

Anyone can eat healthy. Small changes make a big difference!

Want to lose weight but have tried “diets” and failed? I believe diets don’t work because most people don’t learn how to change their lifestyle to a healthy eating pattern. Diets are a temporary way to lose weight. Once the goal is reached, they go back to normal eating and regain the weight. Try making permanent small changes that make a positive impact on your eating pattern. In my perspective, people should not diet, they should adopt a healthy lifestyle and include healthy eating and exercise. The United States Guidelines for Americans describes a healthy diet as being rich in fruits and vegetables, whole grains, fat free or low fat dairy products and includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts. It is low in saturated and trans-fat, cholesterol, salt (sodium) and added sugars.

Don’t set yourself up for failure by expecting to lose weight overnight. You did not gain it overnight nor will you lose it overnight. Plan on losing approximately one pound per week. Studies prove that the faster you lose weight the faster you will gain it back! Remember, 3500 calories make a pound, so losing that pound will take time. Eating less and burning more calories through exercise is the key to losing weight. What you eat needs to be nutritious and beneficial to your body. In a healthy meal plan, there is room for treats and snacks - but high calorie low nutrient foods should be kept to a minimum! Eating the appropriate portion size is an important way to keep track of calories and meet your goal for healthy food intake. Here are some small changes (try one or two just to get started) then gradually adapt to a healthy eating lifestyle!

- Try to eat more fruits and vegetables.
 - o Try adding one serving a day, then additional servings until you reach the goal of 8-10 servings per day.
 - o Include a fresh fruit or 100% juice at breakfast
 - o Make your snacks veggies or fruits with low calorie dip
 - o Use a 50/50 mix of spinach and lettuce in salads or on sandwiches.
 - o Reserve half of your plate for fruit or veggies at lunch and dinner to get 2-3 servings per meal.
 - o Check out our website for more healthy picks and tips from the produce department!

- Eat breakfast. You will eat fewer calories throughout the day.
 - o Feel like you have no time for breakfast? Grab a granola bar, meal replacement bar, yogurt, cheese and fruit or make a quick fruit smoothie.

- Need help cutting calories?
 - o Use a salad plate instead of a dinner plate,
 - o Juice and soda have about the same amount of calories- limit to one 8 oz glass a day.

- Keep a food journal- you may be surprised what you are really eating.
 - Eat at home.
 - Limit alcohol.
 - Dilute juice with water.
 - Use mustard instead of mayonnaise. Mayonnaise has 50-90 calories per tablespoon while mustard has 3 calories per teaspoon.
 - When dining out - eat half of your meal and take the rest home, split desserts with the rest of your guests.
 - Try the USDA's online calorie and nutrient database at www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp/search
- Can beverages really add that many calories?? Yes!
 - Reduce or eliminate caloric drinks such as lemonade, sweet tea and soda.
 - If you exchange a 20 oz soda each day for a non caloric drink, you could lose 25 lbs in a year.
 - Still drink whole milk? Switch to 1% milk and by drinking one 8 oz glass a day, you can lose 5 lbs in a year! One cup of 1% milk instead of whole saves 45 calories, use skim and you save 54 calories.
 - Cut down on coffee and what you add to it-
 - If you need coffee- keep it in moderation. If you need to sweeten it up try this- Save 75 calories by using 2T of skim milk and a packet of artificial sweetener, compared to 1T of cream and 2 tsp. of sugar.
- Watch portion sizes - there are no bad foods just bad portions!
 - Never super-size any meal again! Pay attention to serving size on the nutrition facts label.
 - Your lunch and dinner plate should contain half fruits and vegetables - have smaller portions of meats and starches.
 - A serving of pasta is one cup - most people eat four cups at a meal.
 - Do not eat snacks out of the bag - pour a serving into a bowl so you will see the amount that you are eating.
 - Look on our website for the portion control article - understand what a single portion really is!
- Drink water - most people do not reach the goal of 6-8 glasses per day - so drink up!
 - Try a glass of water before each meal and you will be less likely to over indulge.
- Eating has a purpose - It gives your body nutrients to function properly and stay healthy. Enjoy the food you eat - use all of your senses to bring out the best in your food! Take the time to taste

and smell your food. Enjoy different textures, aromas and colors. Slow down and ENJOY!

- Start with low calorie foods first on your plate - salads, veggies and soups. Then graduate to higher calories items - meats and starches. You should not be as hungry so you will be content with smaller portions of the higher calorie foods.
- Do not over indulge - when you feel full - STOP eating. Save the rest for later. Do not finish your plate of food because “You paid for it”. You are not paying yourself to gain weight.
- Don’t have time for a “real dinner” try these alternatives:
 - o Smoothie made with fat free milk, fruit and protein powder
 - o Peanut butter on whole wheat bread or crackers, with an apple and skim milk
 - o Precooked chicken strips or can tuna on a salad
 - o Healthy can of soup
 - o Healthy frozen meal and a salad
 - o Fruit with yogurt or cottage cheese
 - o Whole grain cereal with fruit and fat free milk
 - o Veggie sandwich from a deli
- Do you struggle with a sweet tooth? Try these tips:
 - o Periodically have a great lean salad for lunch and save the meal’s calories for a full dessert later that night
 - o Try sweet healthy treats like fresh berries with fat free whip topping, low fat ice cream and fruit or fruit slushy (blended frozen fruits)
 - o Try cutting out sweets totally for 2 weeks, you will be amazed how your cravings vanish
 - o Have a small portion treat - tootsie rolls, hard candy, one ounce of chocolate, frozen red grapes, fat free fudgcicles
- Need an afternoon snack?
 - o Try a veggie juice like V8 instead of a soda
 - o Try nuts - not too many - only about 1/4 cup
 - o Try yogurt and fruit
 - o Try cheese cubes and whole wheat crackers
 - o Try dried fruit (watch portion sizes – they have higher calories than fresh)
 - o For a listing of healthy snacks - look at our website for more suggestions
- Enjoy eggs for breakfast? Try egg whites instead of the whole eggs. Instead of two scrambled eggs, mix one egg and an egg white and you will save 85 calories. Also look for a replacement (Egg Beaters) as another option

- Put down the salt – don't salt your food during cooking or at the table. Experiment with herbs and salt free seasonings. After cutting the salt in your food, you will be surprised on how sensitive you are to the taste.
- What oils are you using? All oils are fats and high calories, but mono-unsaturated fats provide some heart health benefits. Use extra virgin olive or canola oils instead of peanut, corn or vegetable oil. Skip the butter and margarine when cooking and use cooking spray to coat the pan. Use applesauce instead of oil in baking (look at our website for other recipe substitutions)
- Don't go overboard on "free" foods. Even if it is fat free or sugar free - there are still calories! These products can help reduce your intake of calories when used appropriately. Use low fat sour cream, low fat yogurt or low fat cream cheese, but still use in moderation.
- A proper meat serving should be three ounces (size of a deck of cards) not a serving that fits on the plate!
 - o Most people consume more meat than they need. Most people need 2-3 three oz servings (restaurants serve 12-16 oz steaks!)
 - o Meat provides many essential vitamins, minerals and protein, but nuts and beans also count as a protein serving.
 - o Do not forget fish, poultry and eggs. Limit red meat and give the others a try!
- Get your whole grains - look for the whole grain seal on the package or whole grain listed as the first ingredient on the food label. At least three of your starch servings per day should be whole grain options - look for whole grain cereals, breads, tortillas, crackers and pitas.
 - o Look at our website for more information about whole grain.
- Eat nuts and legumes (beans, peas, soybeans, alfalfa sprouts) 1-3 times a day.
 - o They are packed with protein, fiber, vitamins and unsaturated fat
 - o They make a great snack, and healthy additions to breakfast cereal, salads, and casseroles
- Got milk? Eat low fat dairy products two – three times a day.
 - o Cheese, milk, yogurt, ice cream, cottage cheese all have low fat varieties.
 - o If you choose not to eat dairy products - take a calcium supplement.
 - o Lactose intolerant? Look for foods fortified with calcium - soy, rice and nut milks, orange juice, cereals and breads.

- What about the other part of the equation - exercise?
 - o Exercise will help curb your appetite
 - o Remember to keep hydrated while exercising - drink plenty of water before, during and after the workout
 - o Keep walking - get different types of music or audio books to listen while you are walking. Don't forget a friend to help keep you accountable!
 - o Not sure what to do? - look for local classes at schools or community centers- try something new with a friend - like kick boxing, yoga, water aerobics, cycling or Pilates
 - o Too busy to leave the house? - try walking on a treadmill while watching the news or reading a magazine
 - o Be mindful of exercise through out the day - park away from the building and walk more, use the stairs not the elevator, use a short break at work to walk around the parking lot or office instead of sitting in the break room, window shop and walk the mall, do small exercises at your desk - calf raises, stretches, or lift a book for several reps.

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