



EAT HEALTHY

The food and physical activity choices you make every day affect your health—how you feel today, tomorrow, and in the future. You may be eating plenty of food, but not eating the right foods that give your body the nutrients you need to be healthy. The best way to give your body the balanced nutrition it needs is by eating a variety of nutrient-packed foods every day. Just be sure to stay within your daily calorie needs.

A healthy eating plan is one that:

- Emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products.
- Includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts.
- Is low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars.

Focus on fruits and vegetables. Aim for 2 cups of fruit and 2 ½ cups of vegetables (9 servings) every day (for a reference 2,000 calorie diet). Fruits and vegetables are low in calories and fat and provide fiber and nutrients that are valuable to maintaining health. For example of one serving: one medium-size fruit (about the size of a baseball); 1/2 cup raw, cooked, frozen or canned fruits or vegetables; 3/4 cup (6 oz.) 100% fruit or vegetable juice; 1 cup raw, leafy vegetables; or 1/4 cup dried fruit.

Variety is important. Eat more dark green veggies, such as broccoli, kale, and other dark leafy greens; orange veggies, such as carrots, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, and winter squash; and beans and peas, such as pinto beans, kidney beans, black beans, garbanzo beans, split peas, and lentils.

Make half your grains whole. Eat at least 3 ounces of whole-grain cereals, breads, crackers, rice, or pasta every day. One ounce is about 1 slice of bread, 1 cup of breakfast cereal, or 1/2 cup of cooked rice or pasta. Look to see that grains such as wheat, rice, oats, or corn are referred to as “whole” in the list of ingredients.

Go lean with protein. Choose lean meats and poultry. Bake it, broil it, or grill it. And vary your protein choices—with more fish, beans, peas, nuts, and seeds.

Get plenty of calcium-rich foods. Get 3 cups of low-fat or fat-free milk—or an equivalent amount of low-fat yogurt and/or low-fat cheese (1 1/2 ounces of cheese equals 1 cup of milk)—every day. For kids aged 2 to 8, it’s 2 cups of milk. If you don’t or can’t consume milk, choose lactose-free milk products and/or calcium rich or calcium-fortified foods and beverages.