The African Heritage Diet Pyramid is a guide to the healthy traditional diets of African American ancestors. Base your meals mostly on a variety of foods nearest the base of the pyramid.

- **Go For Greens.** Greens like spinach, collards, mustards and turnip greens are a big part of African heritage cuisine; they help keep your blood, liver, and kidneys in top health. Cook them lightly to retain all of their extraordinary nutrients!

- Every day, enjoy vegetables, fruits, mostly whole grains and cereals, beans, herbs and spices, peanuts and nuts, and healthy tubers like sweet potatoes. These are the core African Heritage foods to shop for, prepare, and eat most often.

- **Tuna, mackerel, and salmon** are rich in heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids. **Sardines** and other small, bony fish are rich sources of calcium and vitamin D. Enjoy them grilled, broiled, or lightly pan cooked in water and a tiny bit of oil.

- Use small amounts of healthy oils, like sesame or olive oil for dressings, and canola, red palm oil, or extra virgin coconut oil for cooking.

- **Eggs, poultry** and other meats moderately, in small portions, or use as garnishes for other dishes.

- **Dairy** in small portions, and if you are lactose intolerant, enjoy other calcium-rich foods like greens, beans, and almonds.

- **Sweets**, at the top of the pyramid, are foods to eat less often, limiting them to once a week or at special meals.

- Drink **plenty of water** throughout the day. If you drink alcohol, limit it to one glass per day for women, two for men.

**Health Through Heritage**

The diseases we know today, like diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and obesity, were much less common with traditional diets in earlier times. Scientific studies show that conditions like these skyrocket as traditional diets are left behind.

The African Heritage Diet Pyramid is based on scientific research that shows eating like your ancestors can help:

- Lower your risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, and stroke
- Avoid or help treat diabetes
- Fight certain cancers and many chronic diseases
- Reduce asthma, glaucoma, and kidney disease
- Nurture healthy babies
- Achieve a healthy weight and avoid obesity
- Reduce depression
- And more!

**Easy African Heritage Recipes**

Use healthy African heritage foods to style any meal:

- **Hearty Pumpkin or Squash Soup**
- **Delicious Rice and Bean Medleys**
- **Stewed Tomatoes and Okra**
- **Healthy Potato Salad and Corn Bread**
- Plus dozens more!

To find recipes and details on the latest scientific studies for enjoying health through heritage, visit the African Heritage section of the Oldways website at:

[www.oldwayspt.org](http://www.oldwayspt.org)
The ancestors of African Americans brought many wonderful food traditions to parts of the Caribbean, South America, and the southern states of the U.S. Maybe these were your great, great, great grandparents.

Over the generations, many of these food traditions have been lost, with the influences of modern, American eating habits. And health has suffered because of this loss.

The African Heritage Diet is a way of eating based on the healthy food traditions of people with African roots. This healthy way of eating is powerfully nutritious and delicious, and naturally meets the guidelines that health professionals promote today.

Good health is not just about food. Good Health = healthy eating + healthy living. Healthy living doesn’t just mean joining a gym. Rather, find simple and fun ways to fit physical activity in every day—a walk alone or with family, gardening, or dancing. Consider adding creativity to your life through art and music, writing, cooking or other fulfilling hobbies. Family meals and family time, plus community activities add to well-being. Also, get plenty of sleep every night.

In other words, activate your body, mind, and heart each day to keep your body working at its best.