



NUTRITION & WEIGHT MANAGEMENT



nutrition

Simpler Ways to a New You

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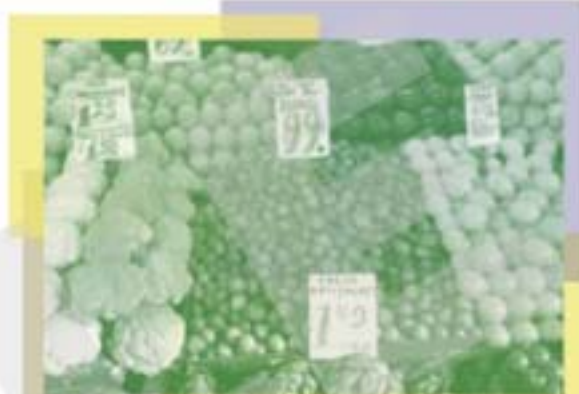
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Eating to Win: Good Nutrition Basics

Ask the experts, and most will say the first rule of good nutrition is EAT LESS FAT. You'll find out how here, along with dozens of other tips and tricks to make every calorie count.

5 SIMPLE TIPS FOR A HEALTHIER DIET

Take one step at a time: Start eating more whole grains one month, cutting down on butter the following month, reducing the portions of meat the next ... gradually, you'll transform your diet!

- 1. Follow a battle plan for grocery shopping.** Shop along the outer aisles of the supermarket first: That's where you'll usually find the healthier items, such as fresh fruits, vegetables, bread, fish and low-fat dairy products. Then tackle the center aisles for rice, pasta, dried beans and other basics.
- 2. Buy fewer processed foods.** Why? They're loaded with artificial flavoring, dyes, preservatives, salt and sugar.
- 3. Assert yourself in restaurants.** Order menu items the way you want them. *Examples:* broiled fish instead of fried, and pizza with half the cheese instead of double cheese.
- 4. Cook at home more.** It's the most effective way to make sure your food is healthiest. Weekend cooking can be fun for the whole family, and you can freeze the leftovers to take for lunch.
- 5. Add health boosters to your diet.** You already know about eating less fat, cholesterol and salt. So now go a step further by adding lots of health-enhancing fiber, potassium-rich tropical fruits and cancer-fighting vegetables, such as broccoli. ♦

THE FACTS ABOUT FAT

Despite their bad reputation, fats can do your body good. They help control blood pressure, maintain healthy skin and hair, transport certain vitamins through your bloodstream and help regulate blood cholesterol levels.

The problem is, too much fat leads to excess weight gain, a risk factor for heart disease, stroke and other serious illness. And certain types of fat can raise blood cholesterol levels. In fact, nutritionists now say that even more important than "how much" fat you eat is "what kind." *Here's a closer look:*

- **Saturated fats** include animal fats, coconut and palm oils, and cocoa butter. Foods high in saturated fats, such as red meat and whole-milk products, tend to raise blood cholesterol levels, especially artery-clogging LDL (low density lipoprotein) or "bad" cholesterol ... surprisingly, much more than high-cholesterol foods.
- **Monounsaturated fats**, which include olive, canola and peanut oils, may cut the risk of coronary disease, stroke and possibly breast cancer.
- **Polyunsaturated fats** are found in fish and safflower, sunflower, corn and soybean oils. Those found in fish, omega-3 fatty acids, are thought to reduce blood clotting, prevent abnormal heart rhythms and promote eye and brain development. Fatty, cold-water fish such as mackerel, salmon, lake trout and albacore tuna are especially good sources of omega-3s.
- **Trans fats**, such as those found in stick margarine, French fries and pastries, result when vegetable oils are artificially saturated ("hydrogenated") to make them more solid. *Problem:* Trans fats raise blood cholesterol just as saturated fats do. *Tip:* The softer the margarine, the fewer unhealthy fats it contains.

The bottom line: Reducing saturated fats in your diet can lower the risk of serious health problems. *Suggestion:* Replace saturated fats with monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats whenever possible. They can lower LDL levels and leave "good" HDL (high density lipoprotein) cholesterol levels unchanged. *Note:* Some medical literature suggests olive oil is an especially good choice.

IDEAS: Load up on fruits, vegetables, beans and whole grains ... eat nuts in small amounts several times a week ... choose lean meats and low-fat dairy products ... eat fewer trans-fat-loaded processed snacks and sweets ... eat fish 2-3 times a week. ♦

WHAT'S A SERVING?

An official serving of meat is 2-3 ounces — so a 12-ounce restaurant sirloin quadruples the suggested amount. That's just one example of how real-world portions can cripple efforts to control your weight. Here are more pointers on portion control:

ABOUT THAT SIRLOIN. To avoid overeating, remember that an official serving of cooked lean meat, poultry or fish is about the size of a deck of cards or an audiocassette.

CHEESE, PLEASE. Rich in calcium and protein, cheese is also high in fat — often, mostly saturated fat. *Helpful:* Remember that one serving of natural cheese — 1.5 ounces — is a chunk about the size of six stacked dice.

MEGAMUFFINS. According to the American Institute for Cancer Research, muffins can pack anywhere from 360-900 calories and 10-50 grams of fat. So if you enjoy a morning muffin, try eating half at the start of your day, the other half later on.

PIECE OF THE PIE. An official slice of pizza is 5 ounces, but the typical restaurant slice is 9-plus ounces — nearly double. *Idea:* Cut up pizza, pie, cake and other high-calorie foods into bite-size pieces. You may eat less since it will take longer to eat the food.

SNACK PACK. Jumbo-size bags of potato chips and popcorn cram multiple servings into "single" snacks. *Wise:* Avoid super-size munchies. According to research at the University of Illinois, people eat 50 percent more when snacks come in bigger bags. ♦

WHEN LOW-FAT ISN'T LOW-CAL

You want to lose weight, so you choose lean meats, nonfat dairy products and low-fat cookies, cakes and ice cream. Well, two out of three ain't bad.

Remember that particularly for sweet treats, low-fat doesn't always mean low-calorie. Why? Manufacturers of low-fat cookies and other goodies often pump up the sugars to boost flavor in the absence of fat. In fact, high-fructose corn syrup, an increasingly common sweetener, now makes up 10 percent of all calories consumed in the United States.



Oodles of ... Fat

You may think a lunch of quickie noodles is a healthy meatless dish, but check the nutrition label. A package of "Ramen" noodles, for instance, is prepared using partially hydrogenated vegetable oil and contains about 14 grams of fat, half of them saturated.