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**SPECIAL INSERT**  
**UNL Extension in**  
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# 30 MyPyramid Steps to a Healthier You

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USDA's MyPyramid symbolizes a personalized approach to healthy eating and physical activity. It reminds us to make healthy food choices and to be active every day. The slogan “Steps to a Healthier You”

suggests we can benefit from taking daily small steps to improve our diet and lifestyle.

Seven recommendations stressed by MyPyramid include:

- Make half your grains whole
- Vary your veggies
- Focus on fruits
- Get your calcium-rich foods
- Go lean with protein
- Find your balance between food and physical activity
- Limit fats, added sugars and sodium

Following are 30 steps from <http://mypyramid.gov> for a month of “steps to a healthier you.”



<p><b>1</b> On the Internet, go to <a href="http://mypyramid.gov">http://mypyramid.gov</a> and calculate your personalized “My Pyramid Plan.”</p>	<p><b>2</b> Order veggie toppings for your pizza like mushrooms, green peppers and onions.</p>	<p><b>3</b> Eat foods and beverages low in “added sugars.” Naturally occurring sugars such as those which are in milk and fruits do not count as added sugars.</p>	<p><b>4</b> Vary your fruit choices. Fruits differ in nutrient content.</p>	<p><b>5</b> Make most of your choices whole or cut-up fruit rather than juice, for the benefits dietary fiber provides.</p>	<p><b>6</b> Select vegetables with more potassium often, such as sweet potatoes, white potatoes, winter squash, tomato products, beet greens, spinach, dry beans and split peas.</p>
<p><b>7</b> Choose grain products which name one of the following whole-grain ingredients first on the ingredient list: brown rice, bulgur, graham flour, oatmeal, whole-grain corn, whole oats, whole rye, whole wheat, wild rice.</p>	<p><b>8</b> Dried fruits make a great snack. They're easy to carry and store well. Because they're dried, 1/4 cup is equal to 1/2 cup of other fruits.</p>	<p><b>9</b> Sauces or seasonings can add calories, fat and sodium to vegetables. Use the Nutrition Facts label to compare the calories and % Daily Value for fat and sodium in plain and seasoned vegetables.</p>	<p><b>10</b> Walking, gardening, briskly pushing a baby stroller, climbing the stairs, playing soccer or dancing are all good examples of being active. For health benefits, physical activity should add up to at least 30 minutes a day.</p>	<p><b>11</b> Try a main dish salad for lunch. Go light on the salad dressing.</p>	<p><b>12</b> For a change, try brown rice or whole-wheat pasta.</p>
<p><b>13</b> If you avoid milk because of lactose intolerance, try using a lactose-free milk, consuming the enzyme lactase before consuming milk or using a calcium fortified soy or rice beverage. <i>Bioavailability of calcium from nondairy foods may vary.</i></p>	<p><b>14</b> Popcorn, a whole grain, can be a healthy snack with little or no added salt and butter.</p>	<p><b>15</b> Do exercises or pedal a stationary bike while watching television.</p>	<p><b>16</b> Many vegetables taste great with a dip or dressing. Try a low-fat salad dressing with raw broccoli, cauliflower, red and green peppers or celery sticks.</p>	<p><b>17</b> Physical activity may include short bouts of moderate-intensity activity. The accumulated total is what is important and can be accumulated through three to six 10-minute bouts over the course of a day.</p>	<p><b>18</b> Color is not an indication of a whole grain. Bread can be brown because of molasses or other added ingredients. Read the ingredient list to see if it is a whole grain.</p>
<p><b>19</b> Frozen juice bars (100% juice) make healthy alternatives to high-fat snacks.</p>	<p><b>20</b> Park farther from your destination (work, shopping, etc.) and walk the rest of the way.</p>	<p><b>21</b> Look for fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids, such as salmon, trout and herring.</p>	<p><b>22</b> Stock up on frozen vegetables for quick and easy cooking in the microwave.</p>	<p><b>23</b> Substitute whole wheat for up to half of the flour in pancake, waffle, muffin or other flour-based recipes.</p>	<p><b>24</b> If you drink lattes or cappuccinos — ask for them with fat-free (skim) milk.</p>
<p><b>25</b> Refrigerate or freeze perishables, prepared food and leftovers within TWO hours.</p>	<p><b>26</b> Use the Nutrition Facts label and choose grain products with a higher % Daily Value (%DV) for fiber — the %DV for fiber is a good clue to the amount of whole grain in the product.</p>	<p><b>27</b> Select fruits with more potassium often, such as bananas, prunes and prune juice, dried peaches and apricots, cantaloupe, honeydew melon and orange juice.</p>	<p><b>28</b> For dessert, make pudding with fat-free or low-fat milk.</p>	<p><b>29</b> Replace a coffee break with a brisk 10-minute walk. Ask a friend to go with you.</p>	<p><b>30</b> For fresh fruit salads, mix apples, bananas or pears with acidic fruits like oranges, pineapple or lemon juice to keep them from turning brown.</p>

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