Week 1 Glossary

Introduction to Nutrition

Acceptable Macronutrient Distribution Ranges ranges of intakes for the energy nutrients that provide adequate energy and nutrients and reduce the risk of chronic diseases.

Adequate Intake the average daily amount of a nutrient that appears sufficient to maintain a specified criterion; a value used as a guide for nutrient intake when an RDA cannot be determined.

Anthropometric relating to measurement of the physical characteristics of the body, such as height and weight.

Blind Experiment an experiment in which the subjects do not know whether they are members of the experimental group or the control group.

Calories units by which energy is measured.

Chronic Diseases diseases characterized by a slow progression and long duration. Examples include heart disease, cancer, and diabetes.

Control Group a group of individuals similar in all possible respects to the experimental group except for the treatment.

Correlation the simultaneous increase, decrease, or change in two variables.

Covert hidden, as if under covers.

Deficient the amount of a nutrient below which almost all healthy people can be expected, over time, to experience deficiency symptoms.

Diet the foods and beverages a person eats and drinks.

Dietary Reference Intakes a set of nutrient intake values for healthy people in the United States and Canada. These values are used for planning and assessing diets.

Double-Blind Experiment an experiment in which neither the subjects nor the researchers know which subjects are members of the experimental group and which are serving as control subjects, until after the experiment is over.

Energy the capacity to do work. The energy in food is chemical energy. The body can convert this chemical energy to mechanical, electrical, or heat energy.

Energy Density a measure of the energy a food provides relative to the amount of food (kcalories per gram).

Energy-Yielding Nutrients the nutrients that break down to yield energy the body can use.
**essential nutrients** nutrients a person must obtain from food because the body cannot make them for itself in sufficient quantity to meet physiological needs; also called indispensable nutrients.

**Estimated Average Requirement** the average daily amount of a nutrient that will maintain a specific biochemical or physiological function in half the healthy people of a given age and gender group.

**Estimated Energy Requirement** the average dietary energy intake that maintains energy balance and good health in a person of a given age, gender, weight, height, and level of physical activity.

**experimental group** a group of individuals similar in all possible respects to the control group except for the treatment.

**foods** products derived from plants or animals that can be taken into the body to yield energy and nutrients for the maintenance of life and the growth and repair of tissues.

**functional foods** foods that contain physiologically active compounds that provide health benefits beyond their nutrient contributions; sometimes called designer foods or nutraceuticals.

**genome** the full complement of genetic material (DNA) in the chromosomes of a cell. In human beings, the genome consists of 46 chromosomes.

**Healthy People** a national public health initiative under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) that identifies the most significant preventable threats to health and focuses efforts toward eliminating them.

**hypothesis** an unproven statement that tentatively explains the relationships between two or more variables.

**inorganic** not containing carbon or pertaining to living things.

**malnutrition** any condition caused by excess or deficient food energy or nutrient intake or by an imbalance of nutrients.

**minerals** inorganic elements. Some minerals are essential nutrients required in small amounts by the body for health.

**nutrients** chemical substances obtained from food and used in the body to provide energy, structural materials, and regulating agents to support growth, maintenance, and repair of the body’s tissues. Nutrients may also reduce the risks of some diseases.

**nutrition** the science of foods and the nutrients and other substances they contain, and of their actions within the body (including ingestion, digestion, absorption, transport, metabolism, and excretion). A broader definition includes the social, economic, cultural, and psychological implications of food and eating.

**nutrition assessment** a comprehensive analysis of a person’s nutrition status that uses health, socioeconomic, drug, and diet histories; anthropometric measurements; physical examinations; and laboratory tests.
nutritional genomics the science of how nutrients affect the activities of genes (nutrigenomics) and how genes affect the interactions between diet and disease (nutrigenetics).

organic in chemistry, a substance or molecule containing carbon-carbon bonds or carbon-hydrogen bonds.

overnutrition excess energy or nutrients.

overt out in the open and easy to observe.

peer review a process in which a panel of scientists rigorously evaluates a research study to assure that the scientific method was followed.

phytochemicals nonnutrient compounds found in plant-derived foods that have biological activity in the body.

placebo an inert, harmless medication given to provide comfort and hope; a sham treatment used in controlled research studies.

placebo effect a change that occurs in response to expectations in the effectiveness of a treatment that actually has no pharmaceutical effects.

primary deficiency a nutrient deficiency caused by inadequate dietary intake of a nutrient.

randomization a process of choosing the members of the experimental and control groups without bias.

Recommended Dietary Allowance the average daily amount of a nutrient considered adequate to meet the known nutrient needs of practically all healthy people; a goal for dietary intake by individuals.

replication repeating an experiment and getting the same results.

requirement the lowest continuing intake of a nutrient that will maintain a specified criterion of adequacy.

risk factor a condition or behavior associated with an elevated frequency of a disease but not proved to be causal.

secondary deficiency a nutrient deficiency caused by something other than an inadequate intake such as a disease condition or drug interaction that reduces absorption, accelerates use, hastens excretion, or destroys the nutrient.

subclinical deficiency a deficiency in the early stages, before the outward signs have appeared.

subjects the people or animals participating in a research project.

theory a tentative explanation that integrates many and diverse findings to further the understanding of a defined topic.
**Tolerable Upper Intake Level** the maximum daily amount of a nutrient that appears safe for most healthy people and beyond which there is an increased risk of adverse health effects.

**undernutrition** deficient energy or nutrients.

**validity** having the quality of being founded on fact or evidence.

**variables** factors that change.

**vitamins** organic, essential nutrients required in small amounts by the body for health.

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**Planning a Healthy Diet**

**adequacy** providing all the essential nutrients, fiber, and energy in amounts sufficient to maintain health.

**balance** providing foods in proportion to each other and in proportion to the body’s needs.

**Daily Values** reference values developed by the FDA specifically for use on food labels.

**discretionary kcalorie allowance** the kcalories remaining in a person’s energy allowance after consuming enough nutrient-dense foods to meet all nutrient needs for a day.

**empty-kcalorie foods** a popular term used to denote foods that contribute energy but lack protein, vitamins, and minerals.

**exchange lists** diet-planning tools that organize foods by their proportions of carbohydrate, fat, and protein. Foods on any single list can be used interchangeably.

**food group plans** diet-planning tools that sort foods into groups based on nutrient content and then specify that people should eat certain amounts of foods from each group.

**food substitutes** foods that are designed to replace other foods.

**fortified** the addition to a food of nutrients that were either not originally present or present in insignificant amounts.

**health claims** statements that characterize the relationship between a nutrient or other substance in a food and a disease or health-related condition.

**imitation foods** foods that substitute for and resemble another food, but are nutritionally inferior to it with respect to vitamin, mineral, or protein content.

**kcalorie control** management of food energy intake.

**legumes** plants of the bean and pea family, with seeds that are rich in protein compared with other plant-derived foods.
**moderation** providing enough but not too much of a substance.

**nutrient claims** statements that characterize the quantity of a nutrient in a food.

**nutrient density** a measure of the nutrients a food provides relative to the energy it provides.

**processed foods** foods that have been treated to change their physical, chemical, microbiological, or sensory properties.

**refined** the process by which the coarse parts of a food are removed.

**SoFAS** an acronym for **Solid Fats and Added Sugars**

**structure-function claims** statements that characterize the relationship between a nutrient or other substance in a food and its role in the body.

**textured vegetable protein** processed soybean protein used in vegetarian products such as soy burgers.

**variety** eating a wide selection of foods within and among the major food groups.

**whole grain** a grain milled in its entirety (all but the husk), not refined.