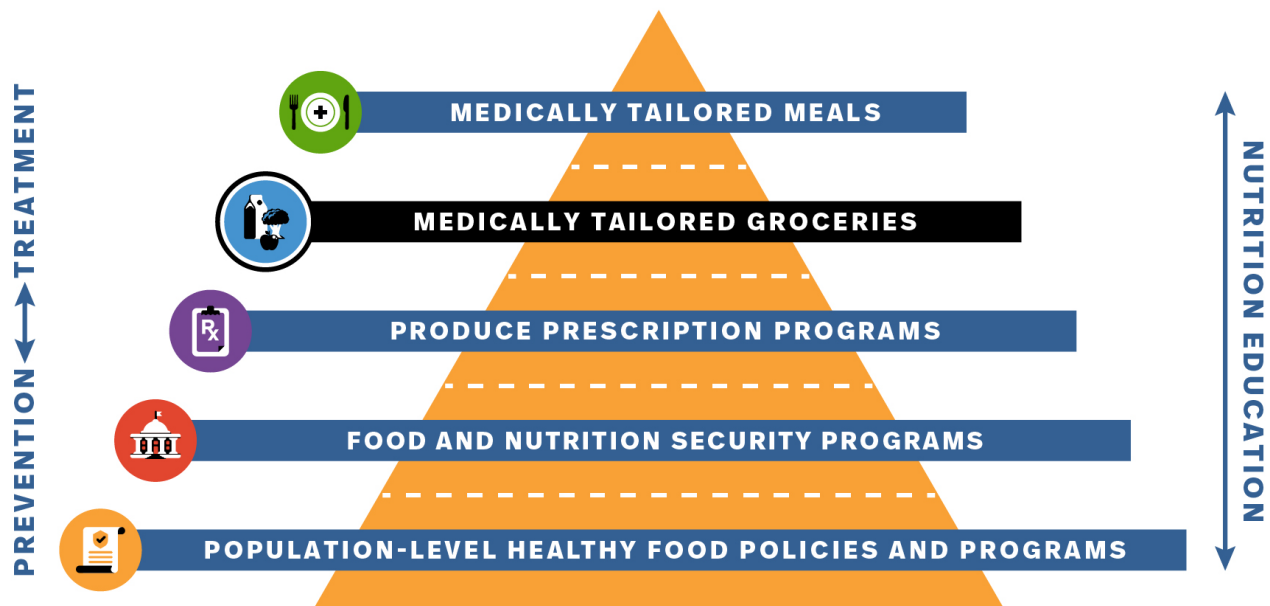


# Designing Medically Tailored Grocery (MTG) Benefits

A guide for establishing an approved product list for an MTG benefit that is both comprehensive and outcomes-oriented.

## What are medically tailored groceries?

MTG are healthy, curated perishable and nonperishable grocery items, assembled in a pre-packaged box or bag, that aim to treat specific diet-sensitive conditions and support health. The items generally require additional preparation before consumption. A Registered Dietitian Nutritionist or other medical professional identifies appropriate foods for inclusion in an MTG package.



## Who is eligible to receive MTG?

MTG are prescribed based on specific medical needs and delivered as part of a clinical care plan. Eligibility is typically restricted to patients with diet-sensitive conditions and/or multiple chronic illnesses.

## What kinds of foods are recommended for MTG programs?

It is recommended that foods included in MTG programs are supported by evidence indicating that **1)** they improve health outcomes<sup>1</sup> and **2)** are underconsumed by most Americans.<sup>2</sup>

# Recommended Components of Medically Tailored Grocery Benefits for Treating Diabetes, by Food Category

Food Category	Recommended	Not Recommended
<b>FRUITS</b>	Fresh, dried, canned, packaged, or frozen	Added sugar
<b>VEGETABLES</b>	Fresh, dried, canned, packaged, or frozen	Added sugar or salt
<b>NUTS, SEEDS, AND NUT BUTTERS</b>	Nuts, seeds; peanut, nut, or seed butter	Added sugar or salt, and spreads that are not primarily nuts or seeds (e.g., sweetened hazelnut butter, cookie butter)
<b>BEANS AND LEGUMES</b>	Dried, canned, or frozen beans and legumes; plain tofu, plain tempeh	Added sugar, salt, or sauces high in sodium <sup>3</sup>
<b>PLANT OILS</b>	Soybean, canola, sunflower, safflower, avocado, olive oil	Coconut oil, palm oil, palm kernel oil
<b>DAIRY</b>	Kefir; yogurt with any fat content and all types (e.g., Greek, Skyr)	Added sugar, ice cream, shakes, half and half, cream, cream cheese, sour cream
<b>GRAINS</b>	Unprocessed, intact whole grains with no additives (e.g., amaranth, farro, kamut, millet, steel cut oats, wheat berries)	Refined grains, processed whole grain foods (e.g., breads, breakfast cereals)
<b>FISH OR SEAFOOD</b>	Canned, frozen, or fresh fish and shellfish without breading	Breaded fish, smoked or salted fish

## NOTES:

- Milk, cheese, poultry, and eggs can be recommended for incorporation into a healthy diet by including them in recipes, nutrition education, and culinary education as part of the MTG program. These foods are generally not recommended, however, for inclusion in MTG packages because they are not underconsumed by most Americans and are not (except for dairy) directly linked to improved health outcomes, thus increasing implementation costs without providing a meaningful contribution to improving a patient’s diet-sensitive risk factors.
- Red meat is not recommended for inclusion in MTG packages due to cost, lack of underconsumption by most Americans, and links to higher risk of colorectal cancer and diabetes.

<sup>1</sup> 2025 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee. “Scientific Report of the 2025 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee: Advisory Report to the Secretary of Health and Human Services and Secretary of Agriculture.” HHS: Washington, DC, USA (2024).

<sup>2</sup> E.g., according to nationally representative dietary intake data from datasets such as the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey.

<sup>3</sup> E.g., exceeding the threshold for eligibility of the FDA nutrient content claim “healthy” - 10% of the daily value (230 mg) per reference amount customarily consumed.