

News Of Nutrition

New Guidelines Help Balance The Family Diet

(NAPSA)—Eating a balanced diet doesn't have to be a balancing act thanks to new guidelines.

The recently released 2005 U.S. Dietary Guidelines recommend that people choose nutrient dense foods as a way to maintain good nutrition and control calories. The guidelines affirm the important role that meat and poultry play in maintaining optimal health since they are among the most nutrient-dense foods.

Information about the leanest, most nutritious cuts of meat and poultry—plus healthy tips and recipes—can be found at meatpoultrynutrition.org. Here are just a few tips from the site:

- **Ironing Out the Details.** While moms may tout spinach as the way to increase iron intake, meat and poultry contain more readily-absorbable “heme iron.” The body absorbs four times as much iron from a serving of cooked beef sirloin as from a cup of iron-rich bran flakes. This is particularly important for growing children and pregnant women.

- **Low-Fat is Good.** While low-fat is good, a “no-fat” diet is not the best choice for good health. Fat helps the body absorb fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E and K, and carotenoids such as beta carotene.

Fat provides essential fatty acids, linoleic acid and alpha linoleic acid, needed for healthy skin, normal brain and nervous system functioning, and normal growth in children.

The guidelines increased the previous recommendation that no more than 30 percent of calories



Meat and poultry are important and efficient sources of iron, an essential nutrient.

come from fat to no more than 35 percent. The site offers a guide to different types of fat and the role they play in nutrition.

- **Portion Control is Key.** Portion sizes have grown steadily over the last few decades with restaurant plates now 25 percent larger to accommodate these portions. To estimate how much meat or poultry fits the recommended 3 oz. portion size, picture a deck of cards. To estimate one cup of ground meat such as ground beef or turkey taco mix, use your fist as a measurement.

- **A Meaty Issue.** The guidelines emphasize the importance of exercise most days along with a balanced diet. Health organizations such as the American Dietetic Association and the American Cancer Society agree with the message that balance is best for good health and weight control.

For more information, visit www.meatpoultrynutrition.org.