



SOCIETY OF  
BEHAVIORAL  
MEDICINE

## Dietary Guidelines for Americans

The Society of Behavioral Medicine (SBM) represents 2,400+ scientific researchers, clinicians, industry professionals, educators, and students who work collectively to treat and prevent disease through research and interventions that improve the health of individuals, families, and whole communities. Our members focus on behavior change across the lifespan and work in more than 40 specialty areas, including nutrition, cancer, chronic disease, obesity, and physical activity.

### What are the Dietary Guidelines for Americans?

Over 60% of United States adults are estimated to be diagnosed with one or more diet-related chronic conditions such as type 2 diabetes. This leads to an expenditure of approximately \$1.1 trillion treating diet-related diseases, which is the same amount of money spent on food annually. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGAs) provide recommendations on what to eat and drink to meet nutrient needs, promote health, and prevent disease. Yet, most Americans fail to meet recommendations for fruits, vegetables, and dairy, while often exceeding intakes of ultra-processed foods (i.e., foods high in added sugars, solid fats, and sodium). Only 10% of all Americans consistently follow the DGAs.

### Preserving Evidence-Based Dietary Guidelines for Americans

The current administration is committed to the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) initiative by focusing on reforming food and health systems, improving access to whole, nutrient-dense foods, and removing specific food dyes. However, recent policy actions, including those associated with the Big Beautiful Bill, undermine nutrition science and their role in informing the DGAs, food assistance programs like SNAP, and nutrition surveillance systems such as the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) under the National Nutrition Monitoring and Related Research Act of 1990. Furthermore, the Dietary Guidelines Reform Act of 2025 (S. 1129), currently before the Senate, could slow progress that ensures the DGAs can continue informing existing food assistance programs and services and guide the public on healthful dietary patterns. S. 1129 provides limited added value and would constitute another setback to our nation's public health and nutrition efforts. Currently, the DGAs are a bipartisan initiative that is updated and published every 5 years based on the best available evidence. S. 1129 proposes lengthening this timeline to every 10 years. The DGAs build on prior versions, corroborating the correlation between diet, lifestyle, and health. Advancing the bill would delay DGA reporting and could further undermine the role of nutrition science in informing the DGA recommendations.

### Recommendations:

1. Engage in bipartisan meetings with fellow members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry to discuss the benefits and drawbacks of the S. 1129 bill.
2. Organize and hold public hearings to gather diverse perspectives on the current DGAs among stakeholder groups and sectors involved, and those not involved in the federal dietary guidance process.
3. Identify bipartisan alternatives to S. 1129 that can advance current and future DGAs with the best available evidence from nutrition science and related fields.