

# Nutrition

Life can be hectic, and sometimes it's hard to take the time to make healthy food choices. But making wise food choices—along with regular physical activity—can offer big benefits, now and in the future. Good nutrition may help you lower your risk of some chronic diseases, have healthy pregnancies and healthy babies, and reach and stay at a healthy body weight. Healthy eating habits can help you feel your best—today and every day.

## Healthy eating plan

You might feel confused by all the conflicting information you hear about what to eat. But, in reality, a healthy eating plan can help you make wise food choices. A healthy eating plan includes:

- fruits and vegetables
- whole grains
- fat-free or low-fat versions of milk, cheese, yogurt, and other milk products
- lean meats, poultry, fish, dry beans and peas, eggs, and nuts

What should you limit? Your healthy eating plan should be low in:

- saturated fat
- *trans* fat
- cholesterol (koh-LESS-tur-ol)
- salt (sodium)
- added sugars
- alcohol

If you're a vegetarian, you can still have a healthy eating plan, even if you avoid some foods.



## Women and Nutrition

Women have special nutritional needs throughout life. For more information on folic acid, vitamin D, iron, and calcium—some of the vitamins and minerals you need to be healthy—see pages 325 and 326.

Healthy eating also means there's a balance between the number of calories you eat and the number of calories you burn. Your body burns calories two ways:

- through daily routine activities and body functions, such as sitting, moving around, breathing, and digesting
- with physical activity, such as walking, biking, or other forms of exercise

### Getting personalized recommendations about eating

Where can you turn for reliable information, tailored to your needs? Here are two options.

- You can use the MyPyramid food guidance system, a system developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to help Americans make healthy food choices. The guidelines in this chapter are based on this system. On the MyPyramid Web site, you can get a food plan based on your age, weight, height, sex, and activity level. The plan will show you what kinds and how much food to eat each day. The MyPyramid Web site also has worksheets and helpful hints.
- You can see a registered dietitian for a personalized nutrition plan. Your doctor can provide a referral. Or you can contact the American Dietetic Association for the name of a dietitian near you.



### What is a calorie?

A calorie is a measure of the energy used by the body and of the energy that food supplies to the body.

Carbohydrates, proteins, fats, and alcohol all have calories. Your caloric needs are determined by your age, your size, how physically active you are, whether you are pregnant or breastfeeding, and other special conditions. Your caloric needs also depend on whether you want to lose or gain weight or keep your weight where it is.

Web sites and phone numbers for MyPyramid and the American Dietetic Association are listed in the resource section on page 335.

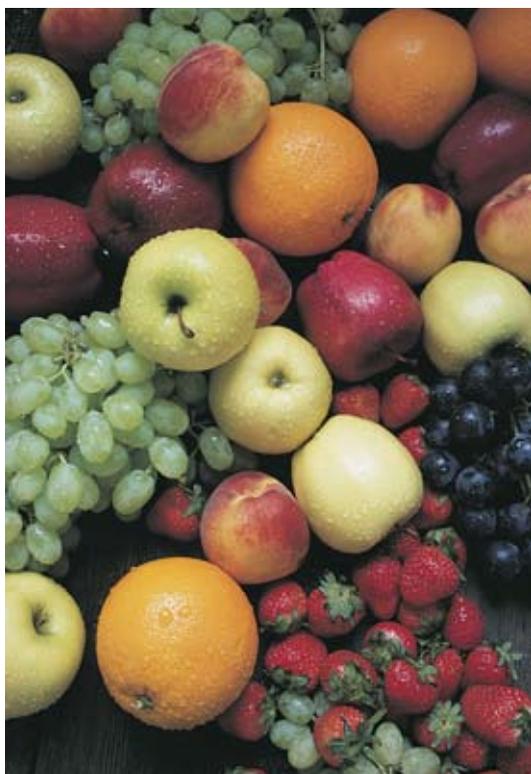
### Tips for making wise food choices

Here are some tips to get you started on making wise food choices. For more detailed information, check out MyPyramid online or see *A Healthier You*, published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, also available online.

### A Healthier You: Free Book About Nutrition With Recipes

Want to learn how to make smart food and fitness choices for good health? Based on the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, *A Healthier You* can show you how. It also includes recipes and tips for eating out. See the Web site listed on page 335, under U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to view the book online and order print copies.





### Fruits

For most of your fruit servings, choose a variety of fruits (without added sugars) in various forms, such as fresh, frozen, canned, or dried. For example, try fresh apples, frozen blueberries, canned peaches, or dried apricots. Look for canned fruit packed in water or 100 percent fruit juice, instead of syrup. Go easy on fruit juice because it lacks fiber. If you do have fruit juice, make sure it's 100 percent fruit juice.

### Milk, cheese, and yogurt

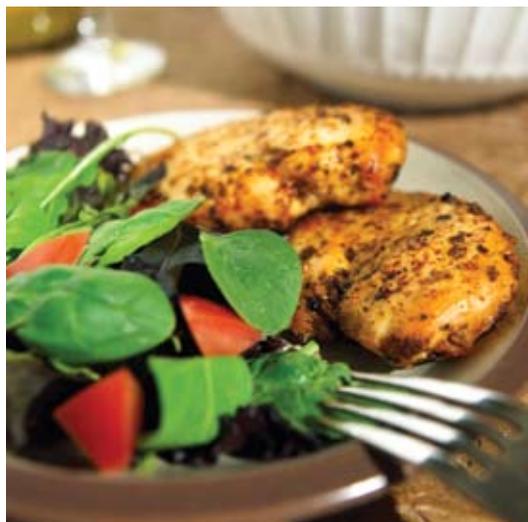
- Choose low-fat or fat-free milk, cheese, and yogurt.
- If you have lactose intolerance, you can still get calcium from reduced-lactose milk, other milk products, and non-dairy sources of calcium. Many people

with lactose intolerance can eat small amounts of milk, cheese, yogurt, and other milk products without discomfort. Or you can take the enzyme lactase in the form of pills or liquid drops before you eat dairy products.

- If you can't or don't consume milk, cheese, or yogurt, choose other sources of calcium, such as calcium-fortified soy drinks, calcium-fortified tofu, collard greens, or fortified ready-to-eat cereals.

### Meat, beans, and other foods high in protein

- Choose low-fat or lean meats and poultry, such as chicken without the skin, or top round (a lean cut of beef).
- Prepare meat, fish, and poultry using low-fat cooking methods, such as baking, broiling, or grilling.
- Vary your protein choices. Try fish, beans, peas, nuts, and seeds. For example, try making a main dish without meat for dinner, such as pasta with beans, at least once a week.



## Fats

- Everyone needs some fat as part of a healthful diet. Fats should provide about 20 to 35 percent of your daily calories. Even though some fats are heart-healthy, they are still high in calories. Limit serving sizes of all fats.
- Choose heart-healthy fats: foods with monounsaturated fats and polyunsaturated fatty acids, such as salmon or corn oil. (See page 324 for more examples.) Most of the fat you eat should come from vegetable oils, nuts, and fish. For example, cook with canola oil. Snack on nuts. Have fish for dinner.
- Limit how often you have heart-harmful fats: foods with saturated fat, *trans* fat, and cholesterol, such as bacon, whole milk, and foods with hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated fats. (See page 325 for more examples.) Limit how often you have fats that are solid at room temperature and the foods that contain them, such as fatty cuts of meat. If you eat foods with heart-harmful fats, limit how much you eat of them.



on food packages. (Food labels use the word “sodium” instead of salt.) Many processed foods are high in sodium. Try to cut back on how much salt you add while you cook and at the table.

## Added sugars

Limit the amount of foods and drinks you consume with added sugars, such as cakes, cookies, regular soft drinks, and candy. Check the Nutrition Facts label to find added sugars. (See page 328 for a list of names of added sugars.) Added sugars will be shown in the list of ingredients. The Nutrition Facts label lists the total sugars content. However, the total includes naturally occurring sugar, such as the sugar in fruit, plus added sugar.

## How to start changing the way you eat

Sometimes it’s hard to change habits. But making a change step by step can help.

- Choose one small change you’d like to make.
- Make your idea as specific and realistic as possible. For example, instead of saying, “I will eat more high-fiber food,” say, “I will have an orange three days a week for breakfast.”
- Decide on when you will make this change, choosing a short period of time. For example, set a goal for this week.
- Write down your plan, using the guide on the following page.
- When your idea has become a regular habit, choose something new to try.

Use the questions on the next page to make your plan for change.

## Salt (sodium)

Limit your sodium to less than 2300 milligrams each day. Choose foods with little sodium. Fruits, vegetables, dry beans and peas, and fresh meat, poultry, and fish are naturally low in sodium. You can also check the Nutrition Facts label

## My Plan for Changing the Way I Eat

**What I'll do:** \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

Example: I'll have fruit for my evening snack instead of potato chips.

**When (or how often) I'll do it:** \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

Example: I'll do that every night before I go to bed.

**What I'll need to get ready:** \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

Example: I'll buy some apples.

**What might interfere with my plan:** \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

Example: Having potato chips in the house.

**How I'll overcome my barriers:** \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

Example: I'll stop buying potato chips this week.

**When I'll start my plan:** \_\_\_\_\_

Example: I'll start on Monday and try it for 1 week.

**How I'll reward myself (with a non-food reward):** \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

Example: I'll go to the movies each week if I meet my goal.

## Ideas for improving your food choices

Start with one of these ideas to improve your food choices this week. Or maybe you already have your own idea.

Instead of...	Try...
Whole milk	Low-fat (1%) milk or fat-free (skim) milk
Sour cream	Plain yogurt, low-fat or non-fat
White bread or flour tortillas	Whole wheat bread or whole wheat tortillas
Bacon	Canadian bacon or lean ham
Regular ground beef (25% fat)	Extra-lean ground beef (5% fat)
Regular ice cream	Low-fat frozen yogurt
Fried chicken	Roasted chicken without the skin

## Your quick reference to the basics of nutrition

Here's a summary of the basics about nutrition. You can use this chart to learn what each nutrient does and where to find it. For more information about how much to have of each nutrient, talk with your doctor or dietitian.

Carbohydrates		
Type	What you need to know	sources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carbohydrates are part of a healthful diet. They supply energy to your body.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fruits</li> <li>Vegetables</li> <li>Grains</li> <li>Milk and yogurt</li> <li>Dry beans and peas</li> </ul>
<b>Fiber</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fiber may lower your risk of heart disease and helps your digestive system run smoothly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fruits</li> <li>Vegetables</li> <li>Whole grains</li> <li>Dry beans and peas</li> </ul>
<b>Sugars</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some sugars occur naturally in foods that are important in a healthy diet.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fruits</li> <li>Milk</li> </ul>
<b>Added sugars</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some foods and drinks are sweetened with added sugars and syrups. (See page 328 for a list of names of added sugars.)</li> <li>Added sugars provide calories, and no additional nutrients.</li> <li>Choosing foods and drinks with little added sugars may help you reduce calories and help with weight control.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular soft drinks</li> <li>Candy</li> <li>Cakes, cookies, and pies</li> <li>Fruit drinks</li> <li>Ice cream</li> <li>Sweetened yogurt and sweetened grains such as sweetened cereals (These foods provide nutrients but may not be the best choices because of extra calories from added sugars.)</li> </ul>

## Protein

### What you need to know

- Protein plays an important role in many body structures and functions.

### Sources

- Meat
- Poultry
- Fish and shellfish
- Eggs
- Nuts
- Peanut butter
- Seeds
- Dry beans and peas
- Tofu
- Soybeans
- Vegetarian burgers

## Fats

### Heart-Healthy Fats—Unsaturated Fats (Best for Your Heart)

#### Type of fat

#### What you need to know

#### Sources

#### Monounsaturated fat

- It can lower your blood cholesterol level.

- Nuts
- Canola oil
- Olive oil
- High oleic safflower oil (“High oleic” means the oil has a high percentage of monounsaturated fatty acids.)
- Sunflower oil

#### Polyunsaturated omega-3 fatty acids (a type of polyunsaturated fat)

- They help your body work well. If you already have heart disease, they may protect your heart.

- Walnuts
- Flaxseed
- Salmon
- Trout
- Herring
- Soybean oil
- Canola oil

#### Polyunsaturated omega-6 fatty acids (a type of polyunsaturated fat)

- They help your body work well (when they replace saturated fat).

- Corn oil
- Soybean oil
- Safflower oil

Fats		
Heart-Harmful Fats (Worst for Your Heart)		
Type of fat	What you need to know	Sources
<b>Saturated fat</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It can increase your blood fat levels. This can raise your heart disease risk.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bacon</li> <li>Butter</li> <li>Coconut</li> <li>Whole milk products</li> <li>Lard</li> <li>Fatty cuts of meat</li> <li>Palm oil</li> </ul>
<b>Trans fats, also called trans fatty acids</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They can increase your blood fat levels. This can raise your heart disease risk.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foods made with partially hydrogenated or hydrogenated oils</li> <li>Foods in which <i>trans</i> fats occur naturally, such as butter, milk products, cheese, beef, and lamb</li> </ul>
<b>Cholesterol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It can increase your blood fat levels. This can raise your heart disease risk.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High-fat milk products, such as cheese, ice cream, and whole milk</li> <li>Egg yolks</li> <li>Liver</li> <li>Meat</li> <li>Poultry</li> </ul>

Vitamins		
Name	What you need to know	Sources*
<b>Folic acid (folate)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It helps make and maintain new cells and can help lower the risk of some birth defects. (For more information, see the <i>Pregnancy</i> chapter on page 169.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fortified foods, such as enriched breads, cereals, and pasta</li> <li>Dry beans and peas</li> <li>Spinach, collard greens, and other leafy green vegetables</li> <li>Orange juice</li> </ul>
<b>Vitamin A</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It's important for your vision. It also helps your body fight infections.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carrot juice</li> <li>Sweet potatoes</li> <li>Carrots</li> <li>Spinach</li> <li>Collards</li> </ul>

## Vitamins

Name	What you need to know	Sources*
<b>Vitamin C</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It helps with repair of your body.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guavas</li> <li>• Red sweet peppers</li> <li>• Oranges</li> <li>• Orange juice</li> <li>• Green peppers</li> <li>• Grapefruit juice</li> </ul>
<b>Vitamin D</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It helps your body create and maintain strong bones.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sunshine. Your body can make vitamin D after your skin is exposed to sunlight without sunscreen for 10 to 15 minutes twice a week. But be sure to use sunscreen after your 15 minutes of exposure and at all other times. Eat foods with vitamin D throughout the year.</li> <li>• Salmon</li> <li>• Shrimp</li> <li>• Milk fortified with vitamin D (Most milk is fortified.)</li> </ul>

\*Food sources in this chart are listed in order of the amount of a nutrient they provide in a typical serving—from high to low. See *A Healthier You* for more sources. See page 335 to find out how to get *A Healthier You*.

## Minerals

Name	What you need to know	Sources*
<b>Calcium</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It helps build strong bones and teeth.</li> </ul>	<p>Dairy sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plain yogurt, non-fat</li> <li>• Cheese</li> <li>• Fruit yogurt, low-fat</li> <li>• Fat-free (skim) milk</li> </ul> <p>Non-dairy sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fortified ready-to-eat cereals</li> <li>• Calcium-fortified soy drinks</li> <li>• Calcium-fortified tofu</li> <li>• Collards</li> </ul>
<b>Iron</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It plays an important part in many basic body functions, such as taking oxygen to cells.</li> <li>• Vitamin C-rich foods help your body absorb iron from non-animal foods, such as fortified cereals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beef, bottom round</li> <li>• Fortified ready-to-eat cereals (Check the label for amounts.)</li> <li>• Fortified instant cooked cereals</li> <li>• Soybeans</li> <li>• Lentils</li> <li>• Spinach</li> </ul>

Potassium		
What you need to know	Recommendation	Food sources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It helps all cells work properly. It also helps build muscles and plays a part in growth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sweet potatoes</li> <li>Potatoes, baked</li> <li>Tomato puree</li> <li>Halibut</li> <li>Bananas</li> <li>Spinach</li> <li>Oranges</li> </ul>	

\*Food sources in this chart are listed in order of the amount of a nutrient they provide in a typical serving—from high to low. See *A Healthier You* for more sources. See page 335 to find out how to get *A Healthier You*.



## Taking Vitamin and Mineral Supplements

If you take vitamin and mineral supplements, talk to your health care provider about what you're taking. Ask whether taking supplements is right for you. Sometimes dietary supplements can interact with your medicines or affect your health in unwanted ways.

Salt (Sodium)	
What you need to know	Recommendation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most people eat too much sodium.</li> <li>Reducing the amount of sodium in your diet can help lower your blood pressure.</li> <li>Meeting your potassium requirement (4700 milligrams each day) by eating foods rich in potassium can also help lower blood pressure.</li> <li>Talk with your doctor about how much sodium you should consume each day.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limit yourself to less than 2300 milligrams of sodium (about 1 teaspoon of salt) each day.</li> <li>People with high blood pressure, African Americans, and middle-aged and older adults should aim to have no more than 1500 milligrams of sodium each day. They should also make sure they have 4700 milligrams of potassium each day by eating foods with potassium.</li> <li>You can limit sodium by cutting down on how much salt you add to food while cooking and at the table and watching out for sodium-containing foods. Check the Nutrition Facts labels and make sure your choices don't exceed 100 percent of the daily value for sodium.</li> </ul>

Alcoholic Beverages	
What you need to know	Recommendation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alcoholic beverages have calories but few nutrients.</li> <li>Avoid alcoholic beverages if you're pregnant, breastfeeding, or if you're of childbearing age and might become pregnant.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you choose to drink alcoholic beverages, limit yourself to no more than one drink each day. One drink is equal to 12 fluid ounces of beer, 5 fluid ounces of wine, or 1.5 fluid ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits.</li> </ul>

## Using the Nutrition Facts label

Information on the Nutrition Facts food label can help you make wise food choices.

- Check the serving size. Use it as a guide to compare products and make better choices. The serving size information tells you how many servings are in one package.

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)	
Servings Per Container 2	
Amount Per Serving	
<b>Calories</b> 250	Calories from Fat 110
	% Daily Value*
<b>Total Fat</b> 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
<i>Trans</i> Fat 3g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 470mg	10%
<b>Sodium</b> 470mg	20%
<b>Potassium</b> 700mg	20%
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
<b>Protein</b> 5g	
Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	20%
Iron	4%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:	
	Calories: 2,000      2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g      80g
Sat Fat	Less than 20g      25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg      300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg      2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g      375g
Dietary Fiber	25g      30g

- Look at the calories per serving. You can use the information about calories to compare foods.
- Check the list of ingredients. Ingredients are listed in order by weight.
  - If you're trying to avoid foods with a lot of added sugar, limit foods that list added sugars as the first few ingredients. Other names for added sugars include brown sugar, corn sweetener, corn syrup, dextrose, fructose, fruit juice concentrates, glucose, high fructose corn syrup, honey, invert sugar, lactose, maltose, malt syrup, molasses, raw sugar, sucrose, and syrup.
  - If you're trying to increase your fiber intake, choose foods with a whole grain, such as whole wheat, listed as the first ingredient. Other whole grains are whole oats, oatmeal, whole-grain corn, popcorn, brown rice, whole rye, whole-grain barley, wild rice, buckwheat, triticale, bulgur (cracked wheat), millet, quinoa, and sorghum. You can also increase your fiber intake by eating more vegetables, fruits, beans, and nuts.

## Comparing foods using the percent (%) Daily Value

The % Daily Value column (see the purple area in the example label) can help you compare packaged foods. Use this quick guide to the numbers:

- 5% or less is low.
- 20% or more is high.

For a healthy diet, you want to **get enough** of these nutrients (see the green

area in the example label):

- potassium
- fiber
- vitamins A and C
- calcium
- iron

For example, if a **cereal** has a daily value of **20% for fiber**, it's **high** in fiber. That means it's a **wise** choice for fiber.

For a healthy diet, you want to **limit** these (see the gold area in the example label):

- total fat
- saturated fat
- *trans* fat
- cholesterol
- sodium



You also want to limit added sugars for a healthy diet. Make sure that added sugars are not among the first few items in the list of ingredients.

For example, **fat-free milk** has a daily value of **1% for cholesterol**, meaning it's **low** in cholesterol. That means it's a **wise** choice if you're limiting your intake of cholesterol. Fat-free milk is also low in total fat, saturated fat, and *trans* fat, meaning it's a wise choice if you're limiting all of these fats.

### Reaching and staying at a healthy weight

To reach and stay at a healthy weight, you need both healthful eating and physical activity. These two strategies work well together.

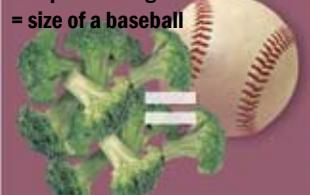
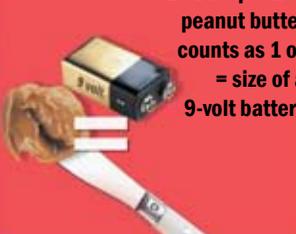
For information on physical activity, see the *Fitness* chapter on page 337.

Many American women are overweight. Being overweight or obese may increase your risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, and other conditions. You can keep from gaining weight by balancing the number of calories you eat and drink with the number of calories you burn with physical activity and body functions. To lose weight, you need to use more calories than you eat and drink.

How do you know whether you're overweight? One way is to check the Body Mass Index chart. (See page 22 of the *Heart Disease* chapter.)

Choosing sensible portions can help you control your weight. You can estimate serving sizes of your food using everyday items. See the guide below.

Amount of foods  
For 2000 calories

<p><b>½ cup of fruit juice</b> = size of a 4 oz juice box</p> 	<p><b>1 small apple = 1 cup</b> = size of a baseball</p> 	<p><b>½ cup sliced fruit</b> = size of a small computer mouse</p> 	<p><b>2 cups</b> Fruit Group</p>
<p><b>½ cup of carrots or other vegetables</b> = size of a small computer mouse</p> 	<p><b>10 medium fries counts as ½ cup</b> = size of a deck of cards</p> 	<p><b>1 cup of raw vegetables</b> = size of a baseball</p> 	<p><b>2½ cups</b> Vegetable Group</p>
<p><b>1 cup of milk</b> = an 8 oz carton of milk</p> 	<p><b>1 cup of yogurt</b> = size of a baseball</p> 	<p><b>1½ oz of low-fat natural cheese*</b> = size of two 9-volt batteries</p>  <p><small>*Counts as one cup</small></p>	<p><b>3 cups or equivalent</b> Milk Group</p>
<p><b>2-3 oz of meat, poultry or fish</b> = size of a deck of cards</p> 	<p><b>1 tablespoon of peanut butter</b> counts as 1 oz = size of a 9-volt battery</p> 	<p><b>½ cup of beans counts as 2 oz</b> = size of a small computer mouse</p> 	<p><b>5½ ounces or equivalent</b> Meat &amp; Beans Group</p>
<p><b>½ cup of cooked pasta = 1 oz</b> = size of a small computer mouse</p> 	<p><b>1 cup of dry cereal = 1 oz</b> = size of a baseball</p> 	<p><b>1 slice of bread counts as 1 oz</b> = size of a CD*</p>  <p><small>*About the thickness of 10 CDs (½ inch)</small></p>	<p><b>6 ounces or equivalent</b> Grains Group</p>

ADAPTED FROM U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, TEAM NUTRITION. USDA DOES NOT ENDORSE ANY PRODUCTS, SERVICES, OR ORGANIZATIONS. PROVIDED BY WOMENSHEALTH.GOV.



### **Making wise food choices when you're away from home**

We all eat many meals and snacks while we're on the run. These tips can help you stay on track.

<b>When</b>	<b>Tips</b>
<b>Snacks</b>	<p>Try these healthier choices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fruit</li> <li>• A small handful of nuts</li> <li>• Baby carrots and cherry tomatoes</li> <li>• Whole-grain crackers with low-fat cheese</li> <li>• Low-fat or fat-free yogurt</li> <li>• Fat-free frozen yogurt</li> <li>• Low-fat, lower sodium crackers</li> <li>• Lower fat cookies such as graham crackers or fig bars</li> </ul>
<b>Lunches</b>	<p>Make sandwiches with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low-fat cheese or fat-free cheese</li> <li>• 95 to 97 percent fat-free lunch meats</li> <li>• Chicken or turkey without the skin</li> <li>• Water-packed tuna</li> <li>• Lettuce leaves, tomato slices, cucumber slices, and other vegetables</li> <li>• Whole-grain breads, rolls, or tortillas</li> <li>• Reduced-calorie margarine or mayonnaise</li> <li>• Mustard</li> </ul>

When	Tips
<b>Lunches</b>	Bring or buy healthy main-dish salads with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A variety of vegetables—not just lettuce</li> <li>• Lower fat, lower sodium high-protein food, such as grilled chicken or turkey, water-packed tuna, or low-fat cheese</li> <li>• Lemon juice, herb vinegar, or reduced-calorie salad dressing</li> <li>• Whole-grain crackers or whole-grain bread on the side</li> </ul> Bring frozen meals—choose ones lower in fat and sodium—and add a salad or some fruit, plus low-fat milk.
<b>Eating out</b>	In any restaurant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask for salad dressing, gravy, or sauce on the side and use sparingly.</li> <li>• Choose main dishes that are broiled, baked, roasted, or grilled, instead of deep-fried or pan-fried.</li> <li>• Don't be afraid to make special requests, such as asking that something be cooked with less fat.</li> </ul> When ordering a sandwich: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add lettuce and tomato.</li> <li>• Ask for whole wheat or rye bread.</li> <li>• Choose mustard instead of mayonnaise.</li> </ul> At Chinese restaurants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have brown rice instead of white rice.</li> <li>• Order a side dish of steamed broccoli.</li> </ul> At fast-food places: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Order smaller burgers.</li> <li>• Have grilled chicken.</li> <li>• Choose water or low-fat milk instead of regular soda.</li> </ul> At pizza places: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask for vegetable toppings, such as mushrooms or peppers, rather than meat toppings.</li> <li>• Get whole wheat crust.</li> <li>• Request half the cheese.</li> <li>• Eat a salad with low-fat dressing in place of a slice of pizza.</li> </ul>

### Research in nutrition today

Scientists are researching what types of diets are best for preventing and controlling disease. For example, one study is examining the effect of the typical American diet on the risk of heart disease in African American and Caucasian

women. In another project, scientists are trying to find the best treatment for osteoporosis (OSS-tee-oh-puh-ROH-suhss) in older women. Much research is also devoted to the prevention and control of obesity, a major problem in the United States.

## **Taking the time to make wise food choices—it's up to you**

It's never too late to make changes in how you eat. Small changes can make a big difference. Think about what you are willing to do. When you're ready to make a change, decide on a plan and give it a try.

If your plan doesn't work, it doesn't mean you've failed. Instead, it means you might need to try something different. Keep in mind that you'll do a lot for your health, day to day and in the long run, if you make wise food choices most of the time. ■



# One Woman's Story

**M**y story of successful weight loss and fitness began in 2003 at age 46. A wife and mother of two teenage girls, I felt myself beginning to age. A frank, life-changing conversation with an older nurse at my annual physical set the course for change. She painted a grim picture of my future, with chronic health problems like arthritis and diabetes, if I didn't change my ways. Tired and obese, with high cholesterol, indigestion, body aches, and a slowed metabolism already a part of my life, I realized she was right, and it scared me into action.

Out of fear came commitment and determination to do everything possible to achieve good health. The challenge was to be successful after a lifetime of poor eating habits and failed diets. Success came this time, not because I started an elaborate physical activity program or went on a special diet, but because I focused on behavior. I started a simple routine that was easy to remember and could be done at home. It combined elements of everything I had learned about good nutrition, physical activity, and healthy weight loss over the years.

For starters, I walked briskly every day for an hour and made wiser food choices at dinner. I focused on fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, and lean meat. At the same time, I chose foods lower in saturated fat and *trans* fat, cholesterol, added sugars, and salt. I made the same wiser food choices at the store, including choosing healthier snacks for my family. I made my health a top priority and stayed committed, and my family supported me. They were willing to cook and do whatever it took to help me accomplish my goal.

Four years later, I continue to work hard on my health every day and follow the new routine I set up. I lost and have kept off 50 pounds, dropped 68 points from my cholesterol numbers, and no longer have any of the health problems that I did before. In fact, I am in better health now than I was at 25! My friends and family are amazed at the results, and I feel wonderful. I've found that good eating and physical activity habits are contagious, as my family and close friends are now in better health, too.

For me, less was more in finally finding a way to achieve and maintain good health. I didn't need to join a gym or enroll in an expensive weight loss program to be successful. Instead of dwelling on pounds lost or calories eaten, I focused on making specific lifestyle changes. I will always be thankful to the nurse who cared enough to warn me and share her own experiences. I will never forget her. She may have saved my life.

Bev

**Cary, North Carolina**

---

**...I am in better  
health now than  
I was at 25!**

---

## For More Information...

### **Office on Women's Health, HHS**

200 Independence Ave SW, Room 712E  
Washington, DC 20201  
Web site: [www.womenshealth.gov/  
FitnessNutrition](http://www.womenshealth.gov/FitnessNutrition)  
Phone number: (800) 994-9662,  
(888) 220-5446 TDD

### **Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, FDA**

5100 Paint Branch Parkway  
College Park, MD 20740-3835  
Web site: [www.cfsan.fda.gov](http://www.cfsan.fda.gov)  
Phone number: (888) 723-3366

### **U.S. Department of Agriculture**

1400 Independence Ave SW  
Washington, DC 20250  
Web site: [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)  
[www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov)  
[www.nutrition.gov](http://www.nutrition.gov)

### **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**

200 Independence Ave, SW  
Washington, DC 20201  
Web site: [www.healthier.us.gov](http://www.healthier.us.gov)  
[www.smallstep.gov](http://www.smallstep.gov)  
[www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines](http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines)

To order *A Healthier You*, call (866) 512-1800 or visit [http://bookstore.gpo.gov/collections/healthier\\_you.jsp](http://bookstore.gpo.gov/collections/healthier_you.jsp)

### **Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity, CDC**

4770 Buford Highway NE, MS K-24  
Atlanta, GA 30341-3717  
Web site: [www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa)  
Phone number: (800) 232-4636,  
(888) 232-6348 TTY

### **Food and Nutrition Information Center, USDA**

National Agricultural Library  
10301 Baltimore Ave, Room 105  
Beltsville, MD 20705  
Web site: <http://fnic.nal.usda.gov>  
Phone number: (301) 504-5414

### **Office of Dietary Supplements, NIH**

6100 Executive Blvd, Room 3B01, MSC 7517  
Bethesda, MD 20892-7517  
Web site: [www.ods.od.nih.gov](http://www.ods.od.nih.gov)

### **Weight-Control Information Network, NIH**

1 WIN Way  
Bethesda, MD 20892-3665  
Web site: [www.win.niddk.nih.gov](http://www.win.niddk.nih.gov)  
Phone number: (877) 946-4627

### **American Dietetic Association**

120 S Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000  
Chicago, IL 60606-6995  
Web site: [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)  
Phone number: (800) 877-1600 ext.5000

