



HEALTHY YOU FOR LIFE

Newsletter

Spring 2026

Take a Hike: Trails to Explore this Spring

FIRST LANDING STATE PARK: BALD CYPRESS TRAIL

This 1.8 mile trail gives you a chance to see the “Rainbow Swamp,” where decomposing cypress needles scatter light on the surface of the still water.

CHIPPOKES STATE PARK: COLLEGE RUN AND JAMES RIVER TRAILS

Together, these trails are a 1.8-mile hike. **Bonus:** You can hunt for (and **keep**) shark teeth found on the James River waterfront!

FAVORITE CITY PARK LOOPS

Mount Trashmore (Virginia Beach)
1.8-mile loop with fitness stations & frequent community events

Oak Grove Park (Chesapeake)
1.5-mile loops with fitness stations & lots of shade

Mariner’s Lake Loop (Newport News)
A longer 4.8-mile loop with lots of shade

April 22nd is Earth Day

The foods we eat can impact our planet. Having a vegetarian meal today can save 133 gallons of water and reduce your carbon footprint by 8 pounds! Try using beans, tofu, seitan, or quinoa as your protein at dinner.

Source: Penn State University

May is National Salad Month!

Salads don’t have to be boring bowls of lettuce. Create your own by dicing your favorite vegetables, fruits, and protein or trying a delicious “dense bean salad” trending on social media right now.

Stretch the budget by eating in-season fruits and vegetables:

Some fruits and vegetables that are “in season” in Spring and early Summer include: asparagus, strawberries, spinach, and peas

Let's Discuss: The New 2025–2030 Dietary Guidelines

About the Guidelines

WHAT ARE THEY?

Every 5 years, the United States government releases new Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) using recent medical and scientific research to make nutrition recommendations that meet nutrient needs, promote health, and reduce the risk of chronic disease for Americans across the lifespan. The 2025–2030 DGA was released on January 7, 2026.

WHAT STAYED THE SAME?

The new DGA still recommends:

- Eating nutrient-dense foods, including vegetables, fruits, and whole grains.
- Limiting added sugars
- Limiting saturated fat intake to less than 10% of daily Calories

WHAT CHANGED?

Past versions of the DGA recommended that Americans increase the amount of whole grains, fruits, and vegetables **and** reduce added sugars, sodium, and saturated fat that they eat. Following these recommendations would likely limit “processed” foods in a person’s diet. The new DGA, however, specifically focus on “whole” and “real” foods in the diet and seem to reduce recommended amounts of whole grains and fruits in the new [inverted] Food Pyramid.

Concern: Meat and Full-Fat Dairy

Eating enough protein is very important, but most Americans already meet or exceed their protein needs. High dairy fat and meat consumption make limiting saturated fats to the recommended 10% of daily Calories extremely difficult. Also, scientific evidence supports eating less meat and more plant-based protein for the prevention of chronic diseases.

Concern: “Whole” and “Real” Foods

These recommendations seem to ignore the very real issues of access to “whole” or “real” foods and their affordability that many Americans experience.

What are experts saying?

Many professional and scientific organizations have voiced concern over the lack of science behind the new DGA and the confusing/harmful messaging accompanying them.

At Healthy You, we continue to support a healthy, balanced diet including low-fat/fat-free dairy, lean proteins (meats and/or plant-based), fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Your dietitians will help you make healthy food choices within your family’s budget and time limits.

Recipe:

Strawberry, Edamame, and White Bean Salad

courtesy of [Purdue Extension](#)

INGREDIENTS:

For the Vinaigrette Dressing:

- 1 1/2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1/4 cup apple juice
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper

For the salad:

- 1 1/2 cups sliced strawberries
- 1 1/2 cups shelled edamame
- 1 15-ounce can low-sodium white beans (drained and rinsed)
- 1/2 cup red onion (chopped)
- 2 tablespoons fresh basil (chopped)
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 6 cups baby spinach

DIRECTIONS:

- Cook edamame according to package directions, drain, and rinse under cool water.
- Meanwhile, add all the vinaigrette ingredients to a small bowl, and whisk to combine.
- Place strawberries, edamame, white beans, chopped onion, chopped basil, and feta cheese in a medium bowl, and toss to combine.
- To serve, place a bed of baby spinach on four plates. Then, nestle the strawberry-white bean-edamame mix atop the spinach.
- Drizzle with dressing. Makes 4 Servings.



Nutrition Information:

- Serving Size: 1/4 of recipe
- Total Calories: 270
- Protein: 14g
- Carbohydrates: 30g
- Dietary Fiber: 10g
- Total Fat: 10g
- Saturated Fat: 2g
- Cholesterol: 10mg
- Sodium: 350mg

Recipe:

Ranch Dip

courtesy of Food Hero (Oregon State University).

Enjoy this better-for-you dip with in-season Spring veggies like radishes, carrots, and sugar snap peas! This is a great way to get a protein boost from cottage cheese if you don't usually like the texture.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup fat-free cottage cheese
- 1 cup fat-free plain yogurt
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder (or 2 cloves garlic, minced)
- ½ teaspoon onion powder
- 2 sprigs of parsley, chopped (or 1 teaspoon dried parsley)

DIRECTIONS:

- Wash hands with soap and water.
- Rinse or scrub fresh vegetables under running water before preparing.
- Blend all ingredients in a blender until smooth.
- Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.



Nutrition Information:

- Serving Size: 2 tablespoons
- Total Calories: 20
- Protein: 3g
- Carbohydrates: 2g
- Dietary Fiber: 0g
- Total Fat: 0g
- Saturated Fat: 0g
- Cholesterol: 0mg
- Sodium: 140mg

Rethink Your Drink!

Add sliced, fresh strawberries and mint to your water bottle and enjoy the taste of Spring!



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