

29

Nutrition: Guidelines for Balanced Meals and Special Diets



TEACHING PLAN

To use this lesson for self-study, the learner should read the material, do the activity and take the test. For group study, the leader may give each learner a copy of the learning guide and follow this teaching plan to conduct the lesson. Certificates may be copied for everyone who completes the lesson.



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will be able to:

- Relate the basic elements of good nutrition and why they are important.
- Understand what makes up a balanced diet, including foods and portion sizes.
- Be familiar with common special diets and how to prepare them.
- Be able to state important factors in food safety and service.



LESSON ACTIVITY

Introduction:

1. Ask your learners, "Have any of you ever been on a diet?" Encourage participants to talk about the types of diets they have tried and the results they obtained.
2. Explain the content in the lesson overview and list the learning goals on a board if available.

Section 1: Basic elements of good nutrition

1. State: "You are what you eat." Using the learning guide, deliver a mini-lecture on the three elements of good nutrition. Emphasize that water is the most important element in the body.
2. Ask different learners to use the learning guide and teach the group about one of the five nutrients.

NUTRITION: GUIDELINES FOR BALANCED MEALS AND SPECIAL DIETS

Section 2: The balanced diet

1. Use the picture of MyPlate (www.fns.usda.gov/tn/myplate) to illustrate the content in the learning guide. Point to each food picture and ask the learners to tell you how many servings of each one are needed every day.
2. Explain that the sixth group, fats, oils and sweets, contains fat that is necessary in limited amounts only. Too much fat can be harmful, and most Americans obtain sufficient quantities in the other foods we eat.
3. Emphasize that calorie needs vary by size, weight, age and activity. A small female should use the smaller number of recommended servings.
4. Discuss the serving size examples listed in the learning guide. Point out that most fast food hamburgers contain at least 4 ounces of meat, so that a small person who needs only 2 two-ounce servings of meat per day will receive the entire allotment with one hamburger.
5. Emphasize that elderly people have the same needs for nutrients, water and fiber but have a decreased sense of taste. Everything they eat should have good nutrient value.
6. If time allows, ask the learners to use the balanced diet and serving sizes to write a one-day meal plan using foods they like. Discuss.

Section 3: Special diets

Review the six types of special diets in the learning guide, and add others that you use.

Section 4: Food safety and serving tips

Discuss the content in food safety and serving tips and allow time for questions.



CONCLUSION

Have participants take the test. Review the answers together. Award certificates to those who answer at least seven (70%) of the test questions correctly.



TEST ANSWERS

1. a
2. a
3. c
4. a
5. b
6. d
7. c
8. b
9. d
10. c

NUTRITION: GUIDELINES FOR BALANCED MEALS AND SPECIAL DIETS

Basic Elements of Good Nutrition

Everybody needs the right amount of nutrients. Nutrients are the elements of food used by the body for energy, maintenance, healing and growth. They include:

- **Proteins** for growth of muscle and body tissue
 - Sources: meat, fish, eggs, milk, peas, beans, nuts
- **Carbohydrates** for energy
 - Sources: bread, grains, cereals, potatoes, peas, beans
- **Fats** for warmth, vitamin storage and energy
 - Sources: meat, dairy products, vegetable oils, egg yolks
- **Vitamins** for healthy functioning of body systems
 - Sources: fruit, vegetables, meat, dairy products
- **Minerals** for growth, strength, healthy blood, bones and body system functions
 - Sources: fruit, vegetables, meat, fish, dairy products, grains

Fiber

Fiber is important for digestion and waste elimination. Sources include cereals, grains, fruits and vegetables.

The balanced diet

The USDA recommends to fill plates half full of fruits and vegetables. The MyPlate icon is now used instead of the food pyramid.

We all need balanced intake from six groups:

1. Breads, cereals, rice, pasta (six to 11 servings)
2. Vegetables (three to five servings)
3. Fruits (two to four servings)
4. Meat, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, nuts (two to three servings)

NUTRITION: GUIDELINES FOR BALANCED MEALS AND SPECIAL DIETS

5. Milk, yogurt, cheese (two to three servings)

AND

6. Limited intake of fats, oils and sweets (two to three times per week)

Using a variety of different foods within these groups ensures balance and good nutrition.

What's a serving?

- One serving of breads, cereals, rice, pasta (carbohydrates) = one slice bread or one tortilla, half cup cooked rice or pasta, one ounce dry cereal
- One serving of vegetables = one cup leafy vegetables (salad), 10 french fries, half cup cooked vegetables, half cup vegetable juice
- One serving of fruit = half cup canned, fresh or frozen fruit, one medium (about the size of a baseball) apple, orange or banana, half cup fruit juice
- One serving of protein meat, poultry, fish, beans, peanut butter, eggs (protein) = 2–3 ounces of meat, poultry, fish, half cup dry beans or peas, two tablespoons peanut butter, one egg
- One serving of milk, yogurt, cheese = one cup milk, 8 ounces of yogurt, 1.5 ounces of cheddar cheese

Calories are the amount of energy in food. Calorie need varies by size, weight, age and activity. Body metabolism slows as we age, so the elderly require fewer calories. However, the need for water, fiber and all nutrients remains the same in older people. So eating healthy food is more important!

Special Diets

Many people have special dietary needs because of illness, surgery or ongoing conditions. Be sure you know the type of diet every patient is supposed to be eating. Mistakes on special diets can have serious results and cause many problems for the patient.

Low salt

Low salt diets, also referred to as restricted sodium or low NA (the chemical abbreviation for salt or sodium). Many people with heart or kidney disease or high blood pressure must eat this kind of diet.

NUTRITION: GUIDELINES FOR BALANCED MEALS AND SPECIAL DIETS

Guidelines:

- Little or no salt is used in preparing food.
- No salt should be added by the patient.
- Salty snacks are not allowed (potato chips, pretzels).
- Condiments that contain salt may be prohibited (ketchup, mustard, margarine).

Low fat (also low cholesterol)

Low-fat diets are often recommended for people with heart disease or obesity.

Guidelines:

- Eat low-fat foods like chicken, vegetables, fruits, pasta and cereal.
- Do not eat fatty foods like ice cream, egg yolks, bacon and sausage (or eat in very small amounts rarely).

Soft

This diet helps people who have difficulty chewing or suffer from certain kinds of stomach trouble. Foods that are a part of this diet can include cooked vegetables, ground meat, fish and pureed foods.

Diabetic

It is important for people with diabetes to eat the right foods, whether or not they are taking insulin or other medicine to control their diabetes. A diabetic patient should have a diet plan designed especially for him or her by a doctor or nutritionist. It will specify certain amounts of carbohydrates, proteins and fats.

High protein

A patient who has just had surgery or who has a wound often needs high protein to speed healing. To get protein, this person may eat lots of meat, fish, eggs, beans, peas and dairy products.

Liquid diets

Full liquid includes all liquids, such as strained soups, milk and ice cream. Clear liquid includes only liquids that are see through, such as water, tea, apple juice, clear broth and black coffee (no cream or milk).

Taste tip: Elderly people have a decreased sense of taste, and often their stomachs can't handle spicy foods. Fresh, tasty foods with creative seasoning will help them get the nutrients they need.

Serving Tips

If a patient has impaired vision, identify the foods on his or her plate by using the clock face: “Your pork chop is at 3 o’clock, your mashed potatoes are at 6 o’clock and your pudding is in a separate dish above the plate at 12 o’clock.”

When feeding a patient, identify the foods and ask the patient what food he or she wants next. Offer seasonings if allowed. Offer liquids often, using a different straw for each liquid. Allow hot liquids to cool. Offer one bite at a time, using a spoon two-thirds full. Serve hot foods hot and cold foods cold!

Food Safety

To avoid food poisoning:

- Never undercook meat. Cook until meat temperature is 165 degrees Fahrenheit to kill the bacteria.
- Refrigerated foods must be kept below 45 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Thaw frozen foods quickly and cook them before they reach room temperature.
- Foods that will spoil at room temperature should be prepared last.
- Keep fresh foods separate from each other and use different surfaces and utensils when preparing each one.
- Cover unserved portions to prevent contamination.
- Cool leftovers quickly by refrigerating them in small containers.

TEST

Nutrition: Guidelines for Balanced Meals and Special Diets

Name _____ Date _____ Score _____

Directions: Circle the best answer. Seven correct answers required.

1. What do proteins do?

- a. Build muscle.
- b. Nothing.
- c. Build fat.
- d. Provide an alkaline environment in the stomach.

2. What are nutrients?

- a. The elements of food used by the body for energy, maintenance, healing and growth.
- b. The part of food that passes through the entire body.
- c. People who provide nutritional advice.
- d. None of the above.

3. Which of the following stores vitamins?

- a. Protein.
- b. Minerals.
- c. Fats.
- d. All of the above.

4. How much bread is considered a single serving?

- a. One slice.
- b. Two slices.
- c. An entire loaf.
- d. Four slices.

5. Those on a low-salt diet should not snack on _____.

- a. Strawberries
- b. Potato chips
- c. Hard-boiled eggs
- d. Carrots

TEST

Nutrition: Guidelines for Balanced Meals and Special Diets (cont.)

6. **Low-fat foods include _____.**
- a. Whole milk
 - b. Cheese
 - c. Bacon
 - d. Fruit
7. **Someone with diabetes _____.**
- a. Cannot eat sugar
 - b. Should limit his or her fluid intake
 - c. Usually has a plan that needs to be followed and includes a specified amount of fats, proteins and carbohydrates
 - d. Needs soft foods
8. **A high-protein diet is sometimes recommended to _____.**
- a. Lose weight
 - b. Speed up healing
 - c. Help with heartburn
 - d. Lower blood pressure
9. **A clear liquid diet can include _____.**
- a. Ice cream
 - b. Strained soup
 - c. Cookies
 - d. tea
10. **Which of the following actions follows food safety guidelines?**
- a. After making a large beef stew, leave it on the stove to cool, and then put it in the refrigerator in the large pot you cooked it in.
 - b. Leave your refrigerator at 57 degrees.
 - c. Cover leftovers and put them in small containers, then put them in the refrigerator to cool them quickly.
 - d. Take out the ground beef from the refrigerator, then chop all your vegetables and other ingredients, and finally add the beef to the pan.

