appointment, please call: **Dial-A-Nurse at 333-2700**

If you are concerned about any difference in your treatment plan and the information in this handout, you are advised to contact your health care provider.

Visit the McKinley Health Center Web site at: <http://www.mckinley.illinois.edu>