



# Navigating the Hurdles

Helping patients make a lifestyle change is a challenge for health care providers with limited time allocated during typical outpatient clinic visits. Cognitive-based behavior change strategies seem to be key to successful change—these strategies focus on changing **how an individual thinks** about themselves, their behaviors and life circumstances.

**The Healthy Life Check-Up** tool helps patients become aware of current habits they would like to change and areas where they need information or direction. Consider using the following strategies as you counsel patients regarding lifestyle change. They have demonstrated merit for successful lifestyle change—especially when two or more of these strategies are employed simultaneously.

## Goal Setting

Helping your patients set goals that are specific, short-term and realistic is a key first step in any lifestyle change effort. Regular, easily measured feedback, such as daily steps on a pedometer, help patients stay on track and measure progress towards a goal. Patients should be encouraged to break big goals down into smaller goals; for example, “walk a block before you walk a mile.” Small successes help to build confidence and increase motivation to stick with a lifestyle change.

**Use the “Smart Goals” tool to help your patients with realistic goal setting.**

## Self Monitoring

Encourage patients to track their progress using a journal or log of eating habits or daily activity. Electronic applications and pedometers are useful devices for creating awareness about behavior and any barriers to change. More frequent and immediate monitoring is most effective for changing behavior. Writing down what you’ve eaten during or right after a meal/snack for example, is better than attempting to recall daily food intake at the end of the day. Ask patients to periodically report progress by sending in copies of their logs and/or bringing them to the clinic for discussion during follow up visits.

**“Jotting it Down” is an example of a self-monitoring tool.**

## Frequent and Prolonged Contact

Before your patient walks out the door, schedule a follow-up session. Make sure the follow up is within a few weeks during the early stages of a behavior change. Frequent contact helps to build trust and communicates a sense of care and importance as it relates to the behavior change. Progress towards goals should be discussed and modifications to the behavior change program should be established. These follow-up sessions can be face to face, over the phone, or through the internet. Consider referring the patient to a group intervention—where weekly sessions can help provide regular support, feedback and commitment to change.

## Feedback and Reinforcement

Patients can measure progress if they receive feedback on a regular basis regarding a specific behavior change. This feedback can be used as a reinforcement to continue to practice a new behavior and/or a motivator to do more to get desired results. In addition to direct, in-person feedback, recent innovations include the use of the internet, or mobile devices that include software for self-monitoring progress toward a goal.



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## Self Efficacy

An individual's perception of their ability to learn a new task or practice a new behavior is defined as self-efficacy. The higher a patient's self-efficacy is, the more likely they are to initiate a new behavior and continue their efforts until success is achieved. There are four sources for building self-efficacy. These can be built into a lifestyle change program. They are to include:

- **Mastery experiences:** success in achieving a goal that is proximal and reasonable (small and realistic)
- **Vicarious experiences:** or observing someone else learn a new task, make a successful change, or achieve a goal
- **Verbal persuasion:** the provider expressing a belief in the patient's ability to learn a new skill or practice a new behavior
- **Physiologic feedback:** being aware of feeling better or having fewer symptoms, such as dyspnea with exertion, as a result of a lifestyle change

## Modeling

Having your patient observe someone performing the desired behavior can serve as a powerful behavior change tool. Exercise programs with a credible leader or cooking classes that demonstrate healthy food preparation are good examples of modeling. A video can be substituted if in-person opportunities are not available. Having your patient meet with someone who has been successful in making a behavior change is another form of modeling and commonly occurs in support groups—such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA).

## Problem Solving

There are 5 common steps to problem solving:

1. Identifying and defining the problem
2. Brainstorming solutions
3. Evaluating the pros and cons of potential solutions
4. Implementing the solution plan
5. Evaluating its outcome/success

These steps can be used to help patients overcome barriers to behavior change. Use open-ended questions and reflective listening as much as possible to allow patients to identify the problem and potential solutions.

**Use the patient tool “Tricks of the Trade” to help patients problem solve common setbacks when trying to become more active.**

**Use the patient tools “A Healthy Diet without Breaking the Bank” and “Dressing on the Side, Please” to help patients navigate the grocery store and restaurant menus.**



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## Relapse Prevention

Make patients aware that it is normal to deviate from prescribed plan for change. Have patients reflect on past experiences, barriers to change, and problem solve solutions in advance. Let them know that getting off track is not a failure. If they miss a few exercise classes, it's okay-no need to give up on their whole program.

## Motivational Interviewing

This directive, patient-centered counseling style helps individuals explore and resolve their own ambivalence. Seven key principles are central to motivation interviewing. They are:

1. Motivation to change needs to come from within the individual not imposed on them
2. It is the patient's job to state and resolve their own ambivalence
3. Direct persuasion is not effective for resolving ambivalence
4. The counseling style is quiet and eliciting
5. The counselor is directive in helping the patient examine and resolve ambivalence
6. The stage of readiness to change is in constant flux and not a fixed trait
7. The therapeutic relationship is a partnership, and not one based on the expert and the passive recipient

**Review the "Tips for the Coach" before you go in to a patient encounter. The brief scripts here can help you feel confident as you navigate a discussion around a behavior change.**



# My Healthy Life Check-Up

Please answer the following questions to help us better understand you and your needs in these areas. We will work with you on these issues over time.

## My Eating

The thing I would most like to change about my eating is:

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I eat healthy

Most of the time

Some of the time

Hardly ever

The amount of food that I eat is:

Just right

Too much

Too little

My interest in changing my eating habits:

The time is now. I am ready.

I am not sure. I would like to talk more about it.

Not right now.

How often do I eat when I am not really hungry—for instance, when I am stressed out, tired, or bored?

Often

Sometimes

Hardly ever

How often do I look at food labels?

Most of the time

Some of the time

Hardly ever

When I read the Nutrition Facts on a food label, I am most interested in:

Serving size

Calories

Fat

Saturated Fat

Cholesterol

Sodium

Carbohydrate

Fiber

Sugar

Protein

Other:

How many times per week do I buy my meals in a cafeteria or restaurant?

0-1

2-5

6 or more

How many times per week do I eat fast food?

0-1

2-5

6 or more



# My Healthy Life Check-Up

Please answer the following questions to help us better understand you and your needs in these areas. We will work with you on these issues over time.

## My Usual Eating

A serving of food is the amount that would fit in the palm of your hand.

How many servings of whole grains (whole grain bread, cereal or tortilla, oatmeal, brown rice) do I eat each day?	<input type="checkbox"/> 0-1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2-3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 or more
How many servings of fruits do I eat each day?	<input type="checkbox"/> 0-1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2-3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 or more
How many servings of vegetables do I eat each day?	<input type="checkbox"/> 0-1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2-3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 or more
How many servings of dairy products do I have each day (milk, cheese, yogurt)?	<input type="checkbox"/> 0-1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2-3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 or more
How many times per day do I eat lean protein (eggs, chicken, turkey, fish, tofu, or beans)?	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 or more
How many caloric beverages do I have each day (fruit juice, soda/pop, sport drinks, sweet tea, coffee drinks, fruit-flavored beverages)?	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 or more
How many alcoholic beverages do I drink in a <b>week</b> ?	<input type="checkbox"/> 0-1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2-5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 or more
How many times a <b>week</b> do I eat desserts or other sweets?	<input type="checkbox"/> 0-1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2-5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 or more
How many times a <b>week</b> do I eat high fat foods (fried food, donuts, chips or dips)?	<input type="checkbox"/> 0-1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2-5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 or more
How much margarine, butter, or meat fat (lard) do I use in cooking or put on bread, potatoes or other vegetables?	<input type="checkbox"/> 0-1 Tablespoons	<input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 Tablespoons	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 or more Tablespoons



# My Healthy Life Check-Up

Please answer the following questions to help us better understand you and your needs in these areas. We will work with you on these issues over time.

## My Activity and Exercise

The thing I would most like to change about my physical activity and exercise is:

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I consider myself:

 Very active

 Somewhat active

 Not active

The amount of exercise that I do is:

 Just right

 Too much

 Too little

My interest in changing my exercise or activity habits:

 The time is now. I am ready to get more active.

 I am not sure. I would like to talk more about it.

 Not right now.

Number of hours per day I spend sitting. This includes time at a computer, reading, watching TV, sports events or movies, meetings/class, and driving.

 Less than 4 hours

 4-9 hours

 More than 9 hours

Number of hours per week I am active doing yard or house work, errands or physical work in my job:

 Less than 10 hours

 10-30 hours

 More than 30 hours

Number of times per week I exercise for 10 minutes or more. This includes walking, swimming, biking, dancing, group exercise class, or sports.

 Less than 2 hours

 2-5 hours

 More than 5 hours



# My Healthy Life Check-Up

Please answer the following questions to help us better understand you and your needs in these areas. We will work with you on these issues over time.

## My Happiness and Satisfaction with Life

To help deal with the pressures of life, I \_\_\_\_\_

I feel:	<input type="checkbox"/> Very happy and satisfied with my life.	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat happy and satisfied with my life.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not happy about my life right now.
I am interested in making changes to improve my happiness and satisfaction.	<input type="checkbox"/> The time is now. I am ready to get started.	<input type="checkbox"/> I am not sure. I would like to talk more about it.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not right now.
Stress, depression or poor health keeps me from making healthy lifestyle changes.	<input type="checkbox"/> True	<input type="checkbox"/> False	
Number of days per week I participate in activities with other people. This includes church, hobbies, clubs, senior center, volunteer work or other social activities.	<input type="checkbox"/> None	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-3 days	<input type="checkbox"/> More than 3 days
I use tobacco products.	<input type="checkbox"/> True	<input type="checkbox"/> False	
I am interested in quitting tobacco.	<input type="checkbox"/> The time is now. I am ready to change.	<input type="checkbox"/> I am not sure. I would like to talk more about it.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not right now.
I am concerned about my use of alcohol.	<input type="checkbox"/> True	<input type="checkbox"/> False	
I am interested in quitting or reducing my alcohol intake.	<input type="checkbox"/> The time is now. I am ready to change.	<input type="checkbox"/> I am not sure. I would like to talk more about it.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not right now.
I have trouble getting to sleep or staying asleep.	<input type="checkbox"/> Rarely	<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/> Almost every night



# Tips for the Coach

Use this tool as a quick review of motivational interviewing strategies as you begin a behavior change counseling session. The focus is patient-centered - where motivation to change comes from within the patient and not imposed on them. The examples below are based on helping a patient start an exercise program, but can be translated to changing eating habits, tobacco cessation, or other lifestyle changes.

## Express Empathy

Goals	Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate respect for the patient.</li> <li>• Avoid communication that implies superior / inferior relationship.</li> <li>• Respect patient's freedom of choice and self-direction.</li> <li>• Seek ways to compliment rather than denigrate. Build up rather than tear down.</li> <li>• Focus on listening rather than telling.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use open-ended questions to explore:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The importance to making a lifestyle change. <i>"How important do you think it is for you to start exercising?"</i></li> <li>• Concerns and benefits of starting an exercise program. <i>"What might happen if you...?"</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Use reflective listening to seek shared understanding:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect words or meaning. <i>"So you think you can't afford to buy exercise gear."</i></li> <li>• Summarize. <i>"What I have heard you say so far is that you don't have time to exercise, on the other hand you feel guilty about the time you spend playing computer games and you are concerned about the weight you've gained."</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Normalize feelings and concerns: <i>"Many people worry about keeping up with others in an exercise class."</i></li> <li>• Support the patient's autonomy and right to choose or reflect change. <i>"I hear you say you are not ready to start exercising now. I am here to help you when you are ready."</i></li> </ul>

## Roll with Resistance

Goals	Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create opportunities for new ways of thinking about problems, without imposing them.</li> <li>• Reinforce the concept of ambivalence as normal and necessary to explore.</li> <li>• Help evoke solutions from the patient.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Back off and use reflection when the patient expresses resistance. <i>"Sounds like you are feeling bad about not being able to keep up with your kids."</i></li> <li>• Express empathy. <i>"You are worried about getting out of breath when you exercise."</i></li> <li>• Ask permission to provide information. <i>"Would you like some information about how to start an exercise program safely?"</i></li> </ul>





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## Develop Discrepancy

Goals	Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help patients become aware of the gap between where they are and where they want to be.</li> <li>• Enhance and focus the patient's attention on these gaps.</li> <li>• Raise patient's awareness of personal consequences of the current behavior.</li> <li>• Elicit patient's concern that would favor change.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlight the discrepancy between the patient's present behavior and expressed priorities, values and goals. <i>"It sounds like playing sports with your kids is important to you. How do you think exercise will affect this time with them?"</i></li> <li>• Reinforce and support "change talk" and commitment language. <i>"So, you realize that you would feel better if you could find the time to exercise. It is great that you are going to start walking over your lunch hour as soon as you get your big project done at work."</i></li> <li>• Build and deepen commitment to change. <i>"It is great that you are looking at exercise and healthy eating as a way to manage your weight and bring your blood pressure down."</i></li> </ul>

## Support Self Efficacy

Goals	Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the patient's belief that they can perform a particular behavior or accomplish a specific task.</li> <li>• Help to instill hope or optimism.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help the patient identify and build on past successes. <i>"So you were able to complete the 2 mile heart walk?"</i></li> <li>• Offer options for small steps toward successful lifestyle change.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start walking 5-10 minutes over the lunch hour.</li> <li>• Take the stairs instead of the elevator.</li> <li>• Keep a bag with your "gym clothes" in the car.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



# SMART Goals for Lasting Change

SMART = **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ddjustable, **R**ealistic, & **T**ime-Based

Setting goals can help you make lasting lifestyle changes to improve your health. Goals help you see what is important as well as stick to your plan. As you get into the habit of setting and meeting goals, you may find you are more able to believe in yourself and your ability to make changes. The tips below will help you set clear and effective goals.

## 1 Specific

Be as clear as possible regarding what you will do. Make sure the goal is **your goal** and not meant to please someone else. Write your goal down and put it in a place you will see each day.

*Example: "I want to complete the 5K (3 mile) Heart Walk in October."*

## 2 Measurable

Spell out exactly what you will do, how long, and how often.

*Example: "Over the next two weeks I will walk 30 minutes over my lunch hour, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays."*

## 3 Adjustable

Keep a good attitude when working on your goal. Don't get too upset if you miss a target. If you have a setback, just reset your goal to take this into account. Being too hard on yourself can get in the way of long-term success.

*Example: An illness prevents you from doing the Heart Walk in October, so adjust your goal to find another 5K walk to register for in November or December.*

## 4 Realistic

Be realistic about the goals you set. You should feel at least 70% confident you will be successful in meeting the goal. Sometimes it helps to break your goal down into smaller steps. Start with 1 or 2 goals—not a whole list.

*Example: Perhaps you want to run a marathon someday. If you have not been a regular exerciser, it would not be realistic to run a marathon in 3 months. Instead, try for a 5K (about 3 miles) in 3 months, and then a 10K (about 6 miles) run and so on.*

## 5 Time-based

Goals that reach out beyond six months are too long to keep you interested and motivated. Set and re-evaluate goals every 2-3 months. Success in meeting small goals helps to build confidence for continued success.

*Example: A goal of running a 5K race in 3 months is a time-based goal. Another example would be "My smoking quit date will be my birthday, October 1st this year."*



# SMART Goals for Lasting Change

## More helpful tips:

### Identify problems that might get in the way of reaching your goal.

These problems may include the weather, your health, your family or your own negative thoughts. Make a plan to remove the problem or find a way to deal with it.

### Reward your success.

Meeting even a small goal is worth celebration. Don't get overwhelmed with all that you still have to do. Small steps are the key to lasting lifestyle change.

### Follow up.

Frequent visits with your health care provider for progress reports, feedback, support, and problem solving will help you stay motivated and increase your chance of success. Ask your nurse, doctor or other health care provider if you can check in with them at least once a month while you are starting on the path of making a healthy lifestyle change. These visits may be less frequent as this change gradually becomes a habit.



# SMART Goals for Lasting Change

## Goal Setting Worksheet

What I will do:

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When I will do it:

---

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How often I will do it:

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---

What or who will help me?

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---

---

What problem might get in my way of reaching this goal?

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What I can do to fix the problem:

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How certain are you that you will reach your goal?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not Sure			Maybe				Very Sure		

My reward when I reach this goal:

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# Physical Activity as a Vital Sign

Becoming more physically active may be the most beneficial thing your patients can do to improve their health. Remember, your **least fit patients will get the most benefit** from starting an exercise program and building more physical activity into their lives. Guidance and support from you, will give patients the tools and confidence they need to get started with a safe and effective exercise program.

## Steps you can take to help your patients become more physically active:

### 1 Make exercise a vital sign.

Consider adding a question to your office visit check in template. Do you exercise? If so, what type?, how long?, how hard?, and how often? Many health systems have added this question to their electronic medical record to ensure consistency and convenience. Documenting physical activity at every visit allows you to track patient's progress over time.

### 2 Provide advice.

If the patient answers no, briefly discuss the benefits of exercise. Give them a copy of the tool, **"All That and More."** You may also encourage them to move more throughout their day even if they don't feel ready to start an exercise program. The tool **"Move More, Sit Less!"** provides great suggestions to for increasing daily activity.

### 3 Assess.

If patients are ready to start an exercise program, determine if the patient is healthy enough to exercise independently. If they have no cardiovascular symptoms and are low risk, provide them with an exercise prescription and advice on starting an exercise program. Use the tools **"That First Step"** and **"Exercise Prescription"** as a basis for your instruction.

### 4 Assist.

If your patients need more support in starting an exercise program, consider a referral to a health and fitness professional. Your health systems cardiac rehabilitation or physical therapy programs may be good resources. Become familiar with other local resources. Senior centers and the YMCA may offer chair or water based exercise programs for your patients that have orthopedic or balance problems. The tool, **"It's Never Too Late!"** is a resource for older patients as well as those with health concerns. Encourage patients to report any exercise-induced symptoms such as shortness of breath, chest pain, excessive fatigue or orthopedic concerns

### 5 Arrange follow up.

Have your patient come back to discuss their progress with exercise and to update their exercise prescription as needed. This is a good time to problem solve any barriers to exercise and help patient's problem solve ways to stick with the plan. **"Tricks of the Trade"** provides good suggestion for overcoming common situations that get in the way of regular exercise and **"The Choices are Limitless"** tools provides suggestions for dealing with travel, weather, boredom or fatigue.

*Visit the American College of Sports Medicine's Exercise is Medicine Web Site for more resources and tips regarding helping your patients become and stay active!  
ExerciseIsMedicine.org*



# Professional References

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# Professional Reference Websites

**Am I Hungry, Eat Mindfully, Live Vibrantly, by Michelle May, MD:** [www.amihungry.com](http://www.amihungry.com)

**American Heart Association/American Stroke Association:** [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org)

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:** [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

**Prevention and Wellness, Health Information for the Whole Family:** [www.familydoctor.org](http://www.familydoctor.org)

**Food Labels:** [www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/foodlabeling.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/foodlabeling.html)

**Nutrition Information:** [www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/foodandnutrition.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/foodandnutrition.html)

**Sleep and Sleep Disorders: Disease Control and Prevention:** [www.cdc.gov/sleep](http://www.cdc.gov/sleep)

**Tobacco: US Department of Health and Human Services:** [www.surgeongeneral.gov](http://www.surgeongeneral.gov)



# Resources for Your Patients

## **Americans in Motion-Healthy Interventions (AIM-HI). American Academy of Family Physician**

Downloaded December 3, 2012: [www.aafp.org/online/en/home/clinical/publichealth/aim.html](http://www.aafp.org/online/en/home/clinical/publichealth/aim.html)

## **Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**

Released October 7, 2008. [www.hhs.gov](http://www.hhs.gov) or [www.health.gov/paguidelines](http://www.health.gov/paguidelines).

## **MOVE! Physical Activity Handouts**

Downloaded December 3, 2012: [www.move.va.gov/handouts.asp?physical](http://www.move.va.gov/handouts.asp?physical)

## **Exercise, Nutrition and Weight Management Toolkit Healthy Living**

[healthnetfederalservices.com/content/hnfs/home/tn/prov/res/prov\\_wellness/hetoollanding/hetoolexercise.html](http://healthnetfederalservices.com/content/hnfs/home/tn/prov/res/prov_wellness/hetoollanding/hetoolexercise.html)

## **Never too old to play: health benefits of exercise. Administration on Aging website**

Available at: [www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Press\\_Room/News/2012/Healthy\\_Tip/21.aspx](http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Press_Room/News/2012/Healthy_Tip/21.aspx) .

Updated May 12, 2012. Accessed on December 3, 2012

## General Websites

[www.WebMD.com](http://www.WebMD.com)

[www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com)

[www.caloriecontrol.org](http://www.caloriecontrol.org)

[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)





# Jotting it Down

- If you were asked to guess the number of calories you ate in one day, you would probably under-estimate by about 500 calories! Keeping track of what you eat, where you ate it, and how you were feeling (like stressed out or bored, for example) is the first step in helping you change your habits. Writing down what you eat helps you think about your eating behaviors and figure out what situations or emotions might lead to overeating.
- According to data from the National Weight Control Registry, people who kept food records ate fewer calories, lost more weight and controlled their weight longer than those who did not keep a food record.
- It is also important to “give a score” to your hunger to see if you are eating for other reasons like boredom, stress, celebrations or sadness. The scale goes from 1 to 10 with 1 being empty and very hungry and 10 being stuffed—like after Thanksgiving dinner!

**As you look over your food and beverage record on the next page, ask yourself the following questions:**

- 1** What time of day do you eat or drink the most?
- 2** Are your calories spread out to provide energy throughout your day?
- 3** Did you notice that you often were feeling a certain way like bored or stressed out when you ate the most?
- 4** Are you getting plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains?
- 5** Are there times that you could replace high calorie, high salt (sodium) or high sugar foods with healthier choices?
- 6** Are there habits on your list that may be leading you to overeat such as eating too fast, cleaning your plate, eating when not hungry, including dessert frequently, or skipping meals?
- 7** What are you willing to change about your eating or drinking behaviors?

**Bring this form to your next visit to get feedback and to help you talk to your nurse or dietitian about your questions.**



# Jotting it Down

**So, get out your pencil and start recording.**

If you do this for a week, you'll get a great look at what you're doing and where to focus your efforts for change!

Enter date & time for each meal, snack or beverage	How much I ate: Portion size or amount	What I ate and drank: List foods and beverages here	How I was feeling before eating:	How hungry I was from 1-10:
Breakfast				
Snack				
Lunch				
Snack				
Dinner				
Snack				

If you would prefer to do this electronically, there are some free apps for your phone or tablet that can help you track your intake. They include:

- **Online Tool:** [www.supertracker.com](http://www.supertracker.com)
- **Online Tool:** [www.sparkpeople.com](http://www.sparkpeople.com)
- **Online Tool & Phone/Tablet Apps:** [www.caloriecount.about.com](http://www.caloriecount.about.com)
- **Online Tool & Phone Apps:** [www.fitday.com](http://www.fitday.com)
- **Online Tool:** [www.fitclick.com](http://www.fitclick.com)
- **Online Tool:** [www.loseit.com](http://www.loseit.com)



# Where's the Salt – Really?

## Sources of salt in our grocery bag

- 35%** come from grains and grain products like breads, cereals and pastries
- 26%** come from meat and meat products which often have sodium added for flavoring
- 8%** come from milk and milk products like milk, cottage cheese, and cheeses

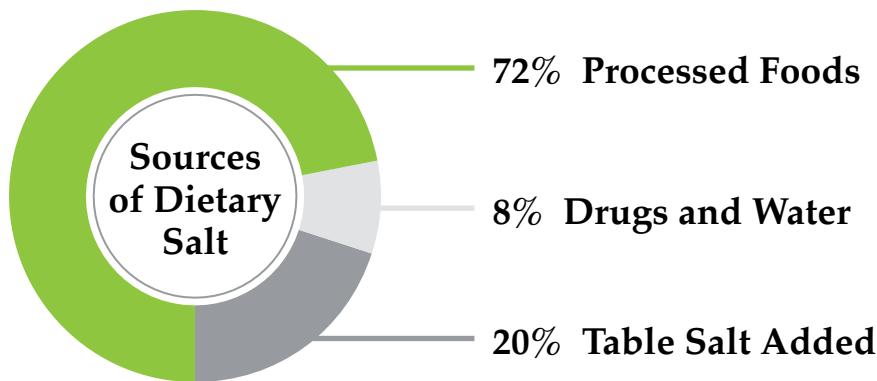


## Top 10 foods the salt in our diets come from

- |                                |                                 |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>1</b> Breads and rolls      | <b>6</b> Sandwiches             |
| <b>2</b> Cold cuts/cured meats | <b>7</b> Cheese                 |
| <b>3</b> Pizza                 | <b>8</b> Pasta mixed dishes     |
| <b>4</b> Poultry               | <b>9</b> Meat mixed dishes      |
| <b>5</b> Soups                 | <b>10</b> Savory (salty) snacks |

**For each of these foods, you can find products that are lower in sodium than others. Reading the label and making a low sodium choice can make a big difference!**

*Top Ten List: CDC Vital Signs February 2012*



Almost all of us eat too much salt. The chemical name for salt is sodium chloride. Too much sodium can increase your risk for high blood pressure. High blood pressure has been called the “silent killer” because there are often no symptoms. So, the only way to know if you have it is to get your blood pressure checked.

Where does sodium come from? Most of the sodium we eat comes from processed foods and foods prepared in restaurants. Only about 20% of our sodium comes from the salt shaker. The majority comes from processed foods and the remainder from drugs like antacids and water from water softeners using salt.



# Where's the Salt – Really?

## Why Reduce Sodium?

Reducing the amount of salt in your diet lowers blood pressure when you have normal or high blood pressure. Eating a diet high in salt increases blood pressure when you already have high blood pressure and aggravates the age-related rise in blood pressure. A high salt intake along with too much saturated fat, trans-fat, or cholesterol and a low intake of fruits, vegetables, or fish results in increased heart disease risk. Heart disease is the number one killer of both men and women in the United States.

US Dietary Guidelines recommend aiming for no more than **1500 mg** of sodium a day if you are over 51 years of age, are African American, or have high blood pressure (BP>140/90), diabetes or chronic kidney disease. If none of these apply to you, you should aim for your sodium to be no more than **2300 mg** a day.

## At Home

- Putting away the salt shaker at home in food preparation is one small way to reduce your sodium intake. But remember most of our sodium comes from processed or restaurant prepared foods. The best way to reduce how much sodium you are eating is to check food labels and look up sodium levels of food from restaurants. You can also check sodium levels in restaurant food products online.

## At the Grocery Store

- Choose fresh foods especially fruits and vegetables with no added sodium more often.
- Look at the food labels of processed foods to find the sodium amount in one serving.
- Buy canned food varieties with no added salt, rinse regular canned foods under running water to help reduce salt, skip the cans with added sauces, and use herbs, spices and other salt-free seasonings to add flavor without salt. The canned tomato label shown at the right demonstrates how choosing a no added salt product (pictured on the right) really lowers the sodium!

### Nutrition Facts

Serving Size ½ cup (126g)  
Servings Per Container 3½

Amount Per Serving		
<b>Calories</b>	25	Calories from Fat 0
		% Daily Value*

<b>Total Fat</b>	0g	0%
------------------	----	----

Saturated Fat	0g	0%
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<b>Cholesterol</b>	0mg	0%
--------------------	-----	----

<b>Sodium</b>	250mg	10%
---------------	-------	-----

<b>Total Carbohydrate</b>	6g	2%
---------------------------	----	----

Dietary Fiber	2g	
---------------	----	--

Sugars	2g	
--------	----	--

<b>Protein</b>	1g	
----------------	----	--

Vitamin A	10%	Vitamin C	15%
-----------	-----	-----------	-----

Calcium	2%	Iron	2%
---------	----	------	----

\*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

Regular Canned Tomatoes

### Nutrition Facts

Serving Size ½ cup (126g)  
Servings Per Container 3½

Amount Per Serving		
<b>Calories</b>	25	Calories from Fat 0
		% Daily Value*

<b>Total Fat</b>	0g	0%
------------------	----	----

Saturated Fat	0g	0%
---------------	----	----

<b>Cholesterol</b>	0mg	0%
--------------------	-----	----

<b>Sodium</b>	50mg	2%
---------------	------	----

<b>Total Carbohydrate</b>	6g	2%
---------------------------	----	----

Dietary Fiber	2g	
---------------	----	--

Sugars	2g	
--------	----	--

<b>Protein</b>	1g	
----------------	----	--

Vitamin A	10%	Vitamin C	15%
-----------	-----	-----------	-----

Calcium	2%	Iron	2%
---------	----	------	----

\*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

Low Sodium Canned Tomatoes



# Choose Your Fats Wisely

Fat is a necessary part of a healthy diet. Fat makes food taste better, and gives it more texture (mouth feel). It also helps your body use certain vitamins—the ones that are we call “fat-soluble”—A, D, E, and K. Some fat in a meal helps keeps you feeling full longer. But many of us eat too much fat or eat the kind of fats that are not good for our heart health. How do you tell the difference between healthy fats and those that are less healthy?

## Here’s a simple guide

### Eat less:

Saturated fats and trans fats are a problem because they raise the levels of bad cholesterol—low-density lipoprotein (LDL) in your blood. Eating less saturated fat and not eating trans fat at all are strategies that help to reduce heart disease risk.

Saturated fat is in whole milk, butter, cheese, red meat and coconut oil. Trans fat is in processed foods like crackers, chips, muffins, cookies, and cakes made with hydrogenated oil or partially hydrogenated oil, stick margarine or vegetable shortening.

### Replace with:

Replace saturated fat and trans fat with healthier fats including polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats.

**Polyunsaturated fat** is found in vegetable oils, walnuts, fatty fish (like salmon) and flax.

**Monounsaturated fat** is found in avocado, olive and canola oil and nuts like peanuts, cashews and almonds.

### Tips on including healthy fats in your diet:

- Eat more of foods that are high in monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats like fish, walnuts, seeds and vegetable oils.
- Use oils that stay liquid at room temperature such as canola, olive, corn, peanut and safflower oil.
- Prepare foods by broiling, baking, steaming or poaching instead of frying to reduce use of saturated fats.
- Choose lean or lower fat meats like chicken, turkey without the skin, and lean cuts of beef and pork such as “loin” and “round” cuts. Eat at least two servings of fish every week. Dried beans, peas, nuts and seeds are also good sources of protein especially when mixed in with grains like rice, wheat, corn, bulgur, or quinoa.
- Choose fat-free and low-fat dairy products more often than butter, whole milk and full fat cheeses and yogurts.
- Eat foods made with partially hydrogenated or saturated fats less often like French fries, crackers, cookies, chips, cakes, pastries, pies and doughnuts.



# Choose Your Fats Wisely

## Fat Facts

### Saturated fats

- They are not recommended for everyday use. Why? They raise LDL (bad) cholesterol.
- They are found in meat fats, butter, cream, whole milk, shortening and cheese
- They are usually solid at room temperature.

### Trans fats

- They are not recommended for everyday use. Why? They lower HDL (good) cholesterol and raise LDL (bad) cholesterol.
- They are formed when liquid oils are hydrogenated to make them solid for products like stick margarine and shortening. Used in many processed foods.
- Look for:
  - “no trans fat” on food labels
  - liquid oils like corn, olive, canola, or safflower oil as the first ingredient rather than “partially hydrogenated oil.”

### Monounsaturated fats

- Recommended—Why? They lower LDL (bad) cholesterol without lowering HDL (good) cholesterol.
- Olive oil, canola oil, nuts, peanut butter, olives and avocados

### Polyunsaturated fats

- Recommended—Why? They lower LDL cholesterol.
- Corn, sunflower, safflower, peanut, and cottonseed oil
- Usually liquid at room temperature

### Omega 3 fats

- Recommended—Why? They reduce blood triglyceride levels and may help prevent blood clots.
- They are found in fish, especially cold-water fish like salmon, tuna, halibut, and cod.
- Additional Omega 3 fat can be obtained from eating nuts and seeds such as walnuts and flaxseed.



# Choose Your Fats Wisely

## Fat Facts (Continued)

### Include these foods to use healthier fats:

- Fish, especially cold-water fish like salmon, tuna, halibut, and cod
- Corn oil, sunflower oil, peanut, safflower, vegetable, and cottonseed oil
- Olive oil, canola oil, nuts, peanut butter, olives and avocados
- Tub (soft) margarine (without “partially hydrogenated oils”)
- Limit the total amount of fat you eat. This will help control your total calorie intake. Fats have 9 calories per gram while carbohydrates and proteins have 4 calories per gram.

### Reduce these foods to use fewer unhealthy fats:

- Beef, pork, and chicken fat
- Butter, cream, and milk fat
- Coconut, palm, and palm kernel oils
- Hydrogenated oil
- Partially hydrogenated oil
- Shortening
- Stick margarine

Fat contains more calories per gram than either carbohydrate or protein. If you are counting calories to control your weight, reducing the total amount of fat you eat is one way to reduce total calories because all fats are high in calories.



# Sweet Treats

Sugar is found in foods in two ways: as naturally occurring and as added sugar. Naturally occurring sugars occur in foods without being added in manufacturing or processing. Examples of this are the lactose in milk or the fructose in fruit. Added sugars are any sugars or caloric sweeteners that are added to foods or beverages during processing or preparation. Examples of added sugars might be the teaspoon of sugar you add to your coffee or tea or the sweeteners added during manufacturing of food, like high fructose corn syrup or cane sugar.

All sugars, both naturally occurring and processed, are simple carbohydrates that your body uses as energy. Natural sugars are found in fruits, vegetables and dairy products. These foods provide nutritional benefits including vitamins, minerals and fiber. Sugars are may also be added to food during preparation or processing such as in desserts (candy cakes, cookies, and pies), regular soft drinks, fruit drinks, energy and sports drinks, salad dressings and condiments, milk products and grain products such as breakfast cereal. Sugar is added to improve taste and provide texture to baked goods, preserve foods such as in fruit jam, provide bulk to ice cream and balance the flavor of acid ingredients such as vinegar. The latest government diet questionnaire found the top sources of added sugars among children and adolescents were soda, fruit drinks, grain desserts, dairy desserts and candy. Consuming too many calories from any source can contribute to overweight and obesity. The US Dietary Guidelines recommend reducing the intake of added sugars and solid fats.

## How to Find Sugar on a Food Label

Both natural and added sugars are included in the sugar listed on the nutrition facts label. Added sugars that you may see on the ingredient list of a packaged food include: sugar, syrup, sucrose, dextrose, fructose, lactose, maltose, sucrose, molasses, malt sugar, high fructose corn syrup, fruit juice concentrate, nectars such as peach or pear nectar, corn syrup, maple syrup, honey, corn sweetener or brown sugar.

## Labeling Terms: What do they mean?

**Sugar free:** less than 0.5 grams of sugar per serving. If you eat more than one serving, you could be eating added sugars even though the label says “sugar free.”

**Reduced Sugar or Less Sugar:** at least 25% less sugar per serving compared to the traditional variety.

**No Added Sugars or Without Added Sugars:** no sugars or sugar-containing ingredients like juice or dry fruit were added in making the product.

**Low Sugar:** not defined or allowed as a claim on food labels.

To figure out how many calories from sugars are in a serving, multiply the grams of sugar by four since there are four calories in every gram. So if a product has 20 grams of sugar, it has 80 calories from sugar.





# Sweet Treats

## Recommendations

The American Heart Association recommends limiting the amount of added sugars you eat to no more than 100 calories or 6 teaspoons a day for women and no more than 150 calories or 9 teaspoons a day for men. The average American in 2010 ate 23 teaspoons of sugar a day or about 367 calories down from a high in 1999 of 26 teaspoons and 422 calories. The Dietary Guidelines state “Reduce the intake of calories from solid fats and added sugars and limit the consumption of foods that contain refined grains, especially refined grain foods that contain solid fats, added sugars, and sodium.”

## Alternatives to Sugar

Using non-nutritive sweeteners is one way to reduce sugar calories. There are many types of sugar substitutes on the market. A great deal of research has been done on the benefits and possible risks of sugar substitutes. They are some of the most studied food products and that research is continuing. One category of sugar substitute that has received a great deal of research attention is non-nutritive sweeteners. Experts must submit required research on the safety of non-nutritive sweeteners for human consumption. These sweeteners are reviewed and approved as safe by the Food and Drug Administration prior to being sold.

Sweetener Type	Ingredients/Brand Names	Characteristics
<b>Non-Nutritive Sweeteners</b>	Acesulfame potassium (Sunett <sup>®</sup> , Sweet One <sup>®</sup> ) Aspartame (Equal <sup>®</sup> , NutraSweet <sup>®</sup> ), Neotame, Saccharin (SugarTwin <sup>®</sup> , Sweet'NLow <sup>®</sup> ), Sucralose (Splenda <sup>®</sup> ), steviol glycosides (PureVia <sup>®</sup> , Truvia <sup>®</sup> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No calories;</li> <li>• No promotion of tooth decay;</li> <li>• Tastes sweeter than sugar so small amounts are needed for sweet flavor</li> </ul>
<b>Polyols and Others</b>	Isomalt, Lactitol, Maltitol, Mannitol, Sorbitol, Xylitol, Erythritol, Tagatose (Naturlose <sup>®</sup> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No promotion of tooth decay;</li> <li>• Lower in calories than sugar;</li> <li>• Isomalt, Lactitol, Sorbitol, Xylitol and Maltitol have a potential laxative effect;</li> <li>• Sorbitol in excess may cause abdominal pain, gas and diarrhea.</li> </ul>
<b>Nutritive Sweeteners</b>	Agave nectar, date sugar, fruit juice concentrate, honey, maple syrup, corn syrup, pancake syrup, molasses, brown sugar and raw sugar.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contain calories and may promote tooth decay like sugar</li> <li>• Any food or beverage that contains fermentable carbohydrates (sugars and some starches) can play a role in the development of tooth decay, if proper dental hygiene is not practiced.</li> <li>• No health advantage over sugar</li> </ul>

When choosing and using non-nutritive and nutritive sweeteners, choose wisely. Be sure to check the label for calorie content. Foods that are sugar free may still contain calories and should be consumed in moderation.



# Size Matters

How do you control your eating when you live in a supersized world?

One way is to use simple things that you know as references for the right portion sizes.



- Deck of Cards = 3 oz Cooked Meat



- A Fist = 1 cup
- Half a fist = ½ cup

Use for rice, potatoes, grains, cereal, side dishes



- A Thumb = 1 Tablespoon

Use for salad dressings, sour cream, whipped cream, gravy, mayonnaise

- ½ a thumb = 1½ teaspoon

Use for margarine, butter



# Size Matters

## Ten Tips to Help Manage Our Portions

**1** Use a smaller plate. Since plates got bigger, so have our waist sizes! Look at your grandmother's plates. They are much smaller!

**2** Serve yourself a small portion first. Drink water, eat that portion and then decide if you are still hungry. See if you are satisfied after 15 minutes.

**3** When eating out, take half home or order the appetizer as your main meal. Share a full size meal with a friend and save calories and money, too.

**4** Be mindful of portion sizes when eating family style or at buffets to prevent overeating.

**5** Eat meals and snacks at regularly scheduled times. Don't skip meals.

**6** At parties and other social events where food is served, limit your choices to those that are worth the calories to you.

**7** Plan before you order when eating out. For example, scan the menu decide what you really want to eat. Then, think about all the accompaniments. Do you really want the bread, the drink, the dessert, the fries? See what you might substitute to lower the calories.

**8** Forget the clean plate club. There really is no reason you have to clean your plate. Ask the waiter to divide your meal in half and take it home for lunch the next day.

**9** Don't eat out of a bag. Even though the larger portion of popcorn at the movies may seem like a better deal, if you buy it, you will eat more than you would if the portion was smaller. When larger portions are in front of you, it's easy to eat too much.

**10** Order salad dressing, gravy, and other condiments on the side so you can choose the amount used.

Add your own tips for managing portion sizes here

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# Energy Balance – More than Just Math

**When it comes to keeping a healthy weight, the bottom line is – all calories count!**

Weight management is all about balance—balancing the number of calories you eat or drink with the number of calories your body uses.

## What is a calorie?

- A **calorie** is a unit of energy supplied by food. A calorie is a calorie regardless of its source. Whether you're eating carbohydrates (sugars and starches), fats, or protein, they all contain calories. Fats contain the most calories at 9 calories per gram followed by alcohol at 7 calories per gram, with carbohydrates and protein at 4 calories per gram.
- **Caloric balance** is like a scale. To remain in balance and maintain your body weight, the calories you eat and drink must be balanced by the calories you use (in normal body functions, daily activities, and exercise).

The bottom line is... each person's body is unique and may have different caloric needs. A healthy lifestyle needs balance—in the foods you eat, the beverages you consume, the way you do your daily activities, and in the amount of physical activity or exercise you do. You don't have to count your calories all the time. It might help you to count calories in the beginning to make you more aware of eating habits as you work to get the right energy balance. The best test of balance is whether you are gaining weight, losing weight or keeping the same weight.

**Q** "If I eat late at night, will these calories turn into body fat?"

**A** The time of day isn't what affects how your body uses calories. It's the total number of calories you eat and the calories you burn (use up) in a day that affects your weight.

**Q** "I've heard it is more important to worry about carbohydrates than calories. Is this true?"

**A** No. By focusing only on carbohydrates, you can still eat too many calories. Also, if you drastically reduce the variety of foods in your diet, you could end up not getting vital nutrients and not be able to stay on that eating plan over time.

Research shows that people get full by the *amount of food* they eat, not the *number of calories* they take in. You can cut calories in your favorite foods by lowering the amount of fat and or increasing the amount of fiber-rich ingredients, such as vegetables and fruit.



# Energy Balance – More than Just Math

## What foods will fill me up?

To be able to cut calories without feeling hungry, look for foods high in fiber and lower in calories such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains or beans.

Choose these foods more often to fill up with fewer calories:	Choose these foods less often to save calories:
<b>Fruits and vegetables prepared with little or no fat</b> Lettuce, cabbage, spinach, broccoli, cauliflower, squash, tomatoes, carrots, apples, oranges, bananas, berries, melons, dried fruits such as raisins in small portions	<b>Fried Foods</b> French fries, onion rings, other fried veggies
<b>Low fat and fat-free milk products</b> Low or fat-free milk, low or fat-free yogurt, low or fat-free cottage cheese, low or fat-free sour cream	<b>Full-fat milk products</b> Whole and 2% milk, full-fat cheese, cottage cheese and sour cream, full-fat ice cream
<b>Broth Based Soups</b> Vegetable-based soups, soups with chicken or beef broth, tomato soups (without cream), seafood gumbos	<b>Cream Based Soups</b> Chowders and bisques
<b>Whole Grains</b> Brown rice, whole wheat bread, whole wheat pastas, whole grain cereals, oatmeal, grits, quinoa, popcorn	<b>Refined Grains</b> White rice, white bread, breads with enriched wheat flour as the first ingredient, cereals with sugar as the second or third ingredient, doughnuts, pie crust, croissants
<b>Lean meat, poultry and fish</b> Chicken or turkey without the skin, lean beef and pork cuts like round or loin, ground beef (lean or extra lean), grilled fish, broiled or boiled shellfish	<b>High Fat Meats</b> Fried meats, Prime rib, rib eye
<b>Legumes (beans and peas)</b> Black, red kidney and pinto beans (without added fat), green peas, black-eyed peas, nuts	<b>Snack Foods and Desserts</b> Chips, dips, cookies, snack bars, candy, cakes, cupcakes

### A healthy, balanced 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 sugars
- stays within the number of calories your body needs for your physical activity level





# Energy Balance – More than Just Math

## Ten Ways to Reduce Your Calorie Intake

- 1** Choose no calorie or low calorie beverage options.
- 2** Put the salad dressing on the side and dip your fork into it.
- 3** Leave off the cheese on the burger or sandwich.
- 4** Choose sparkling water with lemon or lime instead of the glass of wine or alcoholic beverage.
- 5** Choose baked or broiled meat instead of fried.
- 6** Choose salsa instead of cheese dip.

- 7** Try vegetables and dip instead of chips.
- 8** Choose salad or fruit with a sandwich rather than chips or fries.
- 9** Choose steamed veggies instead of rice or potato for a side dish.
- 10** Reduce the size of your morning latte and choose skim milk instead of whole milk.

**Making small changes by reducing your calorie intake by 100 calories per day, sitting less and adding physical activity can help you gradually lose weight and keep it off!**



# More Bang with Each Calorie

A healthy lifestyle involves many choices. So how do you choose a healthy eating plan and increase your intake of nutrient-rich foods? A “nutrient-rich food” is a food with a lot of nutrients compared to the number of calories in it. An example is a food like strawberries—only 150 calories in a whole cup—huge amount of fiber, and packed with vitamin C and folate (an important B vitamin)!

## According to the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, a healthy eating plan:

- 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 sugars
- Stays within your daily calorie needs

A healthy eating plan full of nutrient-rich foods includes a variety of choices you may not have thought of. It may mean eating at home more often which gives you more control over what you eat, how much you eat, and how you prepare your food. Eating more meals at home or bringing your lunch rather than going out has been shown to help with weight loss as well as improving the nutrient-richness of your diet.

- **Fresh fruits** – Stock up on fresh fruit depending on what is in season. You don’t have to limit yourself to apples or bananas. How about a mango, papaya, pineapple or grapefruit? When your favorite fresh fruits aren’t in season, try a frozen, canned, or dried variety of a fresh fruit you enjoy. Make sure to check the label on canned fruits. They may contain added sugars or syrups which can add calories. You can rinse them off and enjoy or choose canned fruit packed in water or in its own juice.
- **Fresh vegetables** – Try something fresh and new to you when in season. Choose colorful vegetables. Instead of white potatoes, try winter squash, or sweet potatoes. You can cook many vegetables in a non-stick pan with a small amount of cooking spray. Or try frozen or canned vegetables for a quick side dish—just microwave and serve. When trying canned vegetables, look for vegetables without added salt or rinse off, and without excess butter or cream sauces. Look for fall/ winter and spring/ summer vegetables and try new ones throughout the year.
- **Calcium-rich foods** – Most people think of a glass of low-fat or fat-free milk to increase their calcium intake. There are many other dairy products like low-fat and fat-free yogurts or cottage cheese without added sugars. They come in a wide variety of flavors and can even be served for a more nutritious dessert. If you have a milk allergy, buy the calcium fortified soy milk or orange juice to get your needed calcium intake. If you are lactose intolerant, select low lactose or lactose free products.

Nutrient-rich foods provide important vitamins, minerals and phytochemicals to help you get the most nutrition for your calorie intake. For good health, nutrient-rich foods should be your priority at home, eating out and when grocery shopping. Eating nutrient-rich foods 80-90% of the time leaves occasional room in your diet for some less nutrient-rich foods like candy, cakes, cookies, pies or other dessert items.



# More Bang with Each Calorie

## Nutrient-Rich Food Shopping List

Vegetables		Whole Grains	Beans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artichoke</li> <li>• Arugula</li> <li>• Asparagus</li> <li>• Avocado</li> <li>• Beans (kidney, cannellini, great northern, lima, garbanzo, or pinto)</li> <li>• Brussels sprouts</li> <li>• Asparagus</li> <li>• Bell peppers (red, green or yellow)</li> <li>• Beets</li> <li>• Broccoli</li> <li>• Cabbage, green or red</li> <li>• Cauliflower</li> <li>• Celery</li> <li>• Carrots</li> <li>• Corn</li> <li>• Eggplant</li> <li>• Green beans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greens (collard, mustard, turnip, kale, watercress)</li> <li>• Leeks</li> <li>• Mushrooms</li> <li>• Onions, red, white, yellow or green</li> <li>• Okra</li> <li>• Peas (green, black-eyed, field)</li> <li>• Pumpkin</li> <li>• Radishes</li> <li>• Potatoes (white, red, yellow or sweet)</li> <li>• Romaine lettuce</li> <li>• Scallions, Leeks</li> <li>• Spinach</li> <li>• Squash (yellow or zucchini)</li> <li>• Tomatoes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amaranth</li> <li>• Barley</li> <li>• Brown rice</li> <li>• Bulgur (cracked wheat)</li> <li>• Corn tortillas</li> <li>• Corn grits</li> <li>• Whole-wheat pasta, bread, tortillas or couscous</li> <li>• Millet</li> <li>• Flaxseed</li> <li>• Oats</li> <li>• Quinoa</li> <li>• Rye</li> <li>• Spelt</li> <li>• Wheat berries</li> <li>• Wild rice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Black Beans</li> <li>• Black-eyed peas</li> <li>• Broad Beans (Fava Beans)</li> <li>• Butter Beans</li> <li>• Cannellini Beans</li> <li>• Chickpeas (Garbanzo Beans)</li> <li>• Edamame</li> <li>• Italian Beans</li> <li>• Great Northern Beans</li> <li>• Kidney Beans</li> <li>• Lentils</li> <li>• Lima Beans</li> <li>• Mung Beans</li> <li>• Pinto beans</li> <li>• Soy Beans, including black soy beans</li> <li>• White Beans</li> </ul>

Fruit		Meats & Seafood	Nuts & Seeds	Beverages	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avocado</li> <li>• Apples</li> <li>• Apricots</li> <li>• Bananas</li> <li>• Blackberries</li> <li>• Blueberries</li> <li>• Cantaloupe</li> <li>• Cherries</li> <li>• Cranberries</li> <li>• Figs</li> <li>• Guava</li> <li>• Grapes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grapefruit</li> <li>• Kiwifruit</li> <li>• Lemons</li> <li>• Limes</li> <li>• Mangos</li> <li>• Oranges</li> <li>• Papayas</li> <li>• Passion fruit</li> <li>• Persimmons</li> <li>• Pomegranate</li> <li>• Peaches</li> <li>• Pears</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pineapples</li> <li>• Plums</li> <li>• Raisins</li> <li>• Raspberries</li> <li>• Star fruit (carambola)</li> <li>• Strawberries</li> <li>• Tangerine</li> <li>• Watermelon</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lean beef or pork (loin and round cuts)</li> <li>• Chicken without the skin</li> <li>• Turkey without the skin</li> <li>• Venison</li> <li>• Scallops</li> <li>• Shrimp</li> <li>• Tuna, Snapper, Salmon, Halibut, Grouper, Cod and other salt water fin fish</li> <li>• Trout, Perch and other fresh water fin fish</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Almonds</li> <li>• Filberts</li> <li>• Cashews</li> <li>• Brazil Nuts</li> <li>• Pistachios</li> <li>• Walnuts</li> <li>• Pumpkin Seeds</li> <li>• Sesame Seeds</li> <li>• Flax Seeds</li> <li>• Peanuts</li> <li>• Pecans</li> <li>• Sunflower seeds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low fat or skim milk</li> <li>• 100% fruit juices</li> </ul>





# Fiber Facts

## Where do we find fiber?

Fruits	Serving size	Total fiber
Raspberries (raw)	1 cup	8.0 grams
Blueberries (raw)	1 cup	4.0 grams
Blackberries (raw)	1 cup	8.0 grams
Pear (with skin)	1 medium	5.5 grams
Apple (with skin)	1 medium	4.4 grams
Strawberries (halves)	1¼ cup	3.8 grams
Banana	1 medium	3.1 grams
Orange	1 medium	3.1 grams
Figs (dried)	2 medium	1.6 grams
Raisins	2 tablespoons	1.0 grams
Vegetables	Serving size	Total fiber
Artichoke (cooked)	1 medium	10.3 grams
Peas (cooked)	1 cup	8.8 grams
Broccoli (boiled)	1 cup	5.1 grams
Turnip greens (boiled)	1 cup	5.0 grams
Sweet corn (cooked)	1 cup	4.2 grams
Brussels sprouts (cooked)	1 cup	4.1 grams
Potato with skin (baked)	1 medium	2.9 grams
Tomato paste	¼ cup	2.7 grams
Carrot, raw	1 medium	1.7 grams

Why is fiber important? Foods high in fiber are “nutrient-rich.” Along with water, fiber helps move food easily and quickly through your digestive tract to help it work well. Fiber is also associated with lower risk of heart disease and diabetes. High fiber foods especially fruits and vegetables tend to be low in calories which helps maintain a healthy weight.

## How much fiber do we need?

According to the Institute of Medicine, for adults 50 and younger, fiber intake should be 38 grams a day for men. Women should aim for 25 grams a day. As you age, men over 50 should aim for 30 grams a day; women should aim for 21 grams.

Choose high fiber foods at each meal and snack and enjoy health benefits such as staying full longer, less constipation, and reduced risk of heart disease and some cancers!



# Fiber Facts

## Where do we find fiber? (Continued)

Grains, cereal and pasta	Serving size	Total fiber
Spaghetti, whole-wheat (cooked)	1 cup	6.2 grams
Barley, pearled (cooked)	1 cup	6.0 grams
Bran flakes	¾ cup	5.3 grams
All bran cereal	½ cup	10 grams
Oat bran muffin	1 medium	5.2 grams
Oatmeal, quick, regular or instant (cooked)	1 cup	4.0 grams
Popcorn, air-popped	3 cups	3.5 grams
Brown rice, cooked	1 cup	3.5 grams
Bread, rye	1 slice	1.9 grams
Bread, whole-wheat or multigrain	1 slice	1.9 grams
Legumes, nuts and seeds	Serving size	Total fiber
Split peas (cooked)	1 cup	16.3 grams
Lentils (cooked)	1 cup	15.6 grams
Black beans (cooked)	1 cup	15.0 grams
Lima beans (cooked)	1 cup	13.2 grams
Pinto beans (cooked)	1 cup	15 grams
Kidney beans	1 cup	16 grams
Baked beans, vegetarian, canned (cooked)	1 cup	10.4 grams
Sunflower seed kernels	¼ cup	3.9 grams
Almonds	1 ounce (23 nuts)	3.5 grams
Pistachio nuts	1 ounce (49 nuts)	2.9 grams
Pecans	1 ounce (19 halves)	2.7 grams

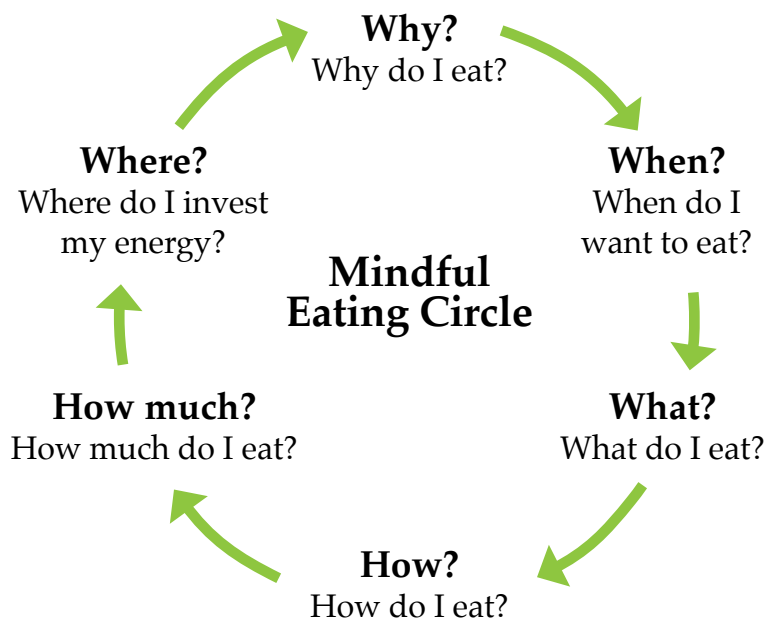


# It's Not Just What You Eat, But Why

Diets focus on what and how much you eat—important, but only part of the story. In fact, what you eat and how much you eat are strongly affected by why you're eating in the first place.

The Mindful Eating Cycle will help you see how each decision you make can affect your other choices.

As you review the Mindful Eating Cycle, ask yourself the following questions to recognize and better understand how you make conscious or subconscious decisions about your eating. More importantly, use these questions to discover steps you can take to become more mindful about your decisions.



From *Eat What You Love, Love What You Eat* by Michelle May MD, ©2011.

## Why? Why do I eat?

- Why do I think I eat?
- Am I aware of any situations or emotions that trigger me to want to eat when I'm not hungry?  
*Examples: mealtimes, social events, certain people, stress, boredom, buffets, getting ready to start a diet...*
- Have I tried a lot of diets? What happened? How did they work for me long term? Why?

## When? When do I feel like eating?

- How often do I feel like eating?
- How do I know if I'm hungry?
- How could I redirect my attention away from food until I'm hungry?
- What could I do to cope better with my emotional triggers for eating? *Examples: manage stress better; tell someone how I really feel; find a hobby; treat myself to a hot bath; ask for more help around the house...*

## What? What do I eat?

- What do I eat in a typical day?  
Would a food journal for a few days help?
- Do I restrict myself from eating certain foods—then later give-in and overeat those foods?
- What health issues do I need to be aware of when deciding what to eat? *Examples: high blood pressure, high cholesterol, family history of diabetes.*
- What beverages do I drink?
- What foods do I feel like eating when I'm eating for emotional reasons? Why?
- Are there any areas of my diet that I could improve right now?
- What specific change(s) would I like to make at this time?
- What kinds of food could I keep on hand to eat when I'm hungry?





# It's Not Just What You Eat, But Why

## Mindful Eating Circle (Continued)

### How? How do I eat?

- Do I eat while I'm distracted?  
*Examples: watching T.V.; reading; driving; working; talking...*
- Do I eat fast?
- Do I really taste my food?
- Do I eat differently in private than I do in public?

### How Much? How much do I eat?

- How do I usually feel when I'm done eating? Do I like that feeling?
- Do I usually clean my plate?
- If I'm not hungry when I start eating, how do I know when to stop?
- What situations or emotions trigger me to overeat?
- What could I do to address those triggers more effectively? *Examples: order less food; ask for a to-go container; get up from the table; turn off the TV; say "no" to food pushers...*

### Where? Where do I invest the fuel I eat?

- Am I physically active?
- Do I watch too much TV or spend too much free time in front of computer?
- Do I exercise? What do I like to do?
- What else do I do with my energy?  
*Examples: play with my children; work on my hobbies; volunteer; travel; spend time with friends...*
- Is there anything else I'd like to do with my energy that I'm not doing now? What are my goals for my relationships, my career, and my life?

The first step to changing the way you eat is awareness. As you become more mindful of each decision point in your eating cycle, you'll discover small changes can make a big difference in why, when, what, and how much you eat and where you invest your energy.

*Excerpt from Eat What You Love, Love What You Eat by Michelle May, M.D.*



# Hunger is the Best Seasoning

You were born knowing exactly how much to eat. Hunger is your body's way of telling you that you need fuel. **By reconnecting with your instinctive signals, you can reach and maintain a healthier weight without restrictive dieting and obsessing over every bite of food you put in your mouth.**

Perhaps you've ignored hunger for so long that you've forgotten how to recognize it. Maybe you even fear hunger or see it as the enemy. Perhaps you confuse hunger with all the other reasons you eat—like mealtime, boredom, stress, or tasty food.

At the same time, you may have learned to ignore the feeling of satisfaction so you eat until you're stuffed and very uncomfortable. Perhaps you "clean your plate," "never waste food," and "eat all your dinner if you want dessert," instead of stopping when you've had enough. And you'll continue this cycle if you teach your children the same things.

## Hunger is Your Instinctive Guide

Reconnecting with your hunger signals helps you reach a healthier weight. Here's how:

- You'll eat less food when you're eating to satisfy physical hunger than if you eat to satisfy other needs. Think about it. If you aren't hungry when you start eating, how do you know when to stop? When the food is gone, of course!
- If you *aren't* hungry but you're eating because you are sad, mad or glad, what kinds of foods do you want? That's when you're more likely to want chocolate, cookies, chips, or other snacks and comfort foods.
- Food actually tastes better when you're physically hungry. Hunger really is the best seasoning—so you eat less but enjoy it more.
- You'll feel more satisfied because food is great for reducing hunger but not so great for reducing boredom, stress, or other triggers.
- Noticing that you're hungry before you get *too* hungry decreases overeating.



# Hunger is the Best Seasoning

## Trust Your Gut Instincts

To break out of the pattern of eating on autopilot, get in the habit of asking yourself, “**Am I hungry?**” every time you feel like eating. This simple but powerful question will help you recognize the difference between an urge to eat caused by the physical need for food from an urge to eat caused by “head hunger.”

Look for symptoms like hunger pangs, gnawing, growling, emptiness, low energy, shakiness, or headache. Notice that hunger is *physical*. It’s not a craving, a thought or a temptation. If you’re not sure you’re hungry, you’re probably not. By focusing on hunger as your guide, you can become your own expert about when, what, and how much to eat.

## Food for Thought

- What specific signs of hunger do you usually have?
- What other thoughts and feelings do you confuse with hunger at times?
- What else could you do besides eat when you feel like eating even though you’re not hungry?

*Excerpt from Eat What You Love, Love What You Eat by Michelle May, M.D.*



# A Healthy Diet without Breaking the Bank

## 1 Plan your meals for the week. Make your list and stick to it.

- Never shop when hungry. You will definitely buy more. You will also tend to make “impulse” purchases that may not be healthy.
- Check weekly grocery ads in the mail and newspaper and buy what is in season and/or on sale. Stock up on “buy one, get one free” items if they are on your list.
- Make sure your store list has lots fresh fruits and veggies. Spend a little time when you get home, dividing them into “easy to use” portions or cutting them up for easy use.
- Try a new fruit or vegetable depending on the season.
- Look for fruits and vegetables with a lot of color. Instead of always buying white potatoes, try sweet potatoes, pumpkin or winter squash.

## 2 Shop the outside aisles of the grocery store.

- Spend the most time in the produce aisle. You’ll get a big nutritional benefit from eating more fruits and veggies.
- When buying meat, look for what is on sale. Choose leaner cuts like loin or round. You can buy poultry with the skin to save money but remove it before eating. Buy smaller amounts to help keep portion sizes like a deck of cards and save on your food budget. Consider vegetarian protein sources too. Beans and rice make a “complete” protein.

## 3 Buy prepared real, fresh foods for the convenience factor. Spending a little more on fruits and veggies is always worth the cost if it gets your family to eat more of them.

- Salad ready to eat in a bag or cherry tomatoes will encourage you to eat more if they don’t require long prep times.
- Cut-up fruit or vegetables in a bag for steaming to make dinner easy.

## 4 Choose foods with 100% fruit juice or 100% whole grains to increase nutritional value.



# A Healthy Diet without Breaking the Bank

- 5 Make the food you need for good health your first priority. Add the extras once in a while if you can afford them.**
- Choose frozen or canned foods so you can still get your fruits and vegetables during winter.
  - Fruits and vegetables are important for health and balanced nutrition. Eating fruits and vegetables also helps you prevent weight gain because they are packed with fiber and tend to be low in calories. Buy what is on sale each week and vary your choices. That increases your nutrient content as well. Limit the high calorie snack foods and buy the baby carrots, broccoli pieces, etc... for added nutrient punch. If you have room to store in your refrigerator, buy the bags of salad on sale and have some each night. Canned veggies are fine, too. Just rinse them off with water to avoid too much salt or buy the low sodium versions.
  - Limit the snacks, caloric drinks and desserts. Cookies, candy, chips, alcoholic beverages, fruit ades and other caloric soft drinks all contribute calories, often without many nutrients.
  - Think about the price per serving to see which items really cost more.
  - Use coupons, but only for things you would buy anyway.

- 6 Use food labels to help you make choices – Reading the small print**
- Packaged foods have a Nutrition Facts label and an ingredients list. Read the Nutrition Facts label on the back of the food package to help you make food choices quickly and easily.
  - Check for calories. Be sure to look at the serving size. Think about how many servings you are actually eating. If you double the servings you eat, you double the calories.
  - Choose foods with lower calories, saturated fat, *trans* fat, sugar and sodium.
  - Read the ingredient list to know what is in the food because the ingredients are listed in order of ingredients in the greatest amount by weight. The last ingredient is the one that is present in the least amount in the food.
  - Check for sugars using the ingredient list. When a sugar is one of the first things on the ingredient list, the food is high in sugars. Some other names for added sugars include sucrose, glucose, high fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, maple syrup and fructose.
  - Check for saturated fats like partially hydrogenated vegetable oil and trans fat on the ingredient list.
  - To be sure you are really getting whole grain; choose a product where whole grain is the first ingredient. The food label below shows an example of a cereal that is NOT a good source of whole grain. It contains enriched wheat flour which is the same as white flour.





# A Healthy Diet without Breaking the Bank

Below is a sample food label for prepared macaroni and cheese. Notice that a 1 cup serving is 250 calories. If you eat the whole package or 2 cups, the calories would be 500. It's important to check the serving size and the servings per container to know how many calories you are getting.

## Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup (228g)

Servings Per Container 2

### Amount Per Serving

**Calories** 250      **Calories from Fat** 110

**% Daily Value\***

**Total Fat** 12g      18%

Saturated Fat 3g      15%

**Cholesterol** 30mg      10%

**Sodium** 470mg      20%

**Total Carbohydrate** 31g      10%

Dietary Fiber 0g

Sugars 5g

**Protein** 5g

Vitamin A      4%

Vitamin C      2%

Calcium      20%

Iron      4%

\*Percent Daily Values (DV) are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.



# Dressing on the Side, Please!

## 1 Don't be afraid to ask for food prepared the way you want it.

- Order water, unsweetened tea, diet sodas, fat-free or low-fat milk, or other low or no calorie drinks.
- Ask for whole-wheat more often than white-bread for sandwiches.
- Start your meal with a salad with lots of veggies or clear soup to help feel satisfied sooner.
- Ask for salad dressing to be served on the side. Then dip your fork in dressing and then pick up your salad. You'll use a lot less dressing that way and save calories.
- Choose main dishes that include vegetables, such as stir fries, kebobs or pasta with a tomato sauce.
- Try incorporating steamed or sautéed veggies as a side dish in lieu of traditional side dishes like mashed or baked potatoes, french fries, or onion rings.
- Control the amount of sauces or condiments like mayonnaise by getting them on the side.
- Order steamed, grilled or broiled dishes instead of those that are fried or sautéed in oil or butter.
- Order foods that do not have creamy sauces or gravies.
- Add little or no butter or margarine to your food.
- Choose fruits for dessert. If there is a dessert you really want to splurge on, share it with someone at your table.
- Ask for foods prepared with no added salt and taste before you add salt at the table.

## 2 Control the portion size.

- Ask for the lunch portion or a "small," "medium" or "half" portion. This includes main dishes, side dishes, and beverages. Order a kid's meal at a fast food restaurant. You'll get portions more like what they were twenty years ago before everything became oversized!
- Order from the menu instead of heading for the "all-you-can-eat" buffet. It's hard to know how much you are eating at a buffet when there are so many choices.
- Order an appetizer-sized portion or a side dish instead of an entrée.
- Share a main dish or a comfort food item like fries with a friend.
- If you can chill the extra food right away, take leftovers home in a "to go" or "doggy bag."
- Ask the server to pack half of your meal to go—before you even start eating.
- Resign from the "clean your plate club"—when you've eaten enough, leave the rest.



# Dressing on the Side, Please!

## 3 Limit the extras.

- Do you really need the bread basket before your meal? Bread that has been buttered and seasoned such as corn bread, garlic bread or cheese bread often has a lot of extra calories. In Mexican restaurants, skip the chips or ask them to bring them with your meal not in advance to save on pre-meal calories.
- Spend your calories wisely. Beverages are easily substituted with low- or no-calorie versions, because there are so many choices. Drink water, sparkling water, diet soft drinks, unsweetened tea or coffee most of the time. Save the caloric drinks for a special splurge. Calories from a few of these beverages or cocktails can quickly add up.
- Save dessert for a special treat. If you do order it, share with everyone at the table. Some large restaurant desserts like cheesecake, cake and ice cream or ice cream sundaes have as many as 1,000 calories. Sharing can reduce the cost and the calories!

## 4 Choose restaurants that offer a diverse menu.

- Choose places you know offer healthy choices and fresh foods. You will have a better chance of eating healthy.

## 5 Eat healthy on the go.

- On long commutes or shopping trips, pack some fresh fruit, cut-up vegetables, low-fat string cheese sticks, or a handful of unsalted nuts.

## 6 Eat healthy away from home on a budget.

- Compare prices at the restaurants you want to go to. Choose the lower priced ones more often.
- Use coupons but don't buy something you wouldn't usually buy just because you have a coupon.
- Don't wait too long to eat. You will order too much if you let yourself get very hungry. Once it is served, you are more likely to eat it.
- Plan what you will order in advance rather than being swayed by the server or the pictures at the restaurant.
- Get take out from the local grocery store or buy ingredients and make sandwiches rather than eating out.



# What to Drink?

There are many reasons to select a beverage including thirst, taste, nutrition, enjoyment and contribution to good health. All beverages provide fluid to support hydration. Listed below are some beverage options with a discussion of nutrient contribution, health benefits/risks and calories. The calorie content of beverages varies widely, and some of the beverages consumed frequently, including regular sodas, fruit drinks, and alcoholic beverages, contain calories but provide few or no essential nutrients.

The current Dietary Guideline related to beverages states, “Drink water, calorie-free beverages like coffee and tea, and 100 percent fruit juice instead of regular sodas, fruit drinks and energy drinks; limit alcoholic drinks to one a day for women, two for men.”

Americans should move toward more healthful eating and drinking patterns. Both foods and beverages should be selected to meet nutrient needs without excess calories resulting in weight gain. Calories from all foods and beverages should be considered, regardless of when and where they are consumed.

## 1 Water

If there is one nutrient we cannot live without, it is water. Dehydration can be life threatening. Total water intake includes water from fluids (drinking water and other beverages) and the water that is contained in foods. Healthy people, in general, have an adequate total water intake to meet their needs when they have regular access to drinking water and other beverages. The combination of thirst and typical behaviors, such as drinking beverages with meals, provides sufficient total water intake.

Most of our water (about 80%) comes from fluids while the other 20% comes from foods with a high water content like fruits and vegetables. Water helps quench thirst and keeps you hydrated without calories. Bottled water is a great choice for people on the go to meet fluid needs and prevent excess calories.

## 2 Tea and Coffee

In addition to water, plain tea and coffee do not have any calories and have healthy ingredients in them like antioxidants and flavonoids. They also provide varying amounts of caffeine. Adding sugar or flavored syrups adds calories but no nutrients. Adding non-nutritive sweeteners provides sweet taste without calories. If you add milk to your coffee and tea, you add protein, calcium, and Vitamin D along with other nutrients—but calories too. Use low-fat or skim milk to limit the calories. Cream or whipped cream is high in saturated fat and adds a lot of calories. Some coffee drinks with syrups and whipped cream have more than 400 calories. These coffee drinks can have as many as 17 teaspoons of sugar and 12 grams of saturated fat. Choose unsweetened or calorie free beverages most of the time to reduce calories.



# What to Drink?

## 3 Skim, Low-fat or Calcium Fortified Soy Milk

Skim, low-fat, or calcium fortified soy milk provides protein, calcium, and vitamin D with less fat compared to whole milk or cream. Current dietary guidelines recommend that intake of fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products (e.g. milk, yogurt, cheese, or fortified soy beverages) should be increased.

## 4 Low or no calorie beverages sweetened with non-nutritive sweeteners

Diet drinks are sweetened with calorie-free non-nutritive sweeteners such as aspartame (Equal®, NutraSweet®, others), saccharin (Sweet'N Low®, Necta Sweet®, others) sucralose (Splenda®), or stevia (Only Sweet®, PureVia®, Truvia®). Beverages sweetened with these often have zero calories or very few calories so are a good choice for people who are trying to maintain or lose weight.

## 5 Caloric Beverages with More Nutrients

This group includes fruit juices, vegetable juices, whole and flavored milks, sports drinks, and vitamin-enhanced water beverages. These beverages may provide important nutrients in addition to calories. They should be consumed in moderation as part of an active, healthy lifestyle.

## 6 Caloric Beverages with Fewer Nutrients

These drinks are sweetened with sugar, high fructose corn syrup or other high caloric sweeteners and provide few nutrients. This category includes carbonated and noncarbonated soft drinks, fruit drinks, sweet tea, lemonade and other “-ades.” Just like most desserts and other high calorie low nutrient snacks, these beverages should be consumed less often.

## 7 Alcohol

Some research has shown that alcoholic beverages like red wine in small quantities are good for your heart health. If you currently don't drink alcohol, don't start drinking for the possible health benefits. If you do enjoy alcohol, the serving size recommended is no more than one drink per day for women and up to two drinks a day for men. One drink is 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine, and 1.5 ounces of 80 proof liquor.



# Small Changes Make a Big Difference

Anything you can do today that moves you toward **better health** is a step in the right direction!

## 1 Make small, simple, steady changes.

It is hard to believe that small changes can make a big difference in your health. In fact, you are more likely to be successful when you focus on small, realistic, easy-to-accomplish goals. Give yourself permission to focus on small changes. Many times when you start small, you end up accomplishing more.

## 2 Live in the grey zone.

Avoid the “all or nothing” mind set. An all or nothing approach to lifestyle change rarely lasts. Instead, try the “something is better than nothing” approach. If you can’t find the time to go to the gym, can you go for a 15-minute walk instead?

## 3 Remind yourself that even small changes can lead to big improvements in health.

Small changes in a number of health behaviors can have a powerful effect on your health. Change in one area can lead to change in another area and they build on each other. You might try skipping dessert and instead going for a short walk during your lunch break. Even if you do this just a few days a week, you’ve made a positive change for your health.

## 4 Pay attention.

Most of us operate on autopilot a lot of the time. As a result, we get stuck in our old habits. Simply paying attention to our choices can help us be more aware of our decisions and develop new healthy habits. Get yourself an inexpensive brightly colored bracelet. Even a rubber band will do. Each time you notice the bracelet, stop and ask yourself if there is something that you could do at that moment to take better care of yourself. Take the stairs instead of the elevator? Swap white bread for fiber rich whole wheat? Take a few less bites, especially if you are already full? Take a deep breath and let go of some tension?

Pay attention to your hunger level over the course of the day, rating it from 1 – 10 and record it in a notebook during meal and snack times. By tuning into your level of “fullness” you can help identify mindless eating patterns

## 5 Reduce portions.

Leave 3 or 4 bites on your plate at most meals. Or if you can’t leave food on your plate, dish up your usual portion and put a few spoonfuls in a “left over” container. Chances are you will not even notice that you are eating less. Most “diets” leave you feeling hungry and deprived, especially when your favorite foods are restricted. Try this instead of another drastic diet.



# Small Changes Make a Big Difference

Anything you can do today that moves you toward **better health** is a step in the right direction!

## 6 Get Support.

Join a group of like-minded people. Consider Weight Watchers™ or a walking club. Is there a “Couch to 5K™” group meeting in your area? How about a YMCA Silver Sneakers™ group? Ask a health professional for support. If you can’t find a group, consider starting one. Perhaps other church members would join you in a weekly walk and healthy lunch after the service? When you make a date with a friend to go for a walk, you are less likely to cancel, even when you don’t feel like walking! Most often, you will be glad you did!

## 7 Keep moving.

Get a pedometer. These gadgets are a great way to get a concrete measure of your daily activity. Record your steps per day at the start. Then, challenge yourself. How can you take more steps per day? Try for a little more each day. Park farther away. Take the stairs. March in place while watching TV. Get your family or friends to join in. Make it a fun and healthy competition.

## 8 Track your progress.

Keep a journal or log of your activity or eating habits. Pen and paper is fine or you can use a tracking tool on your computer or smart phone. Taking the time to write it down makes you more aware of your daily habits and think about where you might be able to make changes. A journal or log also helps you measure your progress over time. You’ll be surprised to look back and see how far you’ve come in just a short time.

## 9 Don’t give up.

Any lifestyle change is bound to have pitfalls or barriers that get in the way of progress. Remember to practice the “something is better than nothing” mindset. Going home for the holidays or vacationing on a cruise ship may make it difficult to eat as healthy as you like, but that doesn’t mean you can’t get back to your healthy habits when you get back home. A bad back or sore knee might prevent you from doing your usual exercise, but could you find a substitute? Instead of walking, could you swim?

## 10 Celebrate success.

Give yourself a gift or throw a party to celebrate your success! Let others know what you’ve accomplished. Taking the time to recognize and appreciate yourself for having reached your goals helps you to continue your healthy habits and may inspire others as well!



# Smoke-Free Life

Quitting is hard. Many people try several times before they quit for good, but they do succeed. You can quit; these steps can help!

## 12 Steps for Success

### 1 Know why you want to quit.

You know that you should quit smoking – there are lots of good things it would do for your health. But that’s not good enough. Quitting smoking is tough—you have to have a powerful, personal reason for quitting in order to be successful. It may be that you don’t want your kids around second hand smoke, or that you saw a friend or family member suffer with lung disease. Whatever your reason for quitting, choose something that is strong enough to help you overcome the urge to light up.

### 2 Don’t go cold turkey.

Quitting smoking is tough. A huge majority (95%) of people who attempt to quit “cold turkey” end up smoking again in a few days or weeks. Nicotine is highly addictive; your brain craves it. When your body first goes without nicotine, you may develop a headache, feel irritable, depressed, nervous and extremely hungry.

### 3 Try nicotine-replacement therapy.

It can help prevent the uncomfortable feelings associated with withdrawal. Nicotine replacement patches, gum or lozenges—along with support and a quit smoking plan—can help double your chances of quitting successfully. Over time, gradually decrease the dose of nicotine until you are ready to stop using it all together. You should not smoke when using nicotine replacement.

### 4 Ask about medication help.

Ask your nurse or doctor about prescription medicines that may help you quit smoking. These medicines do not contain nicotine but work by changing the chemicals in your brain to stop the craving for cigarettes. These medicines may make smoking less satisfying. Other medications may be prescribed to help with the nicotine withdrawal symptoms, like irritability or depression.

### 5 Get support, go public.

Tell your family, friends or co-workers that you plan to quit smoking. Their support and encouragement could help you be successful. Consider joining a support group or looking for a counselor who will help you make a quit smoking plan and stick with it. Make sure you follow up with your support person or group often, especially when you first quit. They can help you problem solve difficult situations. Combining support groups with medications and/or nicotine replacement therapy boosts your chances of success.





# Smoke-Free Life

## 12 Steps for Success (Continued)

### 6 Manage your stress.

Most smokers say they smoke to relax or calm down. Once you quit, you'll need to have other ways to help you manage stress. This could be a deep breathing routine, going for a walk, getting a massage, or taking a yoga class. Try to avoid stressful situations the first few weeks after quitting while making time to do enjoyable, relaxing activities.

### 7 Avoid alcohol and other "triggers."

For many smokers, having a drink goes along with having a cigarette. This may be also true for your morning coffee. You may be used to having a cigarette after a meal. It may be best if you can avoid these situations soon after quitting or find ways to change your routine. Try tea instead of coffee, brush your teeth after a meal, avoid alcohol—meet your friends for a walk instead of for a drink.

### 8 Clean up.

Once you've made the commitment to quit smoking, get rid of all of the reminders of smoking. Toss out the ashtrays, lighters or anything else that reminds you of smoking. Clean your house and your car—including carpets, upholstery and drapes. Don't forget to wash your clothes. You don't want to see or smell anything that will remind you of smoking.

### 9 Get active.

Exercise can help decrease nicotine cravings and withdrawal symptoms. When you crave a cigarette, try going for a bike ride or taking the dog for a walk. The extra calories burned will also help offset any weight gain that may result from quitting smoking.

### 10 Eat your fruits and vegetables.

Many smokers worry about gaining weight when they quit smoking. Eating fruits and vegetables that are low in calories and high in nutrients is a great way to satisfy your cravings without packing on the pounds.

### 11 Pick a reward.

Health benefits aside, don't forget to reward yourself for your quit smoking success. Think about all of the money you've saved by not buying cigarettes; use that to treat yourself to something fun!

### 12 Keep trying. Try again.

It is common for smokers to make several tries at quitting before they are able to give up cigarettes for good. Right now, there are more Americans living who are ex-smokers than are current smokers—proof that over half of smokers have quit. You can too! If you relapse, try to understand the emotions and circumstances that lead you to pick up that cigarette. See if you can re-commit to quitting and once you've made the decision to try again, set a quit date within the next few weeks or month.



# Smoke-Free Life

## Resources for Smokers

- 1-800-QUIT NOW (784-8669): This is the national access number to state-based quitline services.
- [www.ahrq.gov/path/tobacco.htm](http://www.ahrq.gov/path/tobacco.htm)
- [www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov)

## There has never been a better time to Quit!

### Why Quit?

- Smoking is dangerous. More than 435,000 Americans die each year from smoking.
- Smoking causes illness such as cancer, heart disease, stroke, and lung disease.
- If you are pregnant, your baby will be healthier if you quit smoking.
- The people around you, especially children, will be healthier if you quit. Breathing in other people's smoke can cause asthma and other health problems.
- You will have more money when you quit. If you smoke one pack per day, quitting smoking could save you up to more than \$160 per month.



# Smoke-Free Life

## Smoking Cessation Worksheet

### Here's How! Stop Smoking Checklist:

- Set a quit date.** No smoking after: \_\_\_\_\_
- Get support.** Names of people who will support me: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Talk to my nurse or doctor about medicines** to help me quit.  
My clinic appointment: \_\_\_\_\_
- Clean my house and car.** Get rid of all cigarettes, ashtrays and lighters.
- Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669)** to be connected to the quitline in my State for additional support. It's free!
- Things I will do to help me stay smoke free: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Examples: Avoid bars where people can smoke. Keep a positive attitude.*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Don't Forget: Health Benefits of Living Smoke Free

- Within 20 minutes of your last cigarette: your heart rate and blood pressure become lower—a good thing.
- Within 24 hours of your last cigarette: the carbon monoxide levels in your blood become normal.
- Within 2 weeks to 3 months after quitting:
  - Your risk of having a heart attack begins to drop.
  - Your lung function begins to improve.
- Long term benefits of quitting smoking: a lower risk of heart disease, stroke, and lung cancer!  
You will feel better, have more energy, and breathe easier!



# Sleep, Blessed Sleep

A good night's sleep not only helps your mood and energy level, it may also help make your immune system stronger and help you fight a cold or flu. New studies also show that if you get 7-8 hours of sleep at night, you can lower your chance of gaining weight in your belly area—the kind of fat that increases your risk of diabetes and heart disease.

**Here are some tips to help you get a good night's sleep starting tonight!**

## 1 Set a schedule.

Go to bed and get up at the same time each day, even on weekends. This helps your body develop a regular sleep-wake cycle. If you don't fall asleep after being in bed 15-30 minutes, get up and do something relaxing. Go back to bed when you are tired. Lying in bed worrying about not being able to sleep can make it harder to nod off.

## 2 Make it a routine.

Do the same things every night as you get ready for bed. Make these activities relaxing—take a warm bath or shower, read, or listen to soothing music. This tells your body it is time to quiet down and gets your body ready for sleep. It is best not to be on your computer or watch TV right before bed. This can make it harder to get to sleep.

## 3 Eating and drinking matter.

Don't eat a heavy meal right before you go to bed. Feeling over-full may keep you awake. It can lead to extra trips to the bathroom. If you are sensitive to caffeine and it keeps you awake at night, try not to drink coffee, tea, or cola late in the day. Alcohol may also make it harder to sleep, causing you to wake up in the middle of the night.

## 4 Prepare your space.

Fix the room you sleep in to make it better for sleeping. Usually this means a cool, dark, quiet space. Add room-darkening window blinds or curtains, earplugs, fans or other devices to help you sleep. Find a comfortable mattress, pillow and bedding. Make sure you have enough room—especially if you share your bed with someone else.

## 5 Don't take long afternoon naps.

If you have trouble sleeping well at night, only take a short 20-30 minute nap mid-afternoon. Those who work at night might need to sleep during the day. If this is the case, set a routine so you can adjust your internal body clock.

## 6 Get regular activity.

Physical activity can help you go to sleep faster and sleep more deeply. Don't exercise too close to bedtime because this can make you feel more energized. It might be better to exercise earlier in the day.



# Sleep, Blessed Sleep

Here are some tips to help you get a good night's sleep starting tonight! (Continued)

## 7 Manage stress.

A busy, active mind can make it difficult to relax and sleep well. This can be a sign of too much to do, or too much stress in your life. See if you can get better organized, delegate tasks, say “no,” and make a schedule so you get the really important things done. Deep breathing or yoga can help manage stress and help you relax. Write down what’s on your mind before you go to bed—then set it aside to be picked up the next day.

## 8 Know when to contact your doctor or nurse.

Most people have trouble sleeping once in a while. But if you have trouble sleeping several nights a week, ask your doctor or nurse if you have a medical problem that is making it hard for you to sleep. They can help find and treat any medical problem that might be causing your sleep trouble.

## Check off the things you can do to improve your sleep

- Get room-darkening shades/curtains
- Limit caffeine and alcohol in the evening
- Be more active, early in the day
- Go to bed at the same time
- Move the TV out of my bedroom
- Make my afternoon naps short
- Avoid big meals close to bed time
- Learn a relaxation or stress management technique
- Talk to my nurse or doctor



# Life Can be a Stress Test

A 2004 world-wide study demonstrated that emotions and stress were the third leading risk factor for heart disease—right after smoking and high cholesterol. Men and women of all ages and from 52 countries were more likely to have a heart attack if they were depressed, anxious, cynical, hostile, or under high stress. We don't know everything about how your mood affects your heart, but there is good evidence that it does. Heart-mind techniques have been shown to lower heart rate and blood pressure, increase the oxygen in the blood, improve circulation, and reduce anxiety and hostility. Try these out for yourself. You might just find they not only improve your mood, they improve your health, too!

## Slow, Deep Breathing

Breathing is closely tied to your emotional state. Ever notice that when you are angry or upset you breathe faster and less deep? Simply slowing your breathing down can calm you down. You can do this practice anywhere and anytime.

**1** Either lying down or sitting quietly, place your hands on your stomach.

**2** Take a deep breath in through your nose; your stomach should expand or rise. Count to 10 while breathing in.

**3** Pause.

**4** Breathe out through your mouth – you may want to make a blowing sound as you breathe out.

**5** The breathing out should be about half as long as the breathing in. Count to 5 while breathing out.

**6** Each time you breath out, try to release feelings of tension and stress.

**7** You may wish to picture breathing in energy, hope and peace and breathing out what is old, tired, and negative.

**8** Deep breathing can be practiced throughout your day—at a stop light, when on the phone and you're placed "on hold", waiting in line, or when you get into bed at night.



# Life Can be a Stress Test

## Mindfulness Meditation

The goal of mindfulness is to be aware of what is happening right now, to focus the mind on the present moment—not the future, nor the past. During this practice you focus on one thing—a word or phrase, the breath, body sensations or sounds.

**1** Get in a comfortable position either sitting or lying down. If sitting, try to have your back straight while letting your shoulders drop or relax.

**2** Close your eyes softly.

**3** Try to follow your breath—breathing in and out—without changing how you breathe.

**4** Follow the air coming in then follow the air going out. You might focus on one spot like the tip of your nose, as the air passes by or you can pay attention to your belly rising and falling with each breath. Imagine you are riding the waves of your breathing—in and out, in and out.

**5** When you notice your mind has wandered off the breath, just bring your attention back and start over again. Try not to get upset with yourself for getting “off track.” This is natural. The goal of this practice is to notice when your mind has wandered and to gently bring it back to the object of focus.

**6** If you have chosen a word or phrase for your focus, silently repeat the word or phrase. Notice when your mind has wandered off and start over, silently repeating the word or phrase.

**7** Start out with 10 or 15 minutes of practice like this each day. Over time you may wish to stretch out the time to 20, 30, even 40 minutes.



# Life Can be a Stress Test

## Guided Imagery

Daydreaming is an example of how our mind or imagination creates mental pictures. Guided imagery allows you to create a safe, relaxing place where information can be shared between your body and mind. The idea behind guided imagery is that when you imagine you are doing something, you activate the same areas of your brain as when you actually do them. This practice can be used to relax—by going to a special place where you feel safe and calm, or it can be used to create healing images—for example a healthy heart. The example below guides you to a special place for relaxation.

**1** Allow yourself to sit back and relax. Loosen any tight clothing. Take off your glasses and gently close your eyes.

**2** Allow your attention to move to your breathing. Let your breathing become even and comfortable.

**3** Now, think about a special place. It can be a real place, a place you may actually have been; a beautiful spot in the woods or at the beach or a comforting place in your own home. Your special place may be an imaginary place—indoors or outdoors—it doesn't matter. If more than one place comes to mind, allow yourself to stay with one of them.

**4** The only thing that matters is that you are in a place where you are completely comfortable and safe. Appreciate this scene with all of your senses. Smell the smells, feel the air as it caresses your skin, experience the ground securely under you, and touch and feel the whole environment that you are in.

**5** Notice what you are wearing. Notice what you have on your feet, what time of year it is, the time of day, how old you are. Notice whether you are alone or with another person or people. Notice the color that surrounds you. What is the temperature? Warm? Cold? Notice the things about the place that make it safe and comfortable.

**6** Look around you. Is there anything else that would make this place safer for you? Perhaps you need to remove something from the place. Or, do you need to bring something in? Notice how your body feels in the place. Take some time to enjoy this feeling of safety in your special place.

**7** Thank yourself for taking this time for yourself. You may wish to promise yourself you will visit this place again when you need to.

**8** When you are ready, at your own pace, let your breathing deepen. Gradually let the awareness of your body against the chair return. Bring yourself back slowly and comfortably. When you are ready, gently open your eyes with a smile on your face.





# Life Can be a Stress Test

## Yoga

Yoga is a series of gentle stretching and strengthening exercises or postures that can improve strength, balance, flexibility and awareness. If you do it slowly, yoga can be a form of meditation and an excellent way to help manage stress as well as exercise the body.

## Tai Chi

Tai chi (pronounced “tie chee”) is similar to yoga in that it’s slow, gentle movements are like a meditation in motion. Besides helping to manage stress, tai chi may help to increase fitness, strength, balance and flexibility. Tai chi is low impact. It doesn’t put too much stress on the muscles and joints so it is a safe exercise for people of all ages and levels of fitness. Some studies have shown fewer symptoms of heart failure and a lower risk of falls in older adults who practice tai chi regularly.

## Exercise

Physical activity and exercise improves your emotional as well as your physical fitness. Getting outside for a walk or bike ride can take you away from a stressful situation and help you to get rid of nervous energy. Being active helps you relax and sleep better. When you get a good night’s sleep you are better able to manage stress.



# Life Can be a Stress Test

## Manage Your Time – Just Say No!

We all have just 24 hours a day. Learning to manage time better may help you get done what you need to get done, and feel less stressed.

### These are some things you can try, in order to better use the time you have:

- Decide what is the most important thing to do that day and do that first.
- Avoid over-commitment. Don't schedule too much in a day. Say no!
- Use a calendar or planner and check it before you agree to do something.
- Limit time wasters—such as surfing the internet.
- Experts recommend setting aside a certain time each day to check and return email and phone calls rather than constant interruptions incoming information.
- Get organized. If your physical surroundings are well organized, you won't be faced with the stress of misplaced objects and clutter. Make it a habit to regularly clean out and sort through the messes of paperwork and clutter that build up over time.

## Check off the things you will do to lower your stress

- Exercise
- Practice deep breathing
- Get organized
- Learn to meditate
- Just say no
- Keep my calendar up to date
- Limit time wasters



# No Man-or Woman-is an Island

Have you ever heard the expression (or the song), “one is the loneliest number?” Besides making you sad, loneliness can be bad for your health. Having close personal relationships is important to staying healthy. Research has actually shown that the more connected you are to other people, the lower your risk of dying!

## Here is what we know:

**Support matters.** We know that having support from others—family, friends, co-workers, and neighbors—helps you manage difficult emotions like sadness, fear, or anger. But these connections with others (called “social support”) may make you healthier too. When you feel cared about, you are more likely to take care of yourself—eat well, get plenty of rest and exercise. Social support can help you fight off colds or the flu. Feeling connected to others also helps you avoid overeating or drinking too much alcohol.

**Support comes in many forms.** *Professional support groups* are groups led by a doctor, nurse, social worker, or clergy person like a minister or rabbi. Their focus is on giving more information about health topics or life problems. Examples of these are diabetes prevention groups or weight loss groups led by a registered dietitian. *Peer support groups* focus on sharing experiences and learning from other people who are going through the same challenges as you. Group members give each other support and encouragement and provide examples for how to deal with a situation.

**A case for marriage.** Married people live longer on average than do those who are not married, whether widowed, divorced, or never married. However, people in a bad marriage tend to have poorer health than those who are happy and satisfied with their marriage.

**The power of pets.** Humans aren’t the only source of a healing friendship. Pets can also be good for your health. Research shows that pet owners are sick less often and tend to recover from serious illness faster. Pets have been found to act as a stress buster, actually lowering the blood pressure of their owners simply by offering affection and good company.

**Make connections.** Social support includes emotional support—love, trust, and understanding. It may also include getting advice, direction and practical help like having someone to mow your lawn or drive you to the store. Support may come from many different places—family, friends, health care providers and community. You may go to the movies with one group of people, play sports with another group of people and talk over your problems with a different group of friends. Look for help and support from:

- Your husband or wife, life partner, adult children, extended family
- Co-workers, classmates, neighbors
- Church groups, community centers, volunteer organizations
- Doctors, nurses, therapists
- Support or counseling groups
- Sports teams, hobby clubs



# No Man-or Woman-is an Island

Make a list of places where you can go for support:

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_

Check what you will do to increase your support:

- Talk to my nurse or doctor
- Join a support group
- Volunteer
- Adopt a pet
- Sign up for a class
- Take up a new hobby
- Join a sports team
- Get to know my neighbor



# The Power in How You Think

**What we *think* leads to *feelings*—leads to *actions*—creates *results*.**

Our thoughts, feelings, and actions are the keys to understanding ourselves. When we understand ourselves we make better decisions, have healthier relationships and can lead more healthy and fulfilling lives. Understanding how our thoughts, feelings and actions interact with each other can help us overcome depression, anxiety, and unhealthy behaviors—such as over-eating, smoking, and not exercising. Understanding ourselves helps us believe in ourselves and our ability to change.

## Thoughts

Our brains are constantly thinking, whether we are aware of it or not. If we are not aware of our thoughts, we might believe that we have little control over events in our lives and how we respond to those events. The first step toward change is to become aware of your thoughts. Writing your thoughts down in a journal can be a helpful tool. Don't judge your thoughts, just be aware of them. Notice how your thoughts can be positive or negative, true or not true, upsetting or comforting. This is the first step toward noticing how thoughts become feelings.

## Feelings

We all have feelings—pain, anger, sorrow, joy, love, grief, fear, and happiness. It is common to label our feelings as “good” or “bad.” We may try to increase our good feelings and get rid of the bad feelings—sometimes this leads to unhealthy behaviors, like over-eating or drinking too much alcohol. It is important to name the feelings we are experiencing and express them in healthy ways. One step in this process is understanding that other people and events do not “make us” feel a certain way. It is our thoughts about the event that create our feelings. For example if a friend is late, we may tell ourselves “she shouldn't be late, she is late because she doesn't respect me.” These thoughts may lead to intense feelings of anger and pain. A more healthy way is to think your friend has a good reason for being late and will be here soon enough.

## Actions

Our actions and behaviors are the things we do; they do not define us. They are the results of thoughts and feelings. We can make mistakes without being failures. It is important to separate actions from the person. When you define yourself by a past choice you made, you limit your ability to change and you begin to think and feel bad about yourself. A healthier way of thinking is, “I made a bad choice, and I can make a better choice next time.” This leaves you more hopeful about a better future.

## Results

Results are the outcome of a complex process that starts with thinking and leads to feelings and actions. To get the desired result you want or a lasting behavior change, start by becoming aware of your thoughts and feelings, then direct your actions in a healthy way.



# The Power in How You Think

**Thoughts** —————> **Feelings** —————> **Actions** —————> **Results**

If you replay the same negative thoughts in your mind, you will get the same results.

For example if you constantly think “I can’t exercise. I have never been good at sports. I am too overweight to join a gym. I will look silly. People will make fun of me,” you will continue to be out of shape and overweight. Instead, work backwards, begin thinking as if you already have the results you want.

If you want health, think about what it would be like to be a healthy person. How do healthy people care for themselves?

## **Begin to *act* the way you think a healthy person acts:**

- Go to bed early
- Eat more vegetables
- Walk
- Write in a journal
- Say “no thanks” to that extra helping
- Join a water exercise class
- Learn to meditate

**You just might get the *results* you are hoping for!**



# Move More, Sit Less.

Did you know that sitting too much increases your health risks? Studies have shown that even when you get regular exercise at the gym, you may be at risk for chronic conditions like diabetes and heart disease if you sit too much during a typical day. While regular exercise has important benefits, you may be able to improve your health even more by standing up instead of sitting down and staying busy throughout your day!

**Check off 3 or 4 things you will try to do to add more activity to your day. You can also write in any other activity you would like to do.**

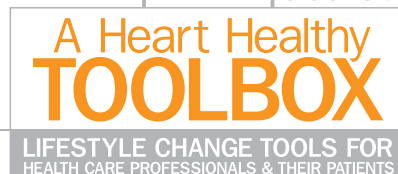
- Park farther away from any store or place you go—or get off the bus or out of the taxi a few blocks before you get to where you are going.
- Avoid the drive-through. Park your car and walk into the grocery store, drugstore, bank, or restaurant.
- When you are stopped in traffic or at a stop light, tighten, then relax your stomach, arm or leg muscles.
- Lift your grocery or shopping bags like weights.
- Take the stairs! Climb up a flight or two whenever you can.
- Walk around or march in place while you talk to someone on your mobile phone. (Walking while texting is not recommended!)
- Clean your house, wash your car, or rake leaves. Maybe start gardening!
- Try doing some exercises when doing chores where you don't normally move. Examples include small squats when ironing or folding clothes and calf raises while brushing your teeth.
- Do some quick exercises during the break of your favorite TV show. Try some push ups, sit ups, or do some light weight training.
- Instead of watching TV or a movie—go window shopping, walking at a zoo or visit a museum.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_





# That First Step

## General Information

If you have heart disease or other health concerns, talk with your nurse or doctor before starting an exercise program. They may take a health history, perform a physical exam or request a monitored stress test. This information will be used to make sure exercise is safe for you and to develop an exercise prescription.

## Exercise Prescription

There are four parts to an exercise prescription. These four things are sometimes known as **F.I.T.T.**

### **F: Frequency** (Number of Times Per Week You Exercise)

- Try to exercise or be physically active on most, and ideally all, days of the week.
- If every day is not possible, work to get in at least 3 days a week. Try to spread out the days you are active (every other day is better than three days in a row).
- Remember—something is better than nothing.

### **I: Intensity** (How Hard You Exercise)

You may need to work with your nurse or doctor to figure out the best way to measure your exercise intensity. A few ways are:

- Target Heart Rate (THR, or pulse)
- The “Talk Test”
- Rated Perceived Exertion (RPE)

More about these 3 ways to measure the intensity of the exercise you do:

- Your nurse or doctor can show you how to count your heart rate (or pulse) and give you a target heart rate to reach during exercise. Your pulse is the number of times your heart beats in one minute. Pulse rates vary from person to person. Your pulse is lower when you are sitting still and gets faster when you exercise. Knowing how to take your pulse can help you evaluate your exercise program. Some medications or conditions can limit how high your heart rate can go. Be sure to check with your nurse or doctor before getting started. If this is the case for you or you have a hard time taking your pulse, there are other ways to figure out if you are working as hard as you need to.
- The “Talk Test” is simple. If you can talk while exercising, the intensity of your activity is considered to be safe and appropriate for improving your health. If you are exercising so hard that you cannot easily talk to the person next to you, this means you are exercising pretty hard. Ask your doctor or nurse if this is safe for you.
- You can also measure how hard you are working using the Rated Perceived Exertion (RPE) Scale shown on the next page.





# That First Step

## Exercise Prescription (Continued)

### I: Intensity (Continued)

#### Rated Perceived Exertion (RPE) Scale

These numbers are used to grade exercise intensity (how hard you are exercising). A rating of 0 would be nothing at all (sitting in a chair) and a 10 would be very, very heavy (how you feel at the end of an exercise stress test on a treadmill). In most cases, you should exercise at a level of 3-4, which is safe and improves your health.

0	0.5	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Nothing at All	Just Noticeable	Very Light	Light	Moderate	Somewhat Heavy	Heavy		Very Heavy			Very, Very Heavy

### T: Time (How Many Minutes Your Exercise Session Lasts)

- Start with a warm up of 5-10 minutes including stretching and flexibility exercises.
- Whichever activity you choose, begin slowly. Examples include:
  - Running: walk for 5 minutes and then begin with a jogging pace.
  - Tennis: walk around the court a couple of times and swing the racket slowly to warm up shoulders.
- Then do 20-40 minutes of endurance exercise (such as running, walking, swimming, or biking).
- Slowly increase the time (by 5 minutes each week) and intensity, so it gets a little harder each week.
- End with another 5-10 minutes of strengthening, stretching and flexibility exercises.

### T: Type (What Kind of Exercise You Do)

- Endurance exercises are sustained continuous exercises which make your heart rate increase. *Examples include walking, biking, jogging, swimming, or cross country skiing.*
- Strength exercises increase the strength in your muscles. *Examples include lifting weights or household items, or using a resistance band.*
- Balance exercises help prevent falls. *Examples include standing on one foot or tai chi.*
- Flexibility exercises help your body stay limber so you can do your normal activities and not get injured. *Examples include yoga or stretching.*



# That First Step

## Getting Started

- Your nurse or doctor can help you find out whether or not you need to do a stress test before you start being more active. This is very important if you have not been active for some time or if you have health problems.
- Pick an activity that you like to do. Be realistic given where you live and what your body can do! Try to choose more than one activity to prevent boredom and to have a plan for bad weather days.
- Examples of activities that may help your heart health include: walking, jogging, swimming, bicycling, rowing, tennis, and dancing.
- Find a friend who likes to do the same activity that you do! This will help you stay on track with your activity program.
- Stretch only after you are warmed up (unless your doctor or nurse says you should stretch before due to a previous injury or chronic condition). Stretching cold muscles could injure them.
- Start slowly and increase your time to your daily / weekly goal.
- Start with 10 minutes a day of light to moderate activities. Try to add 3-5 minutes to your daily exercise each week. Continue to add time this way until you are able to exercise for 30 minutes. At 30 minutes, you may also wish to increase how hard you are working (known as exercise intensity).

### Kinds of exercise I can do and would like to do:

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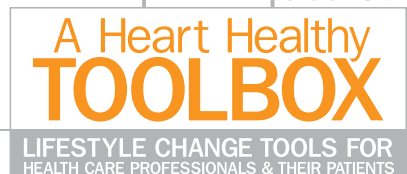
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### How much physical activity should I get?

Ask your nurse or doctor how much is right for you, especially if you have heart disease or other health concerns. The goal for most adults is 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on most days of the week.

You may also choose to count steps per day using a pedometer to monitor your progress. A good way to start with a pedometer is to wear it every day for a week so you can get an idea about the average number of steps you are now taking every day. Then you can make a plan to increase this a little every week. So if you find out that you are taking about 3,000 steps a day, set a goal of 3,500 steps a day for the first week. Aim for 4,000 steps a day the next week. You will soon be up to 10,000 steps, or about 5 miles!

My activity goal is \_\_\_\_\_ minutes per day \_\_\_\_\_ days of the week.





# It's Never Too Late

## A few things to consider before starting

<b>What to wear</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shoes with good support, traction, and shock absorption</li> <li>• Loose fitting, comfortable clothes</li> <li>• A hat and/or sunscreen to protect your skin</li> </ul>
<b>When to be active</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wait 60 minutes after eating before you start (if you are going to be doing more intense activity or if you had a very big meal).</li> <li>• Don't be too active during the hottest time of the day or in very cold weather.</li> </ul>
<b>Avoid dehydration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink plenty of fluids (especially water) before, during and after exercise (unless your nurse or doctor tells you not to). Try to drink 1-2 glasses an hour before, ½ glass every 15-20 minutes you are active, then another glass within an hour of stopping your activity.</li> <li>• Do not wait until you feel thirsty before taking in fluids.</li> </ul>
<b>Safety first</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry a mobile (cell) phone.</li> <li>• Let someone know your plans (where you are going and how long you plan to be gone).</li> <li>• Make sure you have good lighting.</li> <li>• Take the medications you may need with you (asthma inhalers or nitroglycerin).</li> </ul>
<b>Monitor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the "talk test" to monitor how hard you are working. You should be able to talk while you exercise.</li> <li>• If you can't talk, the exercise may be too difficult. Check with your nurse or doctor.</li> <li>• If you are able to sing, the exercise may be too easy.</li> </ul>



# It's Never Too Late

Being active benefits everyone – no matter your age or what shape you are in now. Regular exercise helps to prevent losing muscle as you age and improves your balance—which can help prevent falls and broken bones! Staying active also helps keep your mind sharp and can help prevent depression and getting stressed out! Exercise helps improve your stamina, breathing, blood pressure and blood sugar control.

## Some tips if you have one of the following health conditions

<b>Heart Disease</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know the signs that mean you should stop your exercise session: chest pain or pressure, unusual shortness of breath, feeling dizzy or very tired, sweating more than normal, or irregular heart beat.</li> <li>• Call your doctor or nurse to tell them about these symptoms. Be sure to ask whether it is safe for you to exercise.</li> </ul>
<b>Diabetes</b>	<p>Talk with your nurse or doctor about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• when to check your blood sugars (like before or after exercise) if you are going to be active</li> <li>• when you should or should not exercise based on your medicine and eating schedule—especially if you take insulin</li> <li>• how and what you should eat before and after activity</li> </ul>
<b>Arthritis and/or Low Back Pain</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pick activities that are lower impact: bike, swim, row, water aerobics/ walking, elliptical machine, yoga, or tai chi.</li> </ul>
<b>Balance Problems</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use equipment with a handrail.</li> <li>• Ask about a referral to physical therapy.</li> <li>• Choose chair exercises or a stationary bike.</li> </ul>

## Specific instructions for you

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*The benefits of exercise are greater than the risks for most people.*



# Keeping on Track

## Write down your goals

Your success depends on setting goals that really matter to you. Put them where you can see them and renew them regularly.

### Short-Term Goals: Next 1-2 weeks

Write down at least two of your own personal short-term goals. What will you do over the next week or two that will help you make physical activity a regular part of your life? *Examples: Take a walk at lunch time 2 days this week. Take the stairs instead of the elevator this week.*

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_

### Long-Term Goals

Write down at least two long-term goals. Focus on where you want to be in 6 months, a year, or 2 years from now. Remember, setting goals will help you make physical activity part of your everyday life, monitor your progress, and celebrate your success. *Example: Walk or run in a 5K fundraiser for my local community.*

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_

### Using Technology to Meet and Track Goals

- Track your physical activity or exercise on one of many websites and mobile applications (“apps”). You can also track calories on many of these websites and applications.
- Use a pedometer to track how many steps you take each day. The goal is 10,000 steps a day. You may be able to use your smart phone as a pedometer!

Write down one or two apps, websites, or methods you would use.

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_

*Adapted from: Exercise & Physical Activity: Your Everyday Guide from the National Institute on Aging.  
Available at [www.nia.nih.gov/HealthInformation/Publications/ExerciseGuide/default.htm](http://www.nia.nih.gov/HealthInformation/Publications/ExerciseGuide/default.htm).*



# The Choices are Limitless!

You can start and stay active when it seems like you can't

These are the 4 kinds of exercise that you can pick from:

- 1 Endurance
- 2 Strength
- 3 Balance
- 4 Flexibility

## 1 Endurance: activities that increase your breathing and heart rate (pulse)

- Endurance activities
  - keep you healthy and more fit
  - help you do the things you need to do every day
  - improve the health of your heart and lungs
  - delay or prevent diseases such as diabetes, colon and breast cancers, and heart disease
- Examples of endurance activities:
  - fast walking
  - dancing
  - biking
  - playing tennis
  - yard work
  - jogging
  - climbing stairs or hills
  - swimming
  - playing basketball

## 2 Strength: activities that increase your muscle strength

Strength exercises help you stay independent in your daily activities like climbing stairs and carrying things. *Strength exercises include lifting weights and using a resistance band.*

## 3 Balance: activities that make you more stable

These help improve your balance and prevent falls. *Balance exercises include standing on one foot, heel-to-toe walk, and tai chi.*

## 4 Flexibility: activities that keep your body flexible

These give you more freedom of movement for everyday activity. *Flexibility exercises include shoulder and upper arm stretches, calf stretches, and yoga.*



# The Choices are Limitless!

## You have many choices

<b>When you travel...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay at a hotel that has an exercise room.</li> <li>• Ask locals or the front desk of the hotel where you can walk or run safely.</li> <li>• Walk to dinner instead of taking a taxi.</li> <li>• Do your sightseeing on a bike or on foot.</li> <li>• Do some stretching, yoga or use a strength band in your room.</li> </ul>
<b>When the weather isn't the best...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walk at the mall.</li> <li>• Find stairs at your work or apartment building.</li> <li>• Use a video or TV exercise program.</li> <li>• Dance to your favorite music.</li> </ul>
<b>When you can't afford a fitness center...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use household items for weights such as milk cartons or canned foods.</li> <li>• Use your own body weight: squats, push-ups or sit ups.</li> <li>• Join a walking group with friends.</li> <li>• Find fun activities through a local community center.</li> </ul>
<b>When you feel tired...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try yoga, light weights or stretching—this will still help your balance, strength and flexibility.</li> <li>• Exercise early in the day.</li> <li>• Start walking—you may start to have more energy with each step.</li> </ul>
<b>When it doesn't seem fun...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do an activity while watching TV or a movie, reading a book or a magazine, listening to music, a book or podcasts.</li> <li>• Consider it “play time” like kids do: play with the dog, play with grandkids.</li> <li>• Try a new class or activity.</li> <li>• Find a friend to be active with you.</li> <li>• Help out a neighbor or friend with moving or housework.</li> </ul>



# All That and More!

The many good things that can happen when you exercise are listed below. Check off some reasons why YOU would like to be more active.

## I hope to help prevent heart attack and stroke by:

- lowering my blood pressure, or my chance of getting high blood pressure
- improving my cholesterol
- lowering my blood sugar and my chance for getting diabetes
- burning calories to maintain or lose weight
- reduce stress, depression or anxiety
- improving my heart and lung function

## I would like to improve my:

- ability to play sports
- muscle strength
- flexibility and range of motion of joints
- balance
- energy level
- sleep

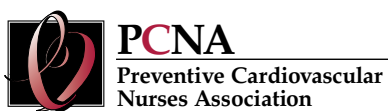
## I would like to lower my risk for:

- some kinds of cancers (colon, breast and lung)
- osteoporosis (thinning of bones)

## Remember:

- The best exercise is the one you will do!
- Start slowly and increase activity over time.
- You may feel sore and more tired when you first start.
- Something is better than nothing.

*Based on 2008 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans.  
Available at [www.health.gov/paguidelines](http://www.health.gov/paguidelines).*



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A Heart Healthy  
**TOOLBOX**

LIFESTYLE CHANGE TOOLS FOR  
HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS & THEIR PATIENTS





# Tricks of the Trade

## 1 Start slow and add a little more over time

Some is better than none, so start slowly. **Don't expect results overnight**, but do take small steps each day. You might not notice any big changes—especially in your weight—for a few weeks or even months. It is still good for your heart health!

## 2 Get a partner or join a class

Be active with a friend or a group to make it more fun! You are less likely to cancel an exercise date with a friend than one with yourself!

## 3 Change your routine around

You will be less likely to get bored or injured if you change your activities. Walk one day; bike the next. Mix in fun sports like golf or tennis to stay active and keep exercise fun. Learn to dance or garden. Even chores like mowing the lawn and cleaning your house can keep you moving.

## 4 Make exercise fun

Plan your walking route to see new sights—change up the neighborhoods you walk through. Take a walk through the zoo or park. Listen to music or an audiobook to help pass the time. Exercise on a treadmill or stationary bike while reading or watching TV.

## 5 Write it down

Keep an activity journal or diary. Write down what you did, how long you did it, and how you felt. This helps to track your progress. Keeping a journal can also be a good way to set future goals. Write down where you want to be next week, month or year.

## 6 Try something new

It may be that jogging is not for you. Try a swimming program instead or sign up for a yoga class or tennis lesson. Find things you enjoy.

## 7 Make exercise a habit

Choose a regular time for exercise each day. Sign a contract with yourself to exercise. Put exercise “appointments” on your calendar and keep them! Change into workout clothes before you leave work.

## 8 Make exercise a priority

You have to believe that exercise is important enough to make it happen. Pay attention to your mood, how your body feels, and your stress level AFTER you are active. Think about your reasons for becoming active.

## 9 Come up with solutions to reasons you may not want to be active

If you don't like to sweat—set up a fan or split it up into three 10-minute walks. If you feel too tired, try to be active earlier in the day. Write down your solutions.

## 10 Every little bit counts

Take a walk on your lunch break or a longer path back to your desk. Walk your dog twice a day. Take the stairs instead of the elevator. Split your activity up into two 15-minute or three 10 minute walks.



# Exercise Really *is* Medicine

Exercise programs are built around four things, often called FITT (Frequency, Intensity, Time, Type)

## 1 Frequency: How often you do the exercise.

It is best to do some type of exercise daily; however, this may vary depending on your overall health as well as your fitness goals. In some cases it may be recommended to alternate activities—for example endurance activities 3 days a week and strength training 2 days a week, while doing some flexibility exercises every day.

## 2 Intensity: How hard you exercise.

You may be given a target heart rate (THR) or pulse to achieve with exercise or be advised to exercise to a perceived exertion rating of “somewhat hard.” Both of these are measures of intensity. The idea is for you to work hard enough to get the benefits of exercise without overdoing to the point that exercise may not be safe.

## 3 Time: How long you do the exercise.

How long you should exercise—usually measured in minutes per day. While a minimum of 30 minutes of endurance exercise daily is recommended for most adults, it may take some time to increase to that level if you haven’t been exercising for a while. You may be advised to start with 5 minutes a day and add a few minutes each day as time goes on.

## 4 Type: What kind of exercise you do.

Walking, jogging, bicycling and swimming are examples of exercise that use large muscles and cause your body to use more oxygen than it would while resting. These types of activities are called endurance and they help the heart. Strength exercises help to increase strength and muscle tone. They may also help with balance and fall prevention. Examples of strength exercises are pushups, sit ups, and using weight lifting machines or free weights. Flexibility exercises stretch and lengthen your muscles to help prevent soreness and injury.



# Exercise Really *is* Medicine

## My Exercise Prescription

Type of Physical Activity	Aerobic	Strength	Flexibility
Frequency (days per week)			
Time (minutes per day)			
Intensity (how hard)	Target HR (pulse rate): _____ Perceived Exertion: _____		

## Rated Perceived Exertion Scale

This scale of numbers is used as a rating system for exercise intensity. A rating of 0 would be nothing at all (sitting in a chair) and a 10 would be very, very heavy (how you feel at the end of an exercise stress test). In most cases, you should exercise at a level of 3-4, which is safe and improves your health.

0	0.5	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Nothing at All	Just Noticeable	Very Light	Light	Moderate	Somewhat Heavy	Heavy		Very Heavy			Very, Very Heavy

## Target Heart Rate (Pulse)

- Your nurse or doctor can help you find a target heart rate zone for your needs, goals and physical condition.
- You gain the most benefits and lower the risks when you exercise in your target heart rate zone.
- You can find your target heart rate zone like this:
  - Your maximum heart rate is approximately 220 minus your age.
  - So if you are 40 years old,  $220 - 40 = 180$ .
  - When you exercise, your target heart rate should be 60-80% of 180, or between 108 and 144 beats per minute.