

Eating healthy at home and dining out



Making healthy, home-cooked meals



When you cook at home, you have more control over food ingredients and portion sizes. As a result, you are likely to eat less sugar, salt, fat, and calories. Make eating at home a chance to try new foods, such as different vegetables or fruits.

Use whole foods when you can

Think about foods that come from the farm or a garden. Vegetables, fruits, lean meats, low-fat dairy, plant-based proteins such as beans, nuts, seeds, and soy foods are healthy food options. Consider adding whole grains and healthy fats, such as vegetable oil or avocado to your meals.

Read nutrition labels

When selecting canned, frozen, or other packaged foods, be sure to check the ingredients in them. Compare the amount of fat, sodium, sugar, and other nutrients in similar products.

Load up on veggies and fruits

Half of each meal should contain veggies and fruits. Eat fresh, seasonal food when possible. Frozen is the next best option.



Tips to make whole foods fun and delicious

It can be hard to get everyone in the family excited about new, healthy eating habits. Try these tips to make mealtime a good time:

- ☐ Cut veggies and fruits in different shapes and sizes.
- ☐ Make cooking at home something the family does together.
- ☐ Let kids taste ingredients or sauces as you cook.
- ☐ Swap out your favorite junk food for healthier options, such as baked sweet potato fries instead of french fries.

Smart choices when dining out

Eating healthy away from home can be a challenge. For example, many portions served at restaurants provide enough food for at least two people. Think about splitting the entrée with someone else. You might also bring some home for an easy meal later.



Use the tips below to make healthy choices when eating out.

Proteins

Try a variety of protein foods, such as chicken, fish, low-fat dairy, beans, or soy products, and ask how it is prepared. Go for baked or grilled options instead of fried.

Salads

Order dressing on the side. Instead of pouring all of it on your salad, dip your fork in the dressing and then into your salad.

Side dishes

Ask for steamed vegetables or a side salad instead of french fries or potato chips.

Desserts

Consider having fresh fruit to finish your meal, or ask for a kid's size portion of a sweet treat.

Low-fat menu word clues

Choose items with "low-fat" words, such as: steamed, broiled, grilled, roasted, poached, or "in its own juices."

High-fat menu word clues

Try to avoid items with "high-fat" words. In particular, butter, sautéed, fried, crispy, cream, gravy, or au gratin.

Remember, most restaurants will prepare your food how you want. Just ask!

One change at a time

As you choose to eat better, you don't need to make a lot of changes all at once. Instead, focus on one goal to make a new habit part of your routine. Then, you can pick another action to focus on. It's all about taking it one step at a time.



Choose one of the habits below to get started.

- ☐ For snacks, choose veggies or fruits paired with a healthy protein food, such as hummus or low-fat yogurt.
- ☐ Know the serving sizes for proper portions.
- ☐ Switch to whole grain bread or pasta.
- ☐ Freeze single-serving portions of leftover cooked foods for reheating later.
- ☐ Replace high-fat cream with low-fat milk.

Write down your own ideas.

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Reasons to eat healthy

Eating in a healthy way contributes to strength and well-being. It can also givesyou more energy. Eating healthy foods may help lower your risk of heart disease, certain types of cancer, high blood pressure, and diabetes.



Tips for reading the nutrition label

There is a lot of great information on the nutrition label. The tips below can help you understand and use a nutrition label correctly. This will help you with portion sizes and getting the nutrients your body needs.

Nutrition Facts

8 servings per container
Serving size **2/3 cup (55g)**

Amount per serving
Calories **230**

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 8g	**10%**
Saturated Fat 1g	**5%**
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	**0%**
Sodium 160mg	**7%**
Total Carbohydrate 37g	**13%**
Dietary Fiber 4g	**14%**
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	**20%**
Protein 3g	

Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	6%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

1. Pay attention to the number of servings per container. The amount of calories and other nutrients listed on the label is only for one serving. If you eat two servings in a container, you would be consuming twice the calories and nutrients listed.

2. The number of calories in 1 serving.

3. Percent daily value (%DV). This number tells you how much of your daily nutrients you are getting with one serving. For some nutrients, like fiber, your goal may be to consume 100% or more of the daily value each day. For other nutrients, like saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium, or added sugars, limiting your intake may be the goal. The daily value is based on a typical diet of 2,000 calories. Your needs may differ.

4. Vitamins and minerals. Eating a variety of foods helps you get the nutrients your body needs to be healthy.

Work with your healthcare provider to determine your nutrition needs.



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