

**Family Living
Focus**

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MAKE NUTRITION COME ALIVE

Welcome to National Nutrition Month!

March is the month set aside by American Dietetics Association to recognize the important role that nutrition plays in maintaining good health.

National Nutrition month is also a time to focus on individual nutritional needs. Calorie, protein, vitamin and mineral requirements vary from person to person depending upon several factors: gender, age, health status, and lifestyle, including the amount of physical activity one has. A meal plan can be geared for these needs and to include an individual's food preferences whether they are from their ethnic background or general likes and dislikes.

There are several guidelines that serve to provide a framework for daily food choices.

Nutritional recommendations can be found in the Food Guide Pyramid, the diabetic exchange system, and the Dietary Guidelines. These are "tools" for the individual to assess where their diet plans currently stand and then provide a "blueprint" to building a healthy meal pattern.

To start this individual assessment, one must keep accurate food records for at least three days. Keep note of portion size, such as 1/2 cup of orange juice, 8 ounces of milk, or 3 ounces of hamburger. Also note the way the food was prepared, such as 8 ounces of skim milk, 3 ounces of broiled hamburger, or 4 ounces of fried chicken. You may be good at guessing size, but a food scale, measuring cups and spoons are more accurate for this assessment.

Then take a look at either the Food Guide Pyramid, the diabet-

ic exchanges, or the Dietary Guidelines. Choose only one "tool" to use because using more than one can become confusing. Compare each of your three-day food record with this tool. Note where you were right on target, then where you fell short. Perhaps you didn't meet the recommendations of 5 fruits or vegetables per day or maybe you were low in milk consumption.

Next, you make a plan for improving your choices. To make this process easier, select only three goals that you feel are realistic and can be accomplished over the next seven days. For example, you can write your goals as:

1. "I will eat three pieces of fruit each day."
2. "I will decrease my intake of butter or margarine by two teaspoons."
3. "I will increase my consumption of milk to 16 ounces per day."

Once you have accomplished these goals and they become part of your eating habits, then move on to a set of three other goals. This way, you have individualized our plan for better nutrition.

Some people may have health problems that make this assessment and planning more difficult. They may have diabetes, stomach or bowel irritations, heart disease, lactose intolerance, or food allergies that

require special dietary adaptations. People who have these conditions must learn about food substitutions, foods to avoid, or those which must be increased to prevent a vitamin or mineral deficiency.

A registered dietitian can help plan meals for these special health considerations. He or she

will alter the plans according to the individual's needs and offer suggestions for food shopping and preparation.

To find a registered dietitian, call your county extension office, local hospital, or dietetic association. To obtain information on the Food Guide Pyramid or Dietary Guidelines, contact your local county extension office.



Lancaster Society 18

Lancaster Farm Women Society 18 held its February meeting on Feb. 21 at the home of Lettie Nissley as hostess in her Willow Valley apartment filled with lovely antiques. President Martha Stoner called the meeting to order. Devotions were presented by Mac Weaver, a scripture portion followed by a poem. Roll call was answered by telling of winter projects, interests, and accomplishments. 17 members were present.

Members filled shoe boxes with gifts for needy children at Christmas to raise the number to 1,500,000 for the Boone family to give out as one of their 170,000

projects in Mexico alone. Other projects include Gospel Crusade, medical help, a home for very sick children, and disaster relief. After refreshments a business meeting was conducted and ladies gave a report on the convention at the January Farm Show.

A real Valentine touch was added when a member admitted her beautiful red dress was a surprise Valentine gift from her husband. Lettie carried a basket of jellies and candies to each one to choose a gift to take home. The March meeting will be a breakfast with husband and guests at Kountry Kitchen Restaurant.



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