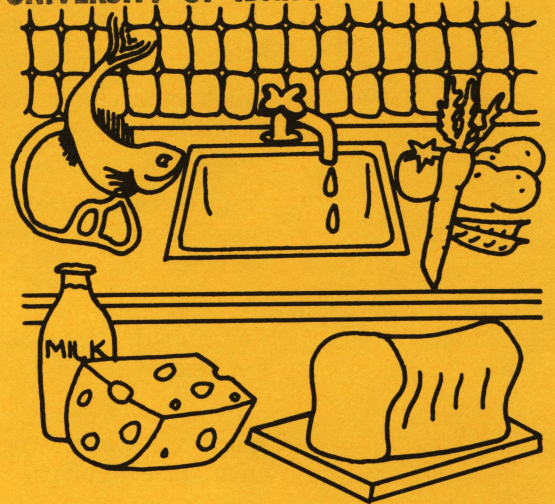




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# *Your Food and What It Means to You*

UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO



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The Fabulous Four — What do you mean?

How you eat — what food does for you. Yes, it is fabulous!

Just think, **you** can control your looks, your popularity, your disposition and your health by making wise food choices. Isn't that fabulous?

Look in the mirror. What do you see? You may see someone who is chunky or a wee bit on the skinny side. That image may have pimples, tired eyes, straggly hair and a droopy body. Or perhaps you see someone who looks bright and peppy, has beautiful skin, shiny hair, an erect posture and wears an easy smile.

But really now, what you are seeing is a mass of skin, muscles and hair. And each is made from millions of tiny cells. Underneath this mass is a frame of bones that is made from other tiny cells.

The food you have eaten built all these special cells into what is known as Y O U.

Even today this building of cells into you is going on because the cells are being rebuilt every minute. The **KIND** and **AMOUNT** of food you eat determine whether the cells you build are strong, beautiful ones, or ones that have difficulty holding you up.

Foods must supply the body with many essential building materials. These are called nutrients. These nutrients are found in the Fabulous Four food groups. The four groups are: milk group, meat group, vegetable-fruit group and bread-cereal group.

You need large amounts of some. Smaller amounts of others are enough. You are more apt to get all the nutrients you need if you get a lot of different kinds of

foods. In other words, no **one** food contains all the needed nutrients, but most foods contain several of them. A good variety of foods will supply all the nutrients you need.

Protein, carbohydrates, fats, minerals, vitamins and water are the six main nutrients provided by the food in your meals. The foods you choose, containing these nutrients, are digested, absorbed and metabolized (constantly built up and broken down) by the body. As this total digestive process goes on, the food is broken into very simple parts (essential nutrients). These are separated and sent throughout the body to do the special jobs for which each is needed. You cannot expect to be healthy and happy unless the food you select contains enough of each of the nutrients to do the job right.

The chart on the next page of the nutrients, what they do for you and where you find them may help you to understand the particular part each plays in developing your body.

This is too hard, you say. I give up, I'm just going to eat what I want when I want it!

Well, you may do all right at that. But then, on the other hand, you may eat too much of some kinds of food and not enough of some others to do the total job of maintaining your health.

Boys are more apt to do better than girls in choosing their food, simply because they usually eat more of it. But even boys may drink too much milk (that is, they may overdo it to the exclusion of other needed food items), eat too many French fries or drink too many non-food soft drinks. The water (in soft drinks) is okay, but so is that from a water faucet, in milk and in fruit juices.



Nutrient	What It Does	Where It is Found
Protein	Builds and repairs tissue. Helps fight infections. Supplies energy.	Meat, fish, eggs, poultry, milk, cheese, pea soup, baked beans, nuts . . . plus some in whole cereal grains.
Carbohydrate	Gives energy. Helps the body use other nutrients. Adds bulk (cellulose) to the digestive tract.	Sugars-starch. Sweet and starchy vegetables and fruits. Fibrous vegetables. Cereals and bread.
Fat	Supplies large amounts of energy in very small amounts of food. Insulates muscles and other tissues. Aids in using vitamins (A, D, E, K). Supplies essential fatty acids.	Butter. Oleomargarine. Lard - hydrogenated fats. Vegetable oils. Whole milk and cream. Egg yolks.
Calcium	Helps build teeth and bones. Helps clot blood. Helps keep steady nerves and strong muscles.	Lots in: Milk, cheddar cheese. Some in: cottage cheese, ice cream, shell fish, green leafy vegetables.
Iron	Combines with protein to make red blood cells. Needed to carry oxygen from lungs to the cells.	Red meats, organ meats, fish, egg yolk, most protein foods, dried beans and peas, dried fruits, whole and enriched bread and cereals, molasses.
Thiamine B <sub>1</sub>	For growth. Helps appetite and digestion. For healthy nerves.	Most meat, especially high in pork. Milk, egg yolks, greens. Whole grain and enriched breads and cereals.
Riboflavin B <sub>2</sub>	Helps cells use oxygen. Helps keep skin clear and eyes bright.	Milk, liver, heart, kidneys, meat, eggs, dry peas and beans. Green and leafy vegetables.
Niacin (a B vitamin)	Helps keep healthy skin and tongue. Helps digestion. For healthy nerves.	All meats, especially organ meats. Dry peas and beans. Peanut butter.
Ascorbic acid (vitamin C)	Helps hold body cells together and to make walls of blood vessels strong. Helps fight infection. Aids in healing wounds and burns.	Fruits, especially citrus. Tomatoes. Green and other vegetables.
Vitamin A (yellow vitamin)	Helps keep skin beautiful. Helps fight infection. For good eyesight.	Fish liver oils. Organ meat. Butter and cream. Fortified oleomargarine. Yellow food. Green and leafy vegetables. Tomatoes. Egg yolk.
Vitamin D	Helps body use calcium. Helps build strong bones and teeth.	Fish liver oil. Vitamin D enriched milk. Sunshine.
Iodine	Helps the thyroid gland to function properly.	Iodized salt, seafood (salt water fish).
Water	Regulates body processes. Carries food to the cells. Carries waste away from cells and out of the body.	Most all foods, especially those with high water content: fresh fruits and vegetables . . . milk and juices.

In the last two groups mentioned (milk and fruit juices), many nutrients do things for you. Check for yourself as to how many body-needed nutrients are in soft drinks. Not many!

So, there is an easier way to be sure of having good health.

Following is a guide giving numbers and sizes of servings that are necessary for children, teenagers and young adults to "eat" sufficient nutrients for one day.



## The Fabulous Four

# Milk Group



An 8 oz. cup is a serving

Children under 9	2 or more
Children 9 to 12	3 or more
Teenagers	4 or more
Young adults	2 or more
Pregnant teenagers	4 or more

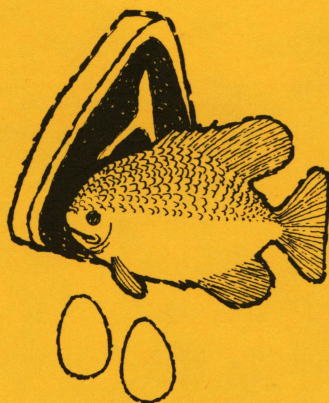
Use whole, evaporated, dry, skim\* or buttermilk.

When substituting for milk (calcium substitute):

- 1 inch cube cheddar cheese = 1/2 cup milk
- 1/2 cup cottage cheese = 1/3 cup milk
- 2 Tbs. cream cheese = 1 Tbs. milk
- 1/2 cup ice cream = 1/4 cup milk

\*When substituting skim milk: Remember most of the butter fat is missing. To equal whole milk value you should be sure to get 2 tsps. of butter or margarine in your food for the day in order to get the planned amount of both vitamin A and calories.

# Meat Group



2 or more servings each day.

Some examples:

- A serving is 2 or 3 oz. of lean cooked meat, poultry or fish (without bone), or
- 2 eggs, or
- 1 cup cooked dry beans or pea soup, or
- 4 Tbs. of peanut butter.

# Vegetable-Fruit Group

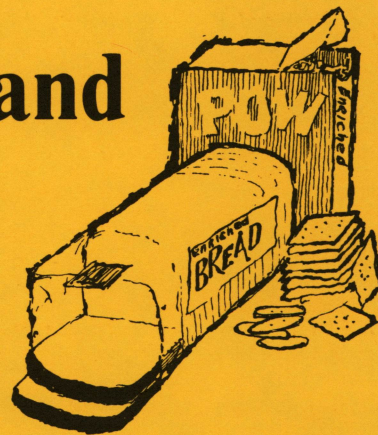


4 or more servings a day.

Choose: 1 serving containing vitamin C, plus  
1 serving containing vitamin A and/or iron, plus  
2 servings of any well-liked vegetable and/or fruit.

[1 serving equals 1/2 cup of juice or vegetable or other fruit or 1 medium apple, potato, banana or orange (3 to a pound), or 1/2 medium-size grapefruit or cantaloupe, or the juice of 1 lemon.]

# Bread and Cereal Group



4 or more servings each day.

Whole grain or enriched cereals and breads, rice, macaroni. Check labels to be sure of contents.

1 serving equals:

- 1 slice bread, or
- 1/2 to 3/4 cup cooked cereal, or
- 1 oz. ready-to-eat cereal, or
- 1/2 to 3/4 cup cooked rice or macaroni variety.

NOTE: 1/4 to 1/2 slice of bread may be considered a serving for a pre-school child.

SPECIAL NOTE: Many sweet rolls, doughnuts, cakes and other packaged mixes are not made of enriched flour and should not be counted in this group. READ LABELS.



# Other Foods

A 5th group —  
Go easy now.



To satisfy your appetite and to add extra appeal to your meals, you may want to include some other foods. Remember what you looked like when you studied the mirror, though. Too much of this group and you won't like what you see. You, your parents and your doctor should decide just how much of these OTHER FOODS are for you.

Butter or fortified margarine should come first, mainly because of the vitamin A. Oils, sugars and highly refined grain products (cake and pastry flour) are down the line.

Remember . . . some of the Fabulous Four group foods, if prepared with excessive amounts of sugar or fat, should also be thought of as being in this group.

Besides eating good food to see that you'll look your best in the mirror, you should also get enough rest (sleep) and exercise (outdoors preferably).

You also need to be clean and to be happy. NOTE: To be happy within a family, you must do your part in helping others to be happy.

## Benefits from the Fabulous Four

- Strength for a full life in the future
- Beauty for more enjoyment
- Correct weight
- Better personality
- More ability to learn
- Enthusiasm
- Happy, well-adjusted

## Things You Might Like to See and Read for Further Study

(Ask your Extension Home Economist)

The Real You — Filmstrip, 84 color slides. Shows the importance of good nutrition for beauty development and vitality for the teenager.

It's the Most — Color slides. A play-acting method of learning about the four food groups.

The Guide to Good Eating.

Food Models

Teenage Comparison Cards (Compares nutrients in different foods).

A Girl and Her Figure — From Idaho Dairy Council.

A Boy and His Physique — From Idaho Dairy Council.

10 cents per copy

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