

Health Tip

DASH Eating Plan

DASH stands for **D**ietary **A**pproaches to **S**top **H**ypertension.

A study conducted by researchers at Johns Hopkins University Medical School of more than 400 adults with prehypertension, or stage 1 high blood pressure, found that combining a low-salt diet with the heart-healthy DASH diet substantially lowers systolic blood pressure.

The DASH eating plan is in line with dietary recommendations to help prevent osteoporosis, cancer, heart disease, stroke, and diabetes.

DASH was not intended as a weight loss tool; however, because it has an emphasis on real foods, heavy on fruits and vegetables, balanced with the right amount of protein, DASH may be a weight loss solution.

DASH is a flexible and balanced eating plan that helps create a heart-healthy eating style for life.



Includes plenty of:

- Vegetables
- Fruits
- Whole grains
- Fat free or low fat milk products
- Fish, poultry and lean meats
- Beans, nuts and legumes

Limits:

- Sodium
- Saturated fats
- Added sugars

DASH doesn't require any special foods or supplements. It simply calls for a certain number of daily servings from various food groups. The number of servings depends on the number of calories you choose to eat every day. Your caloric needs depend on your age, gender and activity level. You can choose the "regular" DASH plan, which limits your daily sodium intake to around 2300mg or you can choose the lower sodium version, which limits your daily sodium intake to around 1500mg. The less salt you eat, the more you may be able to help lower your blood pressure.

Daily caloric recommendations for women:

Age (years)	Calories Needed for Sedentary Activity Level	Calories Needed for Moderately Active Activity Level	Calories Needed for Active Activity Level
19-30	2,000	2,000-2,200	2,400
31-50	1,800	2,000	2,200
51 +	1,600	1,800	2,000-2,200

Daily caloric recommendations for men:

Age (years)	Calories Needed for Sedentary Activity Level	Calories Needed for Moderately Active Activity Level	Calories Needed for Active Activity Level
19-30	2,400	2,600-2,800	3,000
31-50	2,200	2,400-2,600	2,800-3,000
51 +	2,000	2,200-2,400	2,400-2,800

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To figure out your caloric needs, you need to consider your age and physical activity level. If you want to maintain your current weight, you should eat only as many calories as you burn by being physically active. If you need to lose weight, you should eat fewer calories than you burn or increase your activity level to burn more calories than you eat.

After figuring out your daily calorie needs, use this table to find the closest calorie level to yours and estimate the number of servings from each food group that you should have. For example, if your daily calorie needs is 2000 calories per day, on the DASH Eating Plan your goal would be 6-8 servings of grains per day, 4-5 servings each of fruits and vegetables per day, 2-3 servings of fat free or low fat dairy products per day, and so on.

Food Groups	1,600 Calories	1,800 Calories	2,000 Calories	2,600 Calories
Grains	6	6	6-8	10-11
Vegetables	3-4	4-5	4-5	5-6
Fruits	4	4-5	4-5	5-6
Fat-free or low-fat dairy	2-3	2-3	2-3	3
Lean meats, poultry, fish	3-4 or less	6 or less	6 or less	6 or less
Nuts, seeds, legumes	3 per week	4 per week	4-5 per week	1
Fats and oils	2	2-3	2-3	3
Sweets and added sugars	3 or less per week	5 or less per week	5 or less per week	≤ 2



The DASH eating plan is a diet full of natural, healthy foods and eliminates processed foods.

Sources:

Johns Hopkins News Release November 2017. <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/news/media/releases/The-DASH-diet-Eating-Plan>. <http://dashdiet.org/default.asp>
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 NIH DASH Eating Plan. <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/dash-eating-plan>. 2018.

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