



NEWS RELEASE

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Make small changes using the dietary guidelines

*By Chris Halagarda,
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FORT LEE, Va. – It’s February again! The time when New Year’s resolutions to “lose weight” become distant memories and the excuses are abundant: It’s too cold to exercise outside, I don’t have time to go to the fitness center, and biscuits covered with gravy are more inviting than skinless chicken breasts and broccoli.

If you’re one of the many who feel like they’ve failed at their resolution, again, make a *new* New Year’s resolution. It’s never a bad time to improve your health, but this time, focus less on body weight and more on healthy eating habits. If you are giving yourself the nutrients your body needs, you will be rewarded with a healthier body and mind. Your energy levels will increase, you’ll be more productive at home and work, you’ll sleep better, and you will set a good example for your family. This February, resolve to make one change to your diet that you know you can succeed at.

Then in March, if you’re still practicing that one change, decide if you would like to add another change or simply continue to follow your original change. Regardless of how many changes you make in 2009, you want to be certain it becomes part of your routine in 2010, 2011, 2012 and so on. The following are a few key recommendations from the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005. These suggestions require no expensive supplements or trips to out of the way “health” food stores. You can cover these recommendations by shopping at the commissary. For more detailed and individualized diet and exercise information, go to www.MyPyramid.gov.

- Consume less than 20-25 grams of saturated fats and less than 300 milligrams of cholesterol each day.
- Get rid of trans fats and partially hydrogenated oils in your diet. (Partially hydrogenated oils are listed in the ingredients on food labels.)
- When selecting and preparing meat, poultry, and milk or milk products, make choices that are lean, low-fat or fat-free.
- Consume at least three servings of whole grains per day with the rest of the recommended grains coming from enriched or whole-grain products. In general, at least half the grains should come from whole grains.
- Eat two cups or pieces of fruit daily.
- Eat a minimum of 2½ servings of vegetables daily. Select from all five vegetable subgroups (dark green, orange, legumes, starchy vegetables and other vegetables) several times a week.
- Consume three cups of fat-free or low-fat milk or equivalent milk products per day.
- Consume less than 2,300 milligrams (about 1 teaspoon of salt) of sodium per day.

Processed and canned foods such as cold cuts and soups are examples of foods that are traditionally high in sodium.

By following these recommendations in 2009, your focus will be on sound nutritional behaviors and not on your body size. Keep following this list of key recommendations and your 2010 New Year's resolution can be ... to save money for a new wardrobe!

For more information about making healthy choices, visit Ask the Dietitian on <http://www.commissaries.com> and post your questions on the DeCA Dietitian Forum. Be sure to look for other useful information in the Dietitian's Voice archive. Sign up with the DeCA Dietitian on www.twitter.com and get messages sent to your cell phone today. For delicious recipes, check out Kay's Kitchen. And to enjoy all your commissary has to offer, sign up for the Commissary Connection.

Nutrition Tip: *Make small changes in your eating habits like drinking three cups of 1 percent milk instead of 2 percent milk to subtract 60 calories a day. This may help you lose 5 to 10 pounds in a year.*

– *Chris Halagarda is the Navy fitness, performance enhancement dietitian. Feel free to contact him with your questions at (202) 433-3472 or Chris.Halagarda@Navy.mil.*

About DeCA: *The Defense Commissary Agency operates a worldwide chain of commissaries providing groceries to military personnel, retirees and their families in a safe and secure shopping environment. Authorized patrons purchase items at cost plus a 5-percent surcharge, which covers the costs of building new commissaries and modernizing existing ones. Shoppers save an average of more than 30 percent on their purchases compared to commercial prices – savings worth about \$3,400 annually for a family of four. A core military family support element, and a valued part of military pay and benefits, commissaries contribute to family readiness, enhance the quality of life for America’s military and their families, and help recruit and retain the best and brightest men and women to serve their country.*