

Proposed dietary guidelines for Americans sharply debated

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A special article published today in the journal *Nutrition* sharply criticizes the recent Report of the 2010 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee (DGAC). Authors Hite et al. argue the Report fails to conform to the standards of evidence-based medicine, despite its claimed reliance on a newly created USDA Nutrition Evidence Library. The authors call the DGAC to task for failing to consider recent scientific results while at the same time further confusing the American public.

The Dietary Guidelines are the basis for the USDA Food Pyramid, and serve as the foundation for nutritional information for Americans. The Guidelines also strongly influence [nutrition education](#), research funding, governmental meal programs including school lunches, as well as providing direction for the [food industry](#), regulatory agencies, consumer advocates, and the media. They have been largely immune from criticism, perhaps a result of their wide application.

The DGAC Report places the blame for many of America's [chronic health problems](#) on the inability of people to follow previous Dietary Guidelines, which have changed very little since the first recommendations were made in 1977. Hite et al. explain that, in fact, nutrient consumption in the past thirty years has consistently moved in the direction of the Guidelines' recommendations for carbohydrate and fat, while [calorie consumption](#) has stayed within suggested ranges. At the same time, the rates of obesity and [Type 2 Diabetes](#) have skyrocketed.

In suggesting the need for an entirely new process, Richard David Feinman, Professor of Cell Biology at SUNY Downstate Medical Center said, "The previous Guidelines have not worked well. It is simply unreasonable to ask the DGAC to audit its own work. An external panel of scientists with no direct ties to nutritional policy would be able to do a more impartial evaluation of the data. This would be far better for everyone."

More information: The article is titled "In The Face Of Contradictory Evidence: Report Of The Dietary Guidelines For Americans Committee" by Adele H Hite, MAT; Richard D Feinman, PhD; Gabriel E Guzman, PhD; Morton Satin, MSc; Pamela Schoenfeld, RD; Richard J Wood, PhD. It appears in *Nutrition*, Volume 26, Issue 10 (October 2010) [DOI: 10.1016/j.nut.2010.08.012](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nut.2010.08.012)

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