



GetFITConnections™.com

## **Explanation of Your Pyramid Connections™ Slide Guide With Activity Ideas**

The information in Your Pyramid Connections™ Slide Guide is from MyPyramid.gov. The Slide Guide can be used at health fairs or classes to assist participants in determining calories and recommended food amounts. Participants can then obtain further information at MyPyramid.gov.

*Your Pyramid Connections™ Slide Guide is a tool to help users:*

- Determine their activity level
- Determine recommended calories based on activity level
- Determine recommended food group amounts as well as recommended oil limitations
- Determine weekly colored and textured vegetable amounts

### **TIPS Side 1 – Your Pyramid Connections™ – How Many Calories Do You Need Each Day?**

- Ask participants to pull the tab on Your Pyramid Connections™ Slide Guide to their gender and age. Point out how calories increase as activity level increases from sedentary to moderately active to vigorously active. The increase in activity of just 100 calories a day can save a 1-pound weight gain a month, or a 12-pound weight gain a year. And the good news is – this activity can be broken into 10-15 minute breaks throughout the day.
- Encourage participants to be active 30 minutes on most days for health benefits, and 60-90 minutes to lose and maintain weight loss.
- Before you turn the Slide Guide over, ask participants to look at the picture of MyPyramid. Each vertical colored stripe refers to a different food group: Orange-Grain, Green-Vegetable, Red-Fruits, Blue-Milk and Purple -Meat and Beans. The base of each stripe is wider to represent lower fat and lower sugar foods within that food group. For example, whole-grain non-sugar coated cereal is at the bottom of the group, but sugarcoated, non whole-grain cereal is situated further up on the stripe. The goal is to eat more foods from the bottom of each stripe.

- The exercising character represents the importance of regular activity.
- Ask participants turn the Slide Guide over.

### **TIPS Side 2 - Your Pyramid Connections™ – Food Groups**

***Note: When participants pull the tab on Your Pyramid Connections™ Slide Guide, the colored boxes towards the bottom of the slide guide should line up under Recommended Daily Amounts to reveal recommended amounts of Grains, Veggies, Fruit, Milk, Meat/Beans, and Oils. The green boxes should line up under Recommended Weekly Colored Vegetables – Dark Green, Orange, Dry Beans/Peas, Starchy, and Other to reveal weekly colored and textured vegetable recommendations.***

- Ask participants to identify their recommended calories on the left hand side of the Slide Guide and pull the tab to those calories. The recommended daily amounts for grains, vegetables, fruit, milk, meat/beans and oils will appear in the colored boxes under Recommended Daily Amounts toward the bottom of the Slide Guide.
- The vegetables are further broken down into colored/textured vegetables and those are listed in the dark green boxes under Recommended Weekly Amounts towards the bottom of the Slide Guide.

### **Foods Groups Are Listed in the Colored Boxes That Correspond to the Colors in MyPyramid**

- **Grains – Orange Box:** Make at least ½ of your selections whole-wheat or whole-grains. Examples are listed in the light orange box on the Slide Guide. Daily recommendations are in 1-ounce equivalents. For example, a 1-ounce equivalent of cooked oatmeal = ½ cup. Ready-to-eat cereal flakes are lighter than cooked oatmeal, so 1-ounce of ready-to-eat cereal equals 1 cup. A 4-ounce bagel equals 4 ounces.
- **Vegetables – Green Box:** The Slide Guide contains the recommendations for daily vegetables and weekly vegetables. Vegetables are broken down into Dark Green, Orange, Dry Bean/Peas, Starchy, and Other. Examples are located in the light green box. One half cup of cut-up, raw, cooked vegetables or juice = ½ cup. Leafy greens are lower in calories and ½ cup = 1 cup of leafy greens.
- **Fruits – Red Box:** The light red box contains fruit amounts. One half cup of fruit equals ½ cup raw, cooked, or juice. Dried fruit contains more calories per an equal amount of fresh fruit because there is no water to increase the volume. Therefore, ¼ cup of dried fruit = ½ cup of fresh fruit.

- **Milk/Dairy – Blue Box:** The light blue box contains examples of milk and other milk based dairy foods. One cup of milk = 1 cup of milk or low-fat yogurt, 1 ½ ounces of harder natural cheese or 2 ounces of processed cheese. One third cup of shredded cheese equals 1 cup of milk.
- **Meat/Beans – Purple Box:** The light purple box contains examples of meat and beans. One ounce of meat = 1 egg, ¼ cup cooked dry beans/tofu, 1-tablespoon peanut butter or 2 tablespoons hummus, and ½ ounce nuts or seeds. Three ounces of chicken = 3 ounces of meat. Replace some of the meat in your diet with beans, nuts, or seeds to reduce the amount of dietary saturated fat.
- **Oils – Yellow Box:** Oils are not a food group, but the recommendation is to limit oils. Recommended oils are the monounsaturated and polyunsaturated oils listed in the light yellow box. Examples include liquid canola, olive, peanut, corn, safflower, and soybean oils. Select mayonnaise made with one of these oils and trans fat free soft tub margarines.

### **ACTIVITIES WITH YOUR PYRAMID CONNECTIONS™ SLIDE GUIDE:**

**1. Encourage participants to take 15-minute activity breaks to total 60 minutes. Examples are listed below:**

*Recommended 30-90 minutes of regular exercise does not need to be all at one time. If you have difficulty getting in the exercise time all at once, or if you just want to add even more activity into your schedule, break up your activity into 10-minute breaks.*

**Take activity breaks** instead of coffee breaks. Encourage others to walk around the block with you.

**If your children** spend too much time on the computer, take a 10-minute activity break for each hour of computer time.

**Picking up the mail?** Don't turn around at the mailbox, but keep going down the road for a 10-minute activity break.

**If you feel** stressed, de-stress with a yoga tape. Yoga tapes are available in perk me up morning routines and settle down evening routines.

**Build a quick** 10-minute snowman or snowgal with your kids.

**Each television show** contains about 10 minutes of commercials, so get up and move (not to the refrigerator) when the commercials are on.

**2. Explain key concepts in MyPyramid with empty food product labels. Save product labels and demonstrate the following:**

- Margarine labels: Look for trans fat free on the label as well as the recommended oils in the light yellow box on Your Pyramid Connections™ Slide Guide.
- Cereal and Bread: Label read for the first ingredient as whole-wheat flour or whole-grains.
- Fruit containers (packed in syrup, light syrup, water or juice): Compare calorie and sugar content. Four grams of sugar = 1 teaspoon of sugar.
- Yogurt containers –Compare 2 8-ounce cartons of the same brand of yogurt – one plain low-fat and one fruit-flavored (with sugar). Compare the sugar content in the yogurts. The sugar content in the plain yogurt is lactose. The difference in the grams of sugar between the plain and sugar yogurts is added sugar.

**2. Bring in samples of grains and whole-wheat items such as whole-wheat couscous, quinoa, whole-wheat noodles, whole-wheat tortillas and other whole grain or whole-wheat products listed on Your Pyramid Connections™ Slide Guide. Make the following recipe:**

**Couscous with Fresh Crisp Vegetables and Feta Cheese (serves 4)**

**Ingredient List:**

- 1 cup whole-wheat couscous
  - 2 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
  - 2 teaspoons canola oil
  - 2 cups broccoli florets
  - ¼ cup sliced black olives
  - 1 cup sliced grape tomatoes
  - 3-4 tablespoons lite teriyaki sauce
  - ½ cup feta cheese
  - small plastic serving cups, napkins, fork, large mixing bowl, large spoon for mixing and smaller spoon for serving.
1. Cook couscous according to package directions with broth in place of water.
  2. While couscous is cooking, sauté broccoli florets until tender crisp in canola oil.
  3. Add cooked couscous and broccoli to a large bowl. Add black olives, tomatoes, teriyaki sauce, and feta cheese. Gently toss.

*For a cooking demonstration, prepare the couscous and broccoli ahead of time. Toss the ingredients together at the cooking demonstration.*

**For more ideas to help participants meet recommendations in MyPyramid.gov and the U.S. 2005 Dietary Guidelines go to GetFITConnections.com and click on Goal Coupon Books.**