

Healthy Eating for a Healthy Lifestyle

This tip sheet accompanies the presentation “Healthy Eating for a Healthy Lifestyle.”

A healthy lifestyle begins with a healthy eating plan

Choosing a well-balanced diet or a healthy eating plan can help you maintain a healthy weight. What is a healthy eating plan? How do you choose the right foods?

According to the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion’s *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015-2020*, a healthy eating plan:

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

Healthy eating can be enjoyable

People often think of healthy eating as limiting. If healthy eating makes you think about all the foods you can’t have, try instead, to refocus on all the new foods you can eat.

- **Fresh, frozen, or canned fruits** – All fresh, frozen, or canned fruits are great choices. From mangoes to juicy pineapples, the possibilities are endless. If you choose to eat canned fruits, make sure they are packaged in water or their own juice, so you can avoid added sugars or syrups.
- **Fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables** – Try cooking vegetables in new ways, with new flavors. Maybe you’ll find that roasted vegetables with rosemary are your favorite, or that panfrying vegetables with a small amount of cooking spray is the easiest. You can also try frozen or canned vegetables as long as they don’t have added salt, butter, or cream sauces.
- **Calcium-rich foods** – Besides a glass of low-fat or fat-free milk, there are various yogurts and calcium fortified soy products that you can try.
- **A new take on an old favorite** – If your favorite dish calls for frying chicken or fish, try healthier variations by baking or grilling. Ask other people around you or search the internet for healthier recipes. You’ll be surprised by the tasty and healthy alternatives!

Do I have to give up my favorite comfort food?

No, you do not have to give up eating your favorite foods. Healthy eating is all about balance! The key is to:

- Eat your “unhealthy” favorites only once in a while
- Eat smaller amounts of these foods since they may be high in calories, fat, sodium, or added sugars
- Balance these foods out with healthier foods and more physical activity
- Try a low-calorie version that uses healthier ingredients

Source: https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy_eating/index.html