

2020 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee: DRAFT - Part D. Chapter 13: Frequency of Eating

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This chapter includes questions examined by the Frequency of Eating and the Data Analysis and Food Pattern Modeling Subcommittees

[DietaryGuidelines.gov](https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov)

LIST OF QUESTIONS

1. What is the relationship between the frequency of eating and achieving nutrient and food group recommendations?
2. What is the relationship between the frequency of eating and growth, size, body composition, and risk of overweight and obesity?
3. What is the relationship between the frequency of eating and all-cause mortality?
4. What is the relationship between the frequency of eating and risk of cardiovascular disease?
5. What is the relationship between the frequency of eating and risk of type 2 diabetes?

METHODOLOGY

- Question 1 was answered using data analysis.
- Questions 2, 3, 4 and 5 were answered using NESR systematic reviews.

**Final protocols and draft conclusion statements available at [DietaryGuidelines.gov](https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov)
Part D. Chapter 13: Frequency of Eating
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REVIEW OF THE SCIENCE

- Eating patterns vary by frequency and timing in the United States, and are shaped by age, race/ethnicity, and income. On average, the U.S. population reports 5.7 eating occasions per day, occurring most often at noon or “evening.”
- Most of the U.S. population report consuming 3 meals (64% of the population) or 2 meals (28% of the population) per day. When compared with 2 meals, Americans who consume 3 meals per day tend to have approximately 5-point higher Healthy Eating Index scores.
- Snacking is ubiquitous, occurring in 93% of the U.S. population. Snacks provide 22 to 23% of total energy consumed and 2 to 3 snacking events are reported on average per day. Late-night eating events often include alcohol intake (in adults), and intakes of added sugars, sodium, and saturated fats in adolescents and adults.
- 9 studies were identified as meeting inclusion criteria for NESR systematic review but provided insufficient evidence for answering questions on frequency of eating and health (Questions 2-5)

SUMMARY: Draft Evidence-Based Advice to USDA and HHS

- The NESR review did not yield specific answers to the questions 2-5 concerning the relationship between frequency of eating and health outcomes of obesity, all-cause mortality, risk of cardiovascular disease, or risk of type 2 diabetes. This was primarily due to the limited availability of high-quality data. **The Committee cannot therefore make recommendations to the Departments on frequency of eating and health.**

SUMMARY: Draft Evidence-Based Advice to USDA and HHS, cont.

- The Committee recommends...
 - the scientific community raise the standardization of frequency of eating terms to a high priority and ensures adequate data collection to evaluate habitual or usual eating frequency
 - the 2025 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee consider separate questions examining how the timing of ingestive events influences health
 - See additional future recommendations in the draft report

DRAFT - Part D. Chapter 13: Frequency of Eating USDA/HHS Staff Who Supported this Chapter



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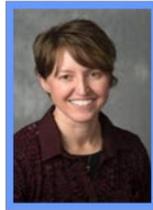
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2020 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee: Meeting on Draft Report