



Family Medicine Associates, P.A.

Nutrition: How to Make Healthier Food Choices

When combined with exercise, a healthy diet can help you lose weight, lower your cholesterol and improve the way your body functions on a daily basis.

The USDA recommends that an adult daily diet include the following:

- 3 ounces of whole grains, and 6 ounces of grains total
- 2 cups of fruit
- 2 1/2 cups of vegetables
- 3 cups fat-free or low-fat dairy

Grains: Whole-grain breads are low in fat; they're also high in fiber and complex-carbohydrates, which helps you feel fuller longer and prevents overeating. Avoid rich bakery foods such as donuts, sweet rolls and muffins. These foods can contain more than 50% fat calories. Avoid fried snacks such as potato chips and tortilla chips. Try low-fat or baked versions instead!

Fruits and Vegetables: Fruits and vegetables are naturally low in fat, add flavor and variety to your diet, and also contain fiber, vitamins and minerals.

Meat, Poultry and Fish: Baking, broiling and roasting are the healthiest ways to prepare meats such as poultry and fish. Lean cuts can be pan-broiled or stir-fried. Use either a nonstick pan or nonstick spray coating instead of butter or margarine. Trim outside fat and visible skin before cooking. Select low-fat, lean cuts of meat. Lean beef and veal cuts have the word "loin" or "round" in their names. Lean pork cuts have the word "loin" or "leg" in their margarine. Chicken breasts are a good choice because they are low in fat and high in protein. Most seafood is low in saturated fat. Omega-3 fatty acids are found in some fatty fish, such as salmon and cold water trout. They may help lower the risk of heart disease in some people.

Dairy: Choose skim milk or low-fat buttermilk. Substitute evaporated skim milk for cream in recipes for soups and sauces. Try low-fat cheeses. Use 1% cottage cheese for salads and cooking. String cheese is a low-fat, high-calcium snack option. Try mixing frozen nonfat or low-fat yogurt with fruit for dessert. Skim sherbet is an alternative to ice cream. Soft-serve and regular ice creams are also lower in fat than premium styles.

Fats, Oils and Sweets: Eating too many high-fat foods not only adds excess calories (which can lead to obesity and weight gain), but can increase your risk factor for several diseases. Heart disease, diabetes, certain types of cancer, and osteoarthritis have all been linked to diets too high in fat. If you consume too much saturated and trans fats, you are more likely to develop high cholesterol and coronary artery disease.

Supplements and Suggestions:

| Instead of this: | Try this: |
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| <i>Grains</i> | |
| Croissants, biscuits, white breads and rolls | Low-fat whole grain breads and rolls |
| Fried tortillas | Soft tortillas (corn or whole wheat) |
| Sugar cereals and regular granola | Oatmeal, low-fat granola, whole-grain cereal |
| Potato or corn chips and buttered popcorn | Pretzels (unsalted) and popcorn (unbuttered) |
| White pasta or white rice | Whole-wheat pasta or whole-wheat rice |
| All-purpose white flour | 100% whole-wheat flour |
| <i>Fruits and Vegetables</i> | |
| Fried vegetables or vegetables served with cream, cheese or butter sauces | All vegetables raw, steamed, broiled, baked or tossed with a very small amount of olive oil and salt and pepper |
| Coconut | Fruit (fresh or canned in light syrup) |
| French fries, hash browns and potato chips | Baked, mashed and boiled potatoes, sweet potatoes |
| <i>Meat, Poultry and Fish</i> | |
| Regular/breaded fish sticks, oil canned fish or fish prepared with butter or served in high-fat sauces | Fish (fresh, frozen, canned in water), low-fat fish sticks or cakes and shellfish (such as shrimp) |
| Prime and marbled cuts | Select-grade lean beef (round, sirloin and loin) |
| Pork spare ribs and bacon | Lean pork (tenderloin and loin chop) and turkey bacon |
| Regular ground beef | Lean or extra-lean ground beef, chicken and turkey |
| Lunch meats (pepperoni, salami, bologna) | Lean lunch meats such as turkey, chicken and ham |
| Regular hot dogs or sausage | Fat-free hot dogs and turkey dogs |
| <i>Dairy</i> | |
| Whole or 2% milk | Skim or 1% milk |
| Evaporated milk | Evaporated skim milk |
| Regular buttermilk | Buttermilk made from skim (or 1%) milk |
| Yogurt made with whole milk | Nonfat or low-fat yogurt |
| Regular cheese (examples: American, blue, Brie, cheddar, Colby and Parmesan) | Low-fat cheese with less than 3 grams of fat per serving (example: natural cheese, processed cheese, soy cheese) |
| Regular cottage cheese | Low-fat, nonfat, and dry-curd cottage cheese with less than 2% fat |
| Regular cream cheese | Low-fat cream cheese (less than 3 grams of fat/ounce) |
| Regular ice cream | Sorbet, sherbet and nonfat or low-fat ice cream (less than 3 grams of fat per 1/2 cup serving) |
| <i>Fats, Oils and Sweets</i> | |
| Cookies | Fig bars, gingersnaps and molasses cookies |
| Shortening, butter or margarine | Olive, soybean and canola oils |
| Regular mayonnaise | Nonfat or light mayonnaise |
| Regular salad dressing | Nonfat or light salad dressing |
| Using fat (including butter) to grease pan | Nonstick cooking spray |

This information was provided by the American Academy of Family Physicians and does not replace a consultation from your physician. More information regarding this topic can be found at: www.familydoctor.org.