

Nurses Notes on Nutrition
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The **Meat and Beans** group is our last stop out of six in the Food Guide Pyramid! For detailed information visit www.mypyramid.gov .

Foods in this group include: meat, poultry, fish, dry beans and peas, eggs, nuts and seeds. This group supplies a good amount of protein, B vitamins (niacin, riboflavin, thiamin, and B6), iron, vitamin E, zinc and magnesium. The one thing to watch for with this group is the amount of fat, cholesterol and calories you are getting, which increases your risk for heart disease. Egg yolks (egg whites are cholesterol free), and organ meats like liver and giblets are high in cholesterol. Lean meats, poultry without skin, and most fish are lower-calorie choices. Eat baked, broiled or steamed rather than fried foods. Try putting nuts on cereal or fruit, or enjoy sunflower seeds, pecans, cashews, pumpkin seeds or other nuts as a snack (a small handful of nuts is about a one ounce serving).

A serving in this group is three ounces (about the size of a deck of playing cards or an audiotape cassette) You should have two to three servings per day from this group.

A bit about the nutrients:

Proteins are the building blocks for muscles, bones, cartilage, skin and blood, and also for hormones, enzymes, and vitamins. They also provide calories.

B Vitamins help build tissues, function in the nervous system, aid in the formation of red blood cells, and help the body to release energy.

Iron is very important for carrying oxygen in the blood. Just a note, that calcium interferes with iron absorption, so it is best to separate the intake of these two minerals.

Vitamin E (a fat-soluble vitamin), is an anti-oxidant that helps protect vitamin A and essential fatty acids from cell oxidation.

Zinc helps the immune system function properly.

Magnesium is used in building bones and in releasing energy from muscles.

Enjoy being a **Meat** eater but like anything else, everything in moderation!!

(sources: www.mypyramid.gov; Fitness and Wellness, 6th Ed., W. Hoeger and S. Hoeger, 2005)