

Healthy Eating

Good food can make the difference between just existing and living life to the fullest. A few changes in your diet will give you more strength and energy. It will also help you fight diseases such as cancer, diabetes, and heart disease.

The Important Foods **Whole Grains**



Whole grains have more fiber and nutrients than “white” varieties. The best sources are whole-wheat bread or English muffins, brown rice, whole-wheat pasta, and whole-grain cereals such as oatmeal.

Eat 5 to 6 “ounce-equivalents” every day (an ounce-equivalent is 1 slice of bread, 1 cup of cereal, or ½ cup of cooked rice or pasta).

Vegetables and Fruits

Try to eat at least 2 cups of vegetables and 1½ cups of fruit every day. Here are some easy ways to do it:



- Top cereal or yogurt with berries, peaches, or banana
- Keep dried fruit handy for a quick nutritious snack
- Toss frozen fruit in a blender with low-fat or skim milk or yogurt for an instant smoothie
- Add extra vegetables like peppers, broccoli, and mushrooms to bottled pasta sauces or on top of pizza
- Keep a container of pre-cut veggies such as cucumbers, carrots, or cauliflower in the fridge for salads or snacks

The Important Foods, continued

Protein

- If you eat meat, choose lean beef or fish, and remove the skin from poultry.
- Consider beans for protein. They can be added to salads, soups, and casseroles. Be sure to wash them first to remove the sodium.
- Add eggs to your diet for a good source of protein. They can be eaten a few times a week, and are available in low-fat substitutes.

Take It Easy With These

Fats and Oils

All fats and oils are pure fat, but some fats — for example, olive, sunflower, or canola oil — are better for your heart.

Instead of butter on your toast, try a teaspoon of peanut butter. Do not use too much salad dressing, and when you are eating out always ask for dressing on the side.

Salt and Sugar

Prepackaged foods contain a lot of excess sugar and salt. When you buy these foods frozen, canned, or packaged, read labels carefully so you can choose items with less fat, sodium, and calories.

Treats and Snacks

Do you really have to give up doughnuts or chips forever? Not necessarily. If your doctor says it is okay, you can treat yourself once in a while to a small serving.

For the other times, keep plenty of healthy snacks on hand, such as dried fruit, whole-wheat crackers, low-fat cheese, and cut-up vegetables with a low-fat dip.

Nuts can be a good snack, but limit yourself to about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup per day.



Guides To Healthy Eating

- To make the best use of your daily calories, eat earlier in the day when you are more active, and less at night when you are more at rest.
- Cook more than you will eat at one meal, and freeze or refrigerate the rest for a day when you do not feel like cooking. When eating out, ask for child-size portions, split an entrée with a friend, or eat half and take the rest home.
- Try to drink at least six 8-ounce glasses of water every day. Low-fat or skim milk and juice count in that total, but not soft drinks, whether sweetened or not.
- Take daily multivitamin-mineral supplements if you need them. Supplements are no substitute for a balanced diet, but they can help ensure that you get essential nutrients such as B12 and folic acid.

Resources

Books

Phillips, Bill. *Eating for Life*. High Point Media: November 2003

Helps you break free of the dieting dilemma and discover that food is friend, not foe.

Tessmer, Kimberly A., M.S., R.D. *The Everything® Nutrition Book*. Adams Media: June 2003

Provides information you need to improve your dietary intake and provides simple dietary guidelines.

Organization

American Dietetic Association

120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000

Chicago, Illinois 60606-6995

Phone: (800) 877-1600

Web site: www.eatright.org

To find a registered dietician in your area: (800) 366-1655

Resources, continued

Publications

“Nutrition Action,” Monthly Newsletter of the Center for
Science in the Public Interest

Phone: (202) 332-9110

Web site: www.cspinet.org/nah/index.htm

“Tufts University Health and Nutrition Letter”

Phone: (800) 274-7581

Web site: www.healthletter.tufts.edu

Web Sites

www.cfsan.fda.gov~dms/foodlab.html

Provides help on reading food labels.

www.healthandage.com

Includes health and nutrition articles.

www.medlineplus.gov

Up-to-date, quality health care information. Go to Health Topics, "Nutrition" then "Nutrition for Seniors" and "Nutrition Support."

www.mypyramid.gov

Features the USDA Food Guide Pyramid, 2005, with recommendations for how much of each group to eat.

www.niapublications.org/engagepages/nutrition.asp

Good Nutrition: It's A Way of Life, a National Institute on Aging "Age Page."