

# Newsletter Update | April 2020

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April 30, 2020



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## 2020 Dietary Guidelines Update

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**The final meeting of the 2020 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee (DGAC) took place in March**, and the results were disappointing. Our articles below contain not only information but also links if you would like to take action. We find it hard to imagine another five years of Guidelines recommending 6 servings of grains, 27g soybean oil, and 10% of calories as sugar per day.

### **On Saturated Fats:**

At the March meeting, DGAC members suggested that they’d like to lower the caps on saturated fats even further: from the current 10% of calories down to 7%—or even zero. These ideas are entirely contrary to a steadily growing consensus over the past decade, among top researchers around the world, that the caps on saturated fats were never based on strong science and ought to be reconsidered.



Indeed, as a recent panel of senior scientists from the U.S., Canada, and Denmark stated, in a letter to the Secretaries of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Health and Human Services (USDA-HHS), “we respectfully request....that [you] give serious and immediate consideration to lifting the limits placed on saturated fat intake for the upcoming 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA). This request is based on a review of the most rigorous scientific data available.”

Further, they stated, “...[M]aking recommendations based on anything but the most rigorous science available is likely to have unintended or even potentially harmful consequences to health.”

To read the rest of this article and also make your voice heard on this issue, [click here](#).

**On Lack of Rigorous Science:**

The last two meetings of the DGAC have revealed many alarming shortfalls in the scientific process. At a minimum, the process lacks transparency, does not use any verified methodology for reviewing the science, and excludes large numbers of rigorous studies--relying often instead on weak data for its conclusions.

For example:

**At least a dozen of the DGAC's reviews are based on outdated science.** By law, the DGA must reflect the “scientific and medical knowledge which is current at the time the report is prepared,” yet the 2020 process does not meet that standard. At the DGAC meeting in January, committee member Katherine Dewey stated that the 13 reviews undertaken for the “B-24” population (birth-through-24-months) had looked at the scientific literature systematically only through 2016. For studies conducted after 2016, Dewey said the committee had done “an informal search to identify new evidence that has emerged since 2016” but “did not locate any studies that would have changed [their] conclusions.” Dewey did seem concerned, however, that these 13 reviews had perhaps missed some of the science from the past few years. She said,

“We would like to ask the public to please submit public comments if you know of any articles published since 2016 that meet the inclusion criteria and would also significantly affect these conclusions...we do appreciate any comment that the public would like to provide.”

It is, of course, completely unscientific to rely upon random submissions from the public for studies. Thus, the DGA’s B-24 reviews are already out of date before even being published.

To read the rest of this article and make your voice heard on this issue, click [here](#).

### **DGAC Can’t Find Low-carb Studies:**

The DGAC could find no studies on low-carbohydrate diets with carbs as 25% of energy or less, according to an article by the Low-carb Action Network (L-CAN) reports. In fact, L-CAN has documented 52 such studies. The DGAC also apparently excluded all the studies on weight loss. This is inexplicable given that 2/3 of Americans have overweight or obesity. [Click here to read this blog post](#).

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## **Launch of *Food For Health***

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A group called Food For Health launched last week, with the primary goals of promoting a Dietary Guidelines based on rigorous science and inclusive of all Americans. Currently the Guidelines are only for "healthy Americans," according to USDA statements, and the policy has never served the needs of Americans from traditionally under-served and underrepresented communities. The Nutrition Coalition is proud to be a member of this group!

The launch was covered by POLITICO in their Morning Ag newsletter: “**NUTRITION DEBATE RAMPS UP AHEAD OF DIETARY GUIDELINES REPORT:** Several organizations, including the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, NAACP and National



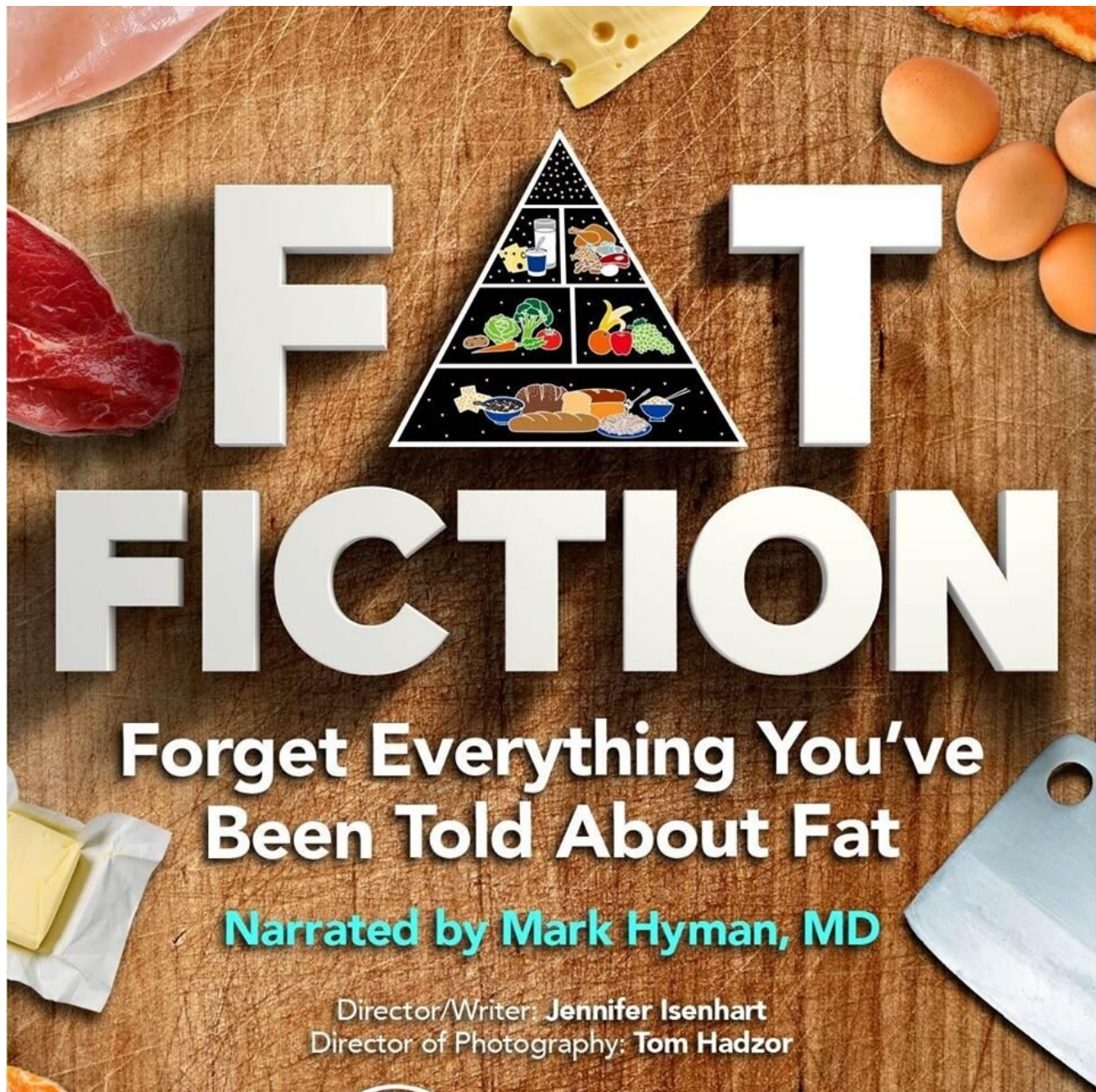
Hispanic Medical Association, today formed the [Food4Health Alliance](#) to lobby for federal nutrition guidelines tailored to the needs of tens of millions of Americans who have diet-related diseases like hypertension, obesity and Type 2 diabetes —conditions that disproportionately affect minorities and underserved communities.” Read more [here](#).

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## ***Fat Fiction* documentary**

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People typically think that Americans have become fat and sick because they don't follow the Dietary Guidelines (or their doctors' advice). Is that true?



From the producers: "What if the 'low fat, heart healthy' diet represents one of the most damaging public health recommendations in the history of our country? FAT FICTION is

a film that questions decades of diet advice insisting that saturated fats are bad for us. Along the way, the film reveals the lies we've been told about fats, learn what fats are good, what fats really are bad, and what we can do to reclaim our health."

Now Streaming on Amazon, Vimeo on Demand and FanForceTV:

[https://bit.ly/FF\\_on\\_Amazon](https://bit.ly/FF_on_Amazon)

[http://bit.ly/FF\\_on\\_Vimeo](http://bit.ly/FF_on_Vimeo)

[https://bit.ly/FF\\_on\\_FF\\_Premieres](https://bit.ly/FF_on_FF_Premieres)

*"This is such a powerful documentary. This is exactly the type of informative movie we need to help educate the public."*

- Dr. Bret Scher, Cardiologist

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## **COVID-19 shows--All the More--Why Metabolic Health is So Important**

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We are, like all of you, deeply concerned about COVID-19 and the heartbreaking toll it's taking on people across the world. We extend our sympathy to all who are suffering, gratitude to all those on the front lines taking care of patients, and support for those facing isolation and the loss or separation from loved ones.

We've heard from some people that they feel it's insensitive to bring up issues of chronic disease during this time, and we understand this concern. Yet the Nutrition Coalition is continuing its work precisely because COVID-19 exposes, now more than ever, the importance of helping people restore their metabolic health. This virus has revealed the added risk faced by people with diet-related, chronic diseases. What data is available to date finds that people with diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure, among other illnesses, tend to suffer poorer outcomes than do healthy people. This is a heartbreaking, added toll for people already burdened by these conditions—and makes our work all the more important.

Diet-related diseases need diet-related solutions. As the 2020 Dietary Guidelines process marches on, so must we, to ensure that this policy is based on the best and most current evidence—in order to better reduce the load of chronic diseases that are such a burden—and a risk—to the American public.

For an interesting article on the connection between metabolic disease and COVID-19, [see this op-ed](#), by Harvard's Dr. David Ludwig, recently published in the New York Times.

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## **Donate to support our work!**

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The Nutrition Coalition would be grateful for your support during this difficult time. Like so many others, we've have had to cut back due to the economic downturn. If you are those fortunate enough to help, we hope that you might consider a donation to support our work. Reducing diet-related diseases has always been urgent issue for the health of our country, perhaps now more than ever. We believe there is still good reason to hope that we can make a difference in these 2020 Guidelines. Thank you.

[Donate](#)