MyPyramid

Why learn how to eat a healthful diet?

People must eat a variety of foods to stay healthy. MyPyramid is a personalized food plan to help people remember what foods they should eat in what quantities to help maintain their health. The MyPyramid for kids, ages 6 to 11 years, is used in this activity book and is based on 1800 calories per day. Family members may go to MyPyramid.gov and enter age, sex, and physical activity into the MyPyramid Plan to receive a customized food guide and calorie goal.

What do we need?

Activity 1: old magazines with pictures of foods; scissors, paper and pencils, pens, markers or crayons.
Activity 2: paper, pencils pyramid
Activities 3 and 4: kitchen table, food items from your kitchen

How long will it take?

30 to 60 minutes or longer, depending on which activities your family decides to do.

What do we do?

• Cut out the MyPyramid For Kids Poster on the next page. You may want to make copies so everyone can have his own.
• Use the poster or refer to MyPyramid.gov to review the food groups and the amounts we need each day.
• Hang MyPyramid poster on your refrigerator as a reminder.
• Choose one or all of the following activities, depending on children’s ages.
Activity 1. Pyramid Upside Down

- Have everyone sit in a circle and give each person one or two pictures of different foods. One person sits in the middle and calls out the name of a food group. Everyone whose food belongs in that group gets up and changes places. Occasionally, the person in the middle says, “Pyramid Upside Down,” and everyone switches places. As people jump up to change places, the person in the middle tries to get one of their chairs. The person left without a chair then goes to the center and calls out the food groups. If someone jumps up without a picture of the food group that was called out, gently correct him and continue the game. Play until everyone has had a turn in the middle or the group tires of the game.

Activity 2. Name Your Food

- Each person prints his name vertically on the left side of a sheet of paper. The person then selects a food that begins with each letter of his name. The last step is to identify where each food fits on the pyramid.

Activity 3. Pyramid Snack

- Work together to invent a snack that includes foods from each food group in the pyramid. For example, start with an English muffin half or a firm cracker. Spread the top lightly with peanut butter. Add shredded carrots and chopped apples. Serve with milk. Option: Have a pyramid snack contest with each member of the family entering his version of a pyramid snack. Award a prize to each person. For example, prizes could be awarded for the best-tasting snack, the prettiest snack, best low-calorie snack, funniest snack, most original snack, most food groups in snack, etc. Or family members could just sample each other’s snacks.

Activity 4. Real Food for Real People

- Divide the family into two teams. Each team tries to stack foods on the kitchen table to represent the recommended daily amount of each of the five food groups. The first team done gets to plan a menu for a meal that will include all the groups in the pyramid.

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What happened?

- Which of the games did you play?
- If you played more than one game, which did you enjoy the most?
- Did family members have difficulty identifying or finding examples for any of the food groups?

What did you learn?

- Were there any surprises – for example, food that you thought should be in a different food group?
- Are there ways the family can fix foods they usually don’t like that will make them more acceptable?

Why was this activity important?

- How does knowing MyPyramid help you choose foods to eat each day?

What’s next?

- How can your family use this information when planning meals and grocery shopping?