

Family Nutrition Program in Pasco

Nutritious Nibbles of Information

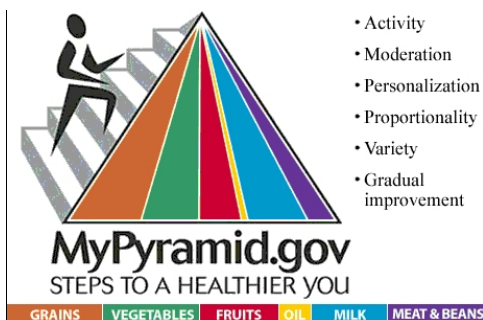
October 2008

MyPyramid and Physical Activity

On April 19, 2005, a new symbol and interactive food guidance system called *MyPyramid* was released by the USDA. *MyPyramid* replaced the *Food Guide Pyramid* that was first introduced in 1992. *MyPyramid* is part of an overall food guidance system that emphasizes the need for a more individualized approach to improving diet and lifestyle. It incorporates recommendations from *the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, released by the US Department of Agriculture and US Department of Health and Human Services in January 2005. *MyPyramid* provides a visual aid to assist in improving diet and lifestyle. It is a consumer-friendly guide, flexible and easy to use to help all healthy people over 2 years of age make healthful food choices.

There are 12 models geared to different people. One size doesn't fit all. *MyPyramid* offers personalized eating plans, interactive tools to help you plan and assess your food choices, and advice to help you: (1) make smart choices from every food group; (2) find your balance between food and physical activity; (3) get the most nutrition out of your calories. (4) stay within your daily calorie needs.

The *MyPyramid* symbol represents the recommended proportion of foods from each of six food groups and focuses on the importance of making smart food choices in every food group, every day. The *MyPyramid* symbol itself shows six vertical color bands, each representing varying proportions of the pyramid. These colors represent the food groups.



- ▲ Orange for grains
- ▲ Green for vegetables
- ▲ Red for fruits
- ▲ Yellow for oils
- ▲ Blue for milk
- ▲ Purple for meat and beans

For specific servings of a given food group, you are encouraged to create your own personal pyramid online, and that is where the name *MyPyramid* comes from. By keying in certain data, you can find out how much you should eat from each food group based on your age, sex and level of activity.

Physical activity is a new element in the symbol. This black silhouette figure has earned the nickname "Spike" as he/she runs up the side of the pyramid.

The new food guidance system utilizes interactive technology found on www.mypyramid.gov. The interactive activities make it easy for individuals to enter their age, gender and physical

activity level to obtain a more personalized recommendation on their daily calorie level based on the *2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. The Web site features *MyPyramid Plan*, *MyPyramid Tracker* and *Inside MyPyramid*, plus tips, resources and a worksheet.

A child-friendly version of *MyPyramid* called *MyPyramid for Kids* has been developed for children six to 11 years old.

There are new *MyPyramids* designed for pregnancy and breastfeeding. The University of Florida recently designed a *MyPyramid for Older Adults*.



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The Food Stamp Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, call toll-free 1-866-762-2237, or visit www.dcf.state.fl.us/ess.