



Healthy Eating for Your Brain and Body



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

WEXNER MEDICAL CENTER



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Talk to your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

For more health information, go to wexnermedical.osu.edu/patiented or contact the Library for Health Information at 614-293-3707 or health-info@osu.edu.

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What Do You Expect to Get Out of this Program?

Do you expect to:

- Lose weight
- Lower your blood sugar or blood pressure
- Stop taking or take less medicines
- Get your life “back on track”

Whatever you expect, don't set yourself up for failure by thinking all of your problems will go away if you change your eating habits.

What can you change by eating better?

- **You can feel better.** You will mostly likely have more energy and be able to think more clearly.
- **You can improve most health conditions.** Most people will see their numbers go in the right direction, like lower blood pressure and lower blood sugar levels.
- **You can sleep better.** Within a couple of months, sleep is often improved. Exercise will help you sleep better too.
- **You may find it easier to deal with problems.** When you eat regularly and choose healthier foods, you may find that making decisions are easier. You have a “full tank” instead of running on empty all day.

What may not change by eating better?

- **You will still have struggles, like everyone.** Your bills will still be there and difficult relationships won't change.
- **You may not get totally off of your medicine for certain health problems.** Eating and exercising may make you healthier, but may not completely rid you of all health problems.
- **You may still weigh more than you would like.** Eating well will usually help people lose weight, but sustainable weight loss takes time and consistency to accomplish.

Eating better and moving more will almost always improve a person's quality of life. However, it won't fix all of your problems.

Why Worry About Eating Healthy Foods?

Over the past century, many diseases, like polio and smallpox, have been “conquered” and most Americans can now enjoy longer lives. However, as these diseases have decreased, the number of chronic, diet-related diseases has gone up. These diseases include:

- Obesity and being overweight
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- Some cancers
- Alzheimer’s Disease

About half of all American adults — 117 million people — have one or more preventable chronic diseases like these. How we eat and the amount of activity we get plays a large role in these health problems.

Eating more healthy foods and less junk food lowers the risk of getting many of these diseases. Eating better and moving more also helps our brains work better.

Some foods help our brains repair damage by building new brain cells and lowering stress on our brain.

How we eat and move has a huge effect on our overall health, including the health of our brains.



Why Don't We Eat Better and Move More?

If we eat better and move more, we will be healthier. So why don't we do this? The answers are not simple. There are many factors that may make doing these healthy behaviors more challenging. Here are a few examples.

Eating more healthy foods	Eating more unhealthy foods
Often sold in grocery stores or farmer's markets	Sold in more places, such as grocery stores, gas stations, carry-out and vending machines
Many foods, like fruit, fish and nuts, can be expensive	Most foods are cheap, such as soda, chips and cookies
Often need to be prepared or cooked before eating	Often ready to eat
Taste good	Taste "better" due to high salt, sugar and fat

Moving more	Moving less
Takes more time	Takes less time, such as choosing to drive over walking or biking
Takes more effort	Takes little effort
Do it yourself	Use technology to do it, such as garage door openers, TV remotes and riding lawn mowers
May cost more money, such as a gym membership	May cost less or nothing...until your health starts to fail and health care costs increase

Examine Your Eating Triggers

Types of eating triggers

An eating trigger is anything that causes you to eat. There are 4 broad types:

- **Physical triggers:** These are the signals your body sends to tell you that energy is needed. These are signs of true hunger.
- **Food triggers:** These are related to a specific food that causes overeating, not to be confused with your favorite foods or cravings. It is a food that you eat until it is gone regardless of mood, time of day or place.
- **Emotional triggers:** These are feelings, good or bad, that lead to overeating. When dealing with an emotional trigger, it is not a specific food that is eaten, but rather any available food will do.
- **Situational triggers:** These are specific locations, people, activities, events or times of day that lead to overeating. These triggers don't relate to a specific feeling or specific food available.

What are your eating triggers?

- **Activities:** Things that lead you to eat while you are doing them, such as going to the movies.
- **Events:** Occasions in which eating plays a major role, such as weddings, parties and vacations.
- **People:** Other people who are eating and possibly offering you food.
- **Sensory:** The sight and smell of food beckons you to sample it, such as a coffee cake aroma.

- **Feelings:** Moods and emotions that lead you to turn to food, such as anger or boredom.
- **Time of day:** Particular times during the day that you relate with eating, such as bedtime.

To manage your eating triggers, focus on the 5 D's

Delay eating for 10 minutes to give yourself time to identify your trigger.

Determine what is going on. Am I hungry? Is there something else going on?

Distract yourself with an activity that requires your full attention, such as reading a book, doing yard work or taking your dog on a walk.

Distance yourself physically from the temptation.

Decide how you are going to handle the trigger. Do you allow yourself a certain portion of the food? Do you write about how you are feeling in a journal? Do you remove the food, so it is not in easy reach? Do you eat a healthy snack before going to the movies?

Are You Ready to Make Changes to How You Eat?

Starting to make lifestyle changes without a plan is not the best way to succeed. Think about why you want to make these changes and how you will benefit. Lasting changes take time and patience to be put into place. Avoid trying to make too many changes too fast and “all-or-nothing” thinking.

Answer these questions to see how ready you are to change

Why do I want to eat healthier?	
What will motivate me?	
What will challenge me?	
What support do I have?	
What results do I want to see?	
What will be everyday life look like if I am successful in meeting my goals?	

Nutrition Terms to Know

In order to start learning how to eat better, it is important to know what some common words and phrases mean.

The terms **eating pattern**, **nutrients** and **variety** will come up often in this program. Learn about them to help you review your current diet and set goals for change.

Eating pattern

This is how you eat, day in and day out. It includes:

- The types of foods and beverages you eat.
- The amount of food you eat.
- The times of day you eat.
- Eating the same number of meals day to day.
- The balance between the calories you eat (energy in) and the energy you burn (energy out).

Example of a healthy eating pattern

- Eat 3 meals a day.
- Include vegetables, fruits, whole grains, healthy fats and lean proteins daily.
- Limit processed or convenience foods, such as pre-packaged meals, lunch meats and baked goods.
- Drink sugar-free and caffeine-free beverages, such as water.
- Balance calorie intake with energy needs.

Example of an unhealthy eating pattern

- Skip meals often.
- Eat few vegetables, fruits and whole grains.
- Eat a lot of processed or convenience foods.
- Drink sugar-sweetened or high-caffeine beverages regularly.
- Eat more calories than are burned, which leads to weight gain.

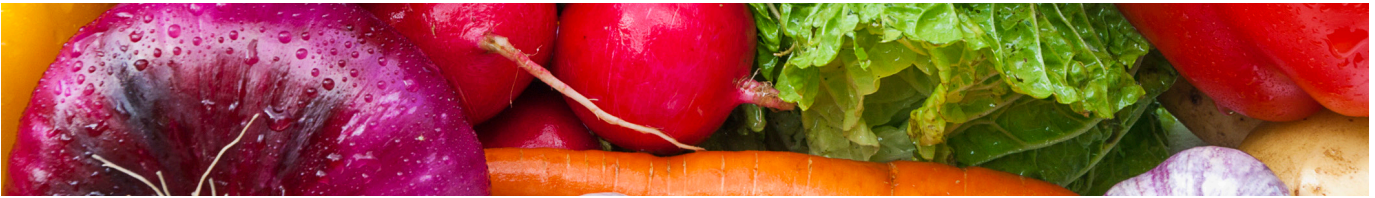
What is considered a healthy eating pattern is based on years of research to show what kind of foods, amount of foods, meals, and timing of meals are healthiest for humans.

No matter what type of eating pattern you have, you can always make small improvements towards a healthier eating pattern.

Nutrients

Nutrients are the parts of food that help your body and mind work well. The 6 major nutrients are:

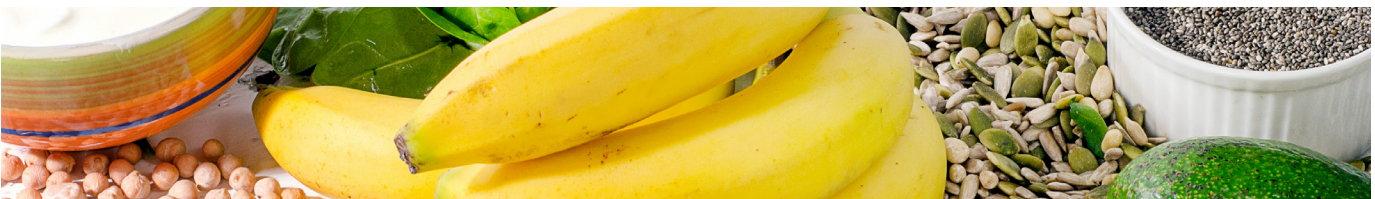
Vitamins



Vitamins are compounds that your body uses for growth, repair and normal functioning.

For example, your body needs vitamin B12 for your nervous system to carry messages from your brain to the rest of your body.

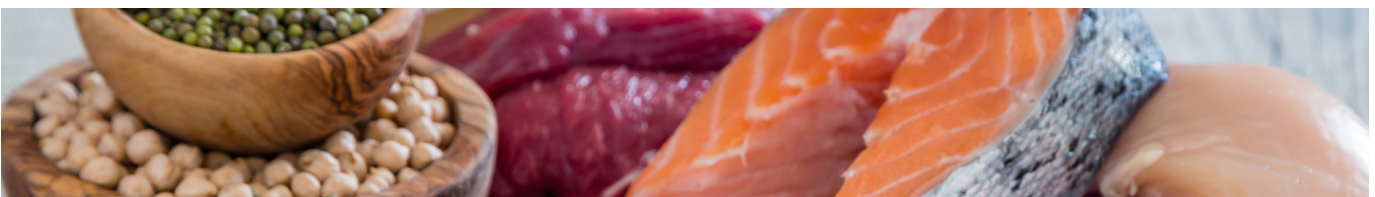
Minerals



Minerals are naturally occurring substances found in the earth, like calcium. Like vitamins, you need minerals for almost every process in your body.

For example, magnesium helps your heart beat regularly.

Proteins



Protein is made up of amino acids. These are the “building blocks” of your cells. Protein is needed for muscle growth and tissue repair, such as healing a cut.

Carbohydrates



Carbohydrates are made up of starches, sugars and fiber. It is the preferred source of energy by the body. Complex carbohydrates are healthiest. They are found in vegetables, fruits, whole grains and beans. Simple carbohydrates are less healthy. Avoid or limit simple carbohydrates, like white bread, pasta or rice, corn, peas, potatoes, and sweets or desserts.

Fats



Fats provide energy, cushion your organs, provide insulation and are needed to absorb certain vitamins. Healthy fats are found in plants, like olives, nuts and avocados. Less healthy fats come from fatty meats, butter, cream and cheese.

Water



Water helps you keep a normal temperature, lubricate and cushion your joints, protects your spinal cord and other sensitive tissues, and gets rid of wastes through urine, sweat and bowel movements. Most of your fluid needs are met by the water and beverages you drink. You can get some fluids through the foods you eat, especially foods with high water content, like vegetables and fruits.

Nutrients are important for our bodies to work well. Where do we get nutrients from?
FOOD!

Variety

Variety is a diverse assortment of foods and beverages across and within food groups.

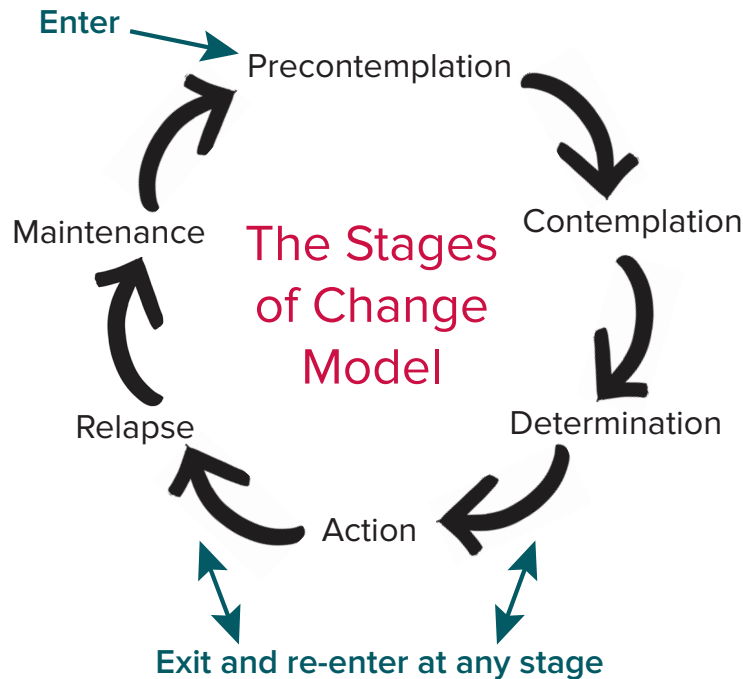
Eat a variety of foods over the course of the day or week to get the nutrients you need.

For example, in the vegetable food group, select a variety of foods over the course of a week by choosing from all subgroups, including:

- Dark green (spinach)
- Red and orange (bell peppers)
- Legumes (beans or peas)
- Starchy vegetables (potatoes)

Aim for eating a variety of foods in each food group (vegetables, fruits, grains, dairy and proteins). A variety of foods will give you a variety of nutrients.

Stages of Change



There are several stages people go through when they decide to change their habits.

Before you can think about making a change, you need to **realize that there is a problem**. You may be in denial that you have a problem, especially if others around you have the same problem.

One of the first stages of change is to **think about taking action to change**. It is common to take a long time in the first stages before making a commitment to take action. When you hit the stage of change where you are ready to take action, you start to think about things you can do to make your situation better.

Keep in mind, **it is common to move back and forth between the stages of change**. Moving backwards doesn't mean you have failed. It might mean you are just re-structuring before moving forward again. The important thing is to not give up. **The goal is to make small changes over time.**

The 5 Food Groups



1. **Vegetables** - broccoli, spinach, carrots, peppers, squash, zucchini
2. **Fruits** - berries, apples, bananas, oranges, melons
3. **Grains** - bread, pasta, rice, cereal, tortillas
4. **Dairy** - milk, yogurt, cheese and nondairy milk alternatives, like almond milk
5. **Protein** - meat, fish, poultry, eggs, beans, nuts

Each food group is important because there are vitamins, minerals, protein, carbohydrates, fats and other nutrients found in each group that are not found in the other groups.

For example:

- Most fruits are high in vitamin C but are low in protein.
- Meat is high in protein but low in vitamin C.

By eating a variety of foods, your body gets a variety of nutrients. If you skip or only eat a few foods in a food group, you miss out on nutrients.

A note about vitamin and mineral supplements

Taking a vitamin supplement to avoid a nutrient deficiency is a little like an insurance policy.

For example, pregnant women cannot get enough iron during pregnancy from their food alone. For this reason, they should take a prenatal vitamin, so their iron doesn't get too low.

Vitamins and supplements are not meant to be the main source of where you get your nutrients. Your body absorbs nutrients better from food than from a supplement. If you could be healthy by just popping some daily vitamins, there would be little reason to eat healthy food. However, there are many differences between the nutrients in food and pills.

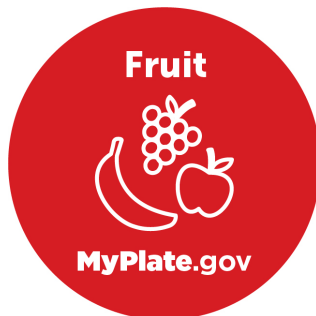
Food will always win!

What to eat



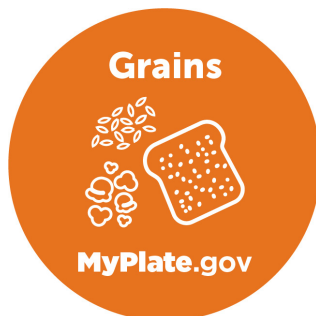
Make half your plate vegetables and fruits and vary your veggies

- Eat 2½ to 3 cups of vegetables a day.
- Buy canned vegetables labeled “reduced sodium,” “low sodium” or “no salt added” or frozen vegetables without sauces added.
- Vegetables can help increase your intake of fiber and potassium, which are often low in the American diet.
- Fiber from vegetables helps reduce blood cholesterol levels and may lower risk of heart disease.



Make half of your plate vegetables and fruits and focus on whole fruits

- Try to eat fruit at least 2 times a day.
- Choose whole fruits, not fruit juice.
- Fruit can be fresh, frozen or canned.
- If using canned fruit, drain and rinse off all liquid.



Make half of your grains whole grains

- Look for labels that say “100% whole grain” or “100% whole wheat” to get more nutrients.
- Use **whole grain** bread, tortillas, rice and pasta.
- Look for a whole grain as the first ingredient on the food label.



Move to low-fat or fat-free milk or yogurt

- Try to include a serving of dairy at 2 to 3 meals.
- Consider lactose-free milk, soy, almond or rice milk alternatives if you do not tolerate regular dairy.



Vary your protein foods

- Eat a variety of proteins, like meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, beans and nuts.
- Choose the leanest beef and pork you can find, and remove any visible fat.
- Remove skin off of poultry before eating. It is okay to leave it on while cooking.

Functional Foods

Sleep and Pain

As you've learned, eating a balanced diet each day can lead to improved health. Functional foods are foods that can have a positive effect on health beyond basic nutrition.

Foods that may help with sleep

- Foods rich in **magnesium**, like spinach, avocado, quinoa, bananas, nuts (almonds, cashews), seeds (hemp, pumpkin, flax), beans and lentils.
- Foods rich in **tryptophan**, like milk, yogurt, cottage cheese, salmon, turkey, edamame or pumpkin seeds.
- Foods rich in **vitamin B6**, such as animal proteins, like fish, chicken, turkey, pork, eggs and milk, along with whole grains and soy products, such as edamame or tofu.
- Foods rich in **fiber**, like brown rice, quinoa, barley and oats, as well as other fiber rich foods like legumes, vegetables and fruits.

Foods that may interfere with sleep

- **Afternoon caffeine**

It can take six hours for your body to process and eliminate just half of the caffeine you drink in one sitting. If you're drinking coffee to make it through the afternoon slump, it could be keeping you awake at night. Caffeine is also a stimulant that can also increase feelings of nervousness.

- **High-fat or spicy foods at night**

Large amounts of fat slows down digestion and can cause heartburn, leaving you feeling uncomfortable, which can interfere with sleep quality. Spicy foods also can be a trigger for indigestion or heartburn.

- **Alcohol at night**

While alcohol might fuel deep sleep in the beginning of the night, the second half of your slumber will likely be more interrupted and full of strange dreams. Alcohol consumption promotes waking up often and missing out on deep sleep cycles.

- **High-sugar foods at night**

Sugar digests rapidly in your system, causing quick and high spikes in your blood sugar. These blood sugar spikes could throw off some of your sleep hormones, leading to less restful sleep.

Foods that may help with pain

Foods and drinks that reduce inflammation can reduce chronic pain. Avoiding foods and drinks that cause inflammation can also help. Read, *Anti-Inflammatory Diet*, from your orientation paperwork for foods to choose and avoid, or visit go.osu.edu/pted4174 for a digital copy.

Barriers to Success

Why isn't it easier to make healthy changes? It may be:

- A lack of time to prepare healthy foods
- A tight budget
- A well-meaning spouse who shows his or her love by bringing home favorite sweet or salty junk foods

Whatever your barriers, think of solutions or strategies to address them.

Common barriers to healthy eating and some solutions

Barrier	Solution
I get hungry between meals and end up getting fast food or snacks at the convenience store.	Keep healthy snacks on hand, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual bags of popcorn • Fresh fruit • Peanut butter and jelly on whole wheat bread
I wake up and am not hungry for breakfast.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop late night eating, especially after dinner. • Start with small amounts and build up to a meal.
I eat a lot of junk food at night.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat a consistent meal pattern, such as 3 meals a day and a small bedtime snack, if needed.
I'm too tired to cook.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan meals ahead of time. • Cook larger portions and freeze extras for easy reheating.
I lack the energy to exercise like I should.	Aim for 30 minutes of exercise a day: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start small and break it into shorter segments throughout the day • Any continuous movement counts • Build endurance over time
My spouse brings home my favorite donuts at least once a week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many people do not know that they are a barrier. Tell people clearly what you need for them to help you.

What is a Healthy Eating Pattern?

A healthy eating pattern includes a variety of healthy foods from all 5 food groups. Remember, eating this way makes it easy to get the nutrients your brain and body needs to be healthy.

The main parts of a healthy eating pattern are:

- Eat from all 5 food groups: vegetables, fruits, grains, dairy and protein foods.
- Within each food group, choose foods with more nutrients, such as 100% whole wheat bread instead of white bread.
- Eat the right amount of food and calories your body needs for a healthy weight.
- Eat foods that improve your brain and overall body health to help prevent chronic diseases. This includes foods like whole fruits, vegetables, whole grains, healthy fats and lean proteins.

Healthy eating patterns by calories and food groups

Calories	1,200	1,400	1,600	1,800	2,000	2,200
Vegetables	1½ cups	1½ cups	2 cups	2½ cups	2½ cups	3 cups
Fruits	1 cup	1½ cups	1½ cups	1½ cups	2 cups	2 cups
Grains	4 ounces	5 ounces	5 ounces	6 ounces	6 ounces	7 ounces
Dairy	2½ cups	2½ cups	3 cups	3 cups	3 cups	3 cups
Protein foods	3 ounces	4 ounces	5 ounces	5 ounces	5.5 ounces	6 ounces

Eating patterns have a significant impact on your health. Diet is one of the most powerful tools you have to prevent disease. It can help prevent obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure and Type 2 diabetes.

This means what and how you eat can be life changing.

Cooking Methods

There are many ways to change your favorite recipes to make them lower in cholesterol, fat, sugar and calories. You can change the way you prepare foods by choosing these lower calorie and lower fat methods of cooking.



Baking

- Cover the container in the oven.
- This method works best with leaner meat.
- Add a fat free liquid, like water or broth, to help keep it moist.

Poaching

- Cook in a small amount of simmering water or broth.
- Fish, chicken and eggs poach well.
- Be careful not to leave foods in simmering liquids too long. Overcooking will leave these foods dry.

Steaming

- Arrange foods in a steamer and add a small amount of water.
- Steaming helps keep vitamins and minerals in the food.
- Vegetables and fish are good choices for steaming.
- You can also steam foods in the microwave in a covered dish.

Sautéing and Stir Frying

- Use a small amount of water (2 to 3 tablespoons) and stir often, adding water 1 tablespoon at a time.
- If food sticks to pan, use nonstick cookware.

Grilling and Broiling

- Meats, poultry, fish and vegetables can be grilled or broiled.
- Coat broiler or grill with vegetable cooking spray to prevent sticking.
- Remove as much fat as possible before cooking.
- For poultry with skin, keeping the skin on can help the meat retain moisture. Remove the skin before eating to reduce the fat.

Roasting

- Meats should be roasted in a preheated oven at 350 degrees to keep meat moist.
- Baste with stock or chicken or beef broth.

Solo vs. Social Changers

What is your “change” personality?

- **Solo changers** like to make changes by themselves and without anyone knowing about their efforts.
- **Social changers** like to share their goals with family, friends or co-workers. They tell people what they are trying to do and ask for support from others. For example, if they are trying to give up drinking soda, they might ask their family to stop buying soda or keep it out of sight, so it is not as tempting.

You are more likely to make successful changes when you have support from the people around you. But what if you have typically been a solo changer? How can you get support from others? Ask for it!

Ask for support

Tell your friends, family or others you trust about your goal and ask them to help support you. If you are not comfortable asking in person, consider sending a text, email or letter.

For example:

Dear _____,

In an attempt to improve my health, I am participating in a wellness program. This program will teach me the skills I will need to develop more positive lifestyle behaviors. As a part of this program, I will be setting weekly goals for myself. At times, I may need help from you. For example, I may need you to: _____

I hope that you will be able to provide the support I need to reach the goals I’m setting for myself. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

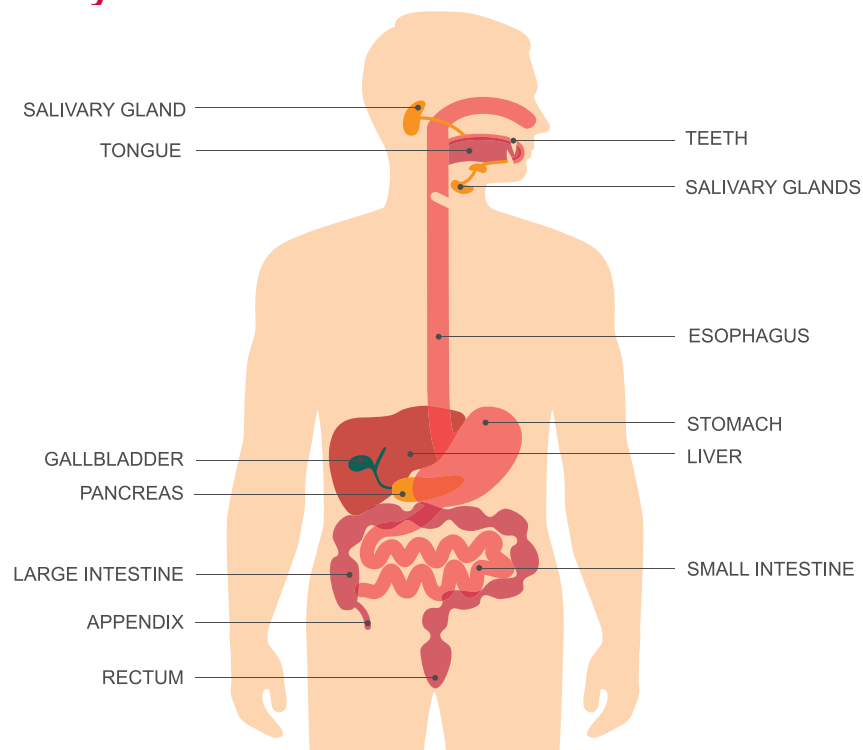
Social support from others can be very important when making changes, no matter how big or small. In Lesson 6, we’ll discuss helpful tips for “*How to Ask for Help*”.

How Nutrients Help Your Body Work

In lesson 3, you learned about eating a variety of foods from the 5 food groups. **Eat a variety of foods** over the course of the day or week to get the nutrients your body needs. For example, eating just apples and macaroni and cheese wouldn't be healthy. There would be many vitamins and minerals you would fall short in, and this could lead to health problems.

You also learned that nutrients are the parts of foods that help your body and mind work well. They include vitamins, minerals, proteins, carbohydrates, fats and water. **Eat more nutrient-rich foods for your health.** They help your brain think and work better too.

Your digestive system



Each part of your digestive system helps to move food and liquid through your gastrointestinal (GI) tract, break food and liquid into smaller parts, or both.

Once foods are broken into small enough parts, your body can absorb and move the nutrients to where they are needed. Your large intestine absorbs water, and the waste products of digestion become stool.

Your nerves and hormones work together to help control the digestive process. Signals flow within your GI tract, and back and forth from your GI track to your brain.

A typical day

Compare what Joe and Steve eat in a typical day for variety and nutrient-rich foods:

Joe's usual foods	Steve's usual foods
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 to 2 Pop-Tarts• 20 ounces Mountain Dew	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Egg sandwich on whole wheat bun• Banana• Tea with a little honey
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fast food hamburger, fries and soda• Little Debbie snack cake	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chicken salad with avocado mayo sandwich on 100% whole wheat bread with spinach leaves and tomato• Apple or orange slices• Iced tea with lemon, unsweetened
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 20 ounces Mountain Dew or Pepsi	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Container of yogurt• Water or coffee
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 Hot Pockets• Large glass of chocolate mlk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grilled fish, such as salmon• Brown rice• California blend vegetables• Low-fat milk or water
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Popcorn, chips, ice cream or cookies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Popcorn, watermelon or roasted almonds

Who eats mainly nutrient-rich foods? _____

Joe is missing out on a lot of nutrients. Can you guess a few? _____

Joe is also getting in a lot of sugar from his Mountain Dew habit and other sweets. Large amounts of sugar have bad effects on our health.

What are 3 nutrient-rich foods Steve eats?

Likely, Joe knows he should eat better. What are 1 to 2 things Joe could change to start eating more nutrient-rich foods? _____

How to Ask for Help

It can be hard asking for help. Sometimes we see asking for help as a sign of weakness, but most people need help at times. Asking for help can show your devotion to making changes. Be sure you ask someone who is in a position to actually provide support.

Helpful tips

1. Ask for help from those you trust will help you.

- This is someone who is willing to help you and doesn't have any hidden motives.
- If you feel bad about asking for help, remember, **you likely have many people who would love to help you make positive changes.**

2. Make the requests specific and clearly worded:

- **Specific** - includes the "what". For example: "I want to eat more fruits and vegetables."
- **Meaningful** - include the "why". For example: "I want to eat more fruits and vegetables to get healthier."
- **Action** - what you want the person to do. For example: "Can you buy more fruits and vegetables at the grocery?"
- **Time-bound** - when you need it done by. For example: "Can you buy the groceries by Sunday? I want to pack my lunches for the week and eat more fruits and vegetables to get healthier."



3. Compromise with the person you are asking to help you. If the person doesn't want to cook you a vegetable every night, can they cook double portions 3 to 4 times a week, so you have leftover vegetables to eat the other days?

4. Revise your goal as needed. If you aren't meeting your goal, and the person you asked isn't helping, see where you can make changes in order to reach the goal. Maybe the goal needs changed or maybe you need to ask someone else for help. **Don't give up!**

How to Read Food Labels

Food labels give us good information about the foods we eat. Many healthy foods, like fresh fruits and vegetables, do not have food labels, but most other foods do.

Nutrition Facts

- 1. Look for the Nutrition Facts on the food label.** The numbers on this illustration match the numbers in the Nutrition Facts section of this handout.
- 2. Serving Size:** The amount of food recommended to be eaten at one time. All of the following nutrition information is based on this serving size. You may eat more than one serving at a time. For instance, if you ate 2 servings, you would need to double the numbers listed.
- 3. Calories:** The average adult needs about 2,000 calories a day from food and beverages. Too many calories each day can lead to weight gain.
- 4. Fat:** Not all fat is created equal. There are 4 types of fat in our foods: saturated fat, trans fat, monounsaturated fat and polyunsaturated fat.
 - Saturated and trans fats are unhealthy.
 - Monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats found in olive and vegetables oils, nuts, seeds and avocados are healthy.
- 5. Cholesterol:** Cholesterol is found in animal products, such as cheese, fatty meat, milk and butter. Eating too many of these foods can increase your risk for heart disease.
- 6. Sodium:** Try limiting sodium intake to no more than 2,300 mg per day. Look for foods that have less than 300 mg of sodium per serving.

Nutrition Facts	
6 servings per container	
Serving size	1 cup (140g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	170
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 5mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 22g	8%
Dietary Fiber 2g	7%
Total Sugars 16g	
Includes 8g Added Sugars	16%
Protein 2g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 20mg	2%
Iron 1mg	6%
Potassium 240mg	6%

*The % Daily Value tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet 2000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Source: Adapted from U.S. Food and Drug Administration

- 7. Total Carbohydrates:** Carbohydrates are in foods like bread, pasta, potatoes, fruits and vegetables. Some people, like those with diabetes, may want to control the amount of carbohydrate that they eat.
- 8. Dietary Fiber:** Fiber is the bulk part of grains, beans, peas, fruits and vegetables. Fiber helps the body's digestive system work well and may help lower the risk of some cancers and heart disease. If you want to increase your fiber intake, look for foods with at least 3 grams of fiber per serving.
- 9. Added Sugar:** Some sugars are naturally occurring, like those in fruit, and others are added during the processing or packaging of foods. Too many of these "added sugars" can increase your risk for developing diabetes, heart disease, obesity and other health conditions. Aim for no more than about 30 to 55 grams per day.
- 10. Protein:** Protein can help to build muscle, regulate hormones and is involved in immune function. Most people should aim for about 60 to 100 grams of protein per day.
- 11. Vitamins and Minerals:** Most Americans are not meeting the recommended amount of these nutrients each day. Look for food products that are a good source of these nutrients. Your goal is to reach 100% of each for the day.
- 12. % Daily Value:** Daily values are the percentage of nutrients the product provides. For certain nutrients, like sodium and added sugar, aim for lower percentages. For other nutrients, like fiber, vitamins and minerals, aim for 100% a day.

Questions about this Nutrition Facts food label

1. How many grams of fiber are in this product?
Is this food a good source of fiber?
2. Does this food have very much sodium in it? What is the amount of sodium to try to stay under when looking at a food label?
3. This food serving, which is 1 cup, has 16 grams of total sugars. How much of that 16 grams is added sugar? Is this a high amount of added sugar?



Flavoring Your Food with Herbs and Spices

In cooking, it is easy to add flavor and boost nutrition. Herbs contain plant compounds that help your body fight inflammation. Try adding some of these spices to get flavor without using salt!

Spice	Taste	Use with
Allspice	Variety of spices, cloves, nutmeg and cinnamon in one	Variety of foods from marinades, to meats, to desserts.
Basil	Sweet and strong	Italian dishes, soups, vegetables and marinades
Bay leaf	Mild	Seafood, stews, most meats and vegetables
Caraway	Sweet and nutty	Breads, salads, cakes and marinades
Chili powder	Spicy and hot	Soups, vegetables, chili and spicy dishes
Cloves	Bittersweet	Fruits or as contrast in stews and spicy food
Dill	Mild and slightly sour	Most meats, vegetables and dips
Ginger	Strong and peppery	Cakes, meats, vegetables and Asian cuisine
Mint	Sweet, clean and refreshing	Fruit salads, rice pilafs and meat marinades. Can also use in place of basil for pesto.
Nutmeg	Warm and spicy	Baked goods, egg and cheese dishes
Oregano	Herby	Meats, pastas, soups and vegetables
Parsley	Mild pepper	Garnish in soups, salads and sauces
Rosemary	Strong and piney	Meats, stews and soups
Sage	Strong	Mostly with meats
Thyme	Lemony	Stuffing, stews and beans
Tarragon	Aromatic and strong	Sauces, salads and meat marinades

Nutrients We Do Not Get Enough Of

We have talked about eating foods that have a lot of vitamins and minerals, so our bodies can work well. Now let's learn about some other important parts of food that we need for good health. Most Americans do not get enough of these.

Fiber

Most people know that fiber helps with gastrointestinal (GI) regularity. It also does a whole lot more! There are billions of good bacteria in your intestines. They play an important role in your overall health and your brain health. These good bacteria are fed by fiber and help your brain make neurotransmitters like serotonin. Serotonin makes you feel good and calm.

Fiber is found in plant foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains and beans.

Calcium

This mineral is needed for strong bones, including teeth. It also is important for muscle contraction.

Calcium is found in dairy products, like low-fat milk and yogurt, **or calcium-fortified products**, like almond or soy milk.

Potassium

This electrolyte is important for muscle function and helps keep our blood pressure in a normal range.

Potassium is found in fruits, vegetables, beans and nuts.

Vitamin D

This vitamin is called the sunshine vitamin because your body can make it from sun exposure. Most people don't make enough because we are inside most of the year. It is needed for many things like your immune system, muscle function and healthy bones.

Vitamin D is found in salmon and other fatty fish, milk and yogurt, eggs, fortified foods or by taking a supplement of about 2,000 international units a day.

Functional Foods

Calm and Relaxation

Functional foods are foods that can have a positive effect on health beyond basic nutrition. These nutrients in foods promote feelings of calm and relaxation.

Antioxidants	Apples, berries, citrus fruits, garlic, onions and green tea
Fiber	Whole grains, fruits and vegetables
Magnesium	Pumpkin seeds and spinach
Omega-3 Fats	Salmon, walnuts and flaxseed
Probiotics	Fermented foods like sauerkraut, kefir and yogurt




Shifting to a Healthier Eating Pattern

Shifting to a healthier eating pattern is just that — shifting from a less healthy food to a healthier food. You swap out a food or ingredient for a healthier option.

- You may adapt your eating pattern to your needs and lifestyle.
- You can add many of the foods you enjoy.
- Your eating pattern can reflect your traditions, culture and budget.

Easy shift ideas

Shift FROM:		Shift TO:
Sugary soda with meals		Sparkling water with lemon or lime
Cream-based pasta sauce		Tomato-based sauce with extra veggies
Potato chips as a snack		Lightly salted nuts or a rice cake
Butter on vegetables		Olive oil on vegetables
Red meat for dinner		Baked or grilled fish 1 to 2 times per week
Skipping breakfast		A banana with peanut butter

How shifts help you

- You don't have to completely change your eating pattern.
- You can make small changes or shifts to familiar foods.
- Shifts are easier to stick with over time.
- Little shifts that you make every day will over time add up to a healthier eating pattern.

You do not have to completely change how you eat! Focus on making small shifts towards healthier eating.

What is the Big Deal about Beverages?

Sugar, Alcohol, Caffeine and Brain Health

Beverages are not always the focus of healthy eating. However, they are an important part of your eating pattern. Beverages make up almost 20% of total calorie intake in the U.S. **If you are trying to lose or maintain your weight, beverages are a major source of calories.**

Sugar

Sugar sweetened beverages make up 35% of calories from the beverage category. This means people are drinking a lot of their calories, and they are coming from sugar. Beverages high in sugar include soda, sweet tea, sports drinks, fruit drinks, lemonade and coffee drinks.

Why is it unhealthy to drink a lot of sugar?

Sugar provides no nutrients, only empty calories. Frequent sugar intake, through food and beverages, also causes inflammation in the body and the brain. Inflammation negatively affects our health and leads to chronic health problems like being overweight and obesity.

Did you know?

The average American gets 270 calories of added sugar each day. That's about 17 teaspoons of sugar each day. Over a year, that is 6,205 teaspoons or over 56 pounds of sugar!

As a part of a healthy diet, it is recommended to limit sugar to:

- Men: 9 teaspoons or less a day
- Women: 6 teaspoons or less a day



Make the shift to a healthier eating pattern

Sugar tastes good and goes down easily, but for better health make the shift to replace the sugar sweetened drinks in your diet with plain water or unsweetened beverages.

- Drink water for most of your liquids.
- Add a lemon or lime to your water or switch to unsweetened sparkling water if you like carbonated beverages.
- Low-fat plain milk or milk substitutes are also good choices and provide calcium.
- Unsweetened tea and coffee are also good choices in moderation.

What beverages do you drink? _____

What is a healthy shift for beverages you could make? _____

Alcohol

Alcohol is:

- A depressant, meaning it can cause you to feel depressed and sad.
- An appetite stimulant, so it makes you more hungry than usual after you drink it. For this reason, drinking alcohol can cause weight gain. Not only are there empty calories in alcohol, but drinking also makes you hungrier.

Alcohol also:

- Lowers your body's ability to burn fat as energy.
- Negatively affects brain function:
 - At first, alcohol increases the neurotransmitter dopamine, which makes a person feel good.
 - But over time, alcohol increases loss of memory and coordination, and lowers your ability to grow new brain cells.
- Increases the risk for several different types of cancer and liver disease.

People who are recovering from any brain condition should completely avoid alcohol. People who do not drink alcohol should not start.

Caffeine: Is it good or bad?

Caffeine is a stimulant. It is naturally found in some plant foods like tea leaves, coffee beans and cocoa beans. It is also added to some beverages, like cola and energy drinks. It is not a nutrient.

We know nutrients like vitamins and minerals are good for us. What about caffeine?

- For most people, caffeine in moderation appears safe.
- Caffeine affects people differently, so it depends on how you react to it.

What is a moderate caffeine amount?

- In general, **1 to 2 large cups of coffee a day or 3 to 4 cups of tea** that have up to 400 milligrams of caffeine a day appear safe for most people.
- Some groups, like children and pregnant women, should consume less.

Most of the caffeine we take in is in beverages. Some beverages, like coffee and tea, have compounds in them that are good for us. Other beverages, like colas and energy drinks, have a lot of added sugar, artificial colors and flavors that are not good for us. Of course, tea and coffee drinks can also have a lot of added sugar, so **choose ones that are plain or low calorie.**

See the chart on the next page for common drinks with caffeine and their milligrams of caffeine per serving.

Drink	Serving size	Caffeine in milligrams (mg)
Dunkin' Donuts Coffee with Espresso Shot	20 ounces	398
Starbucks Coffee, Blonde Roast	16 ounces	360
Dunkin' Donuts Coffee	14 ounces	210
Maxwell House Regular Ground Coffee	1 tablespoon makes 6 ounces	45-100
Maxwell House Lite Ground Coffee	1 tablespoon makes 6 ounces	25-50
Green tea, brewed	8 ounces	28-38
Lipton Lemon Iced Tea	16.9 ounces	21
Arizona Iced Tea, Black	8 ounces	15
Snapple Lemon Tea	16 ounces	37
Mountain Dew, diet or regular	20 ounces	91
Diet Coke	20 ounces	76
Monster Energy	16 ounces	160
5-hour Energy	2 ounces	200

Information in chart retrieved from: Center for Science in the Public Interest. (n.d.). Caffeine Chart. Retrieved December 17, 2020, from <https://www.cspinet.org/eating-healthy/ingredients-of-concern/caffeine-chart>

Foods to Limit

We've gone over how important it is to eat healthy foods. Now, we need to explain why limiting unhealthy foods is important for brain health too. Most Americans eat too much sugar, saturated fat and sodium (salt).

Take a look at the amount of each of these food parts Americans are eating:

Food part	% of Americans eating too much	% of Americans eating recommended amount
Added sugar	70	30
Saturated fat	70	30
Sodium (salt)	90	10

Do these numbers really matter?

The answer is YES. They matter a lot. Research and decades of examining how food affects our body and brain, shows us that eating large amounts of added sugars, saturated fat and sodium raises the risk of many health problems. Also, by eating foods that have a lot of these ingredients in them, we are eating less of the healthier foods.

Let's take a look back at Joe and Steve from lesson 5. Joe eats mostly highly processed foods with few nutrients. Steve, on the other hand, eats foods high in many nutrients.

Joe's lunch	Steve's lunch
Fast food cheeseburger	Chicken salad with avocado mayo with spinach and tomato
Fries	Whole grain bread
Soda	Apple or orange slices
Little Debbie snack cake	Iced tea with lemon, unsweetened

Who do you think will have better brain and body function?

The Lowdown on Fats

The fats in foods you eat serve an important function in your body. They are needed for many parts of your body to function well.

There are healthy fats and unhealthy fats:

- If you do not get enough healthy fats in your diet, your body won't work as well, especially your brain.
- If you eat too many unhealthy fats, you are more likely to have serious health problems.

Healthy fats

- Vegetable oils, such as olive, canola, avocado and grapeseed oils
- Avocado
- Nuts
- Seeds
- Olives
- Fish, which contain omega-3 fats, like salmon



Benefits

- May lower your bad cholesterol levels and your risk of heart disease and stroke.
- Provides essential fats your body can't make itself.

Unhealthy fats

- Solid fats, such as butter, lard, bacon grease and coconut oil
- Fatty red meats, such as steak, ribs and T-bone
- Full fat dairy products, such as whole milk, cheese, ice cream and heavy cream
- Poultry with skin
- Stick margarine or shortening, which contains trans fat
- Palm or palm kernel oil, which is found in many baked goods and snack foods



Risks

- May raise bad cholesterol levels and lower good cholesterol levels.
- May increase risk of heart disease, stroke and Type 2 Diabetes.

Food Records

Why do a food journal?

People who keep daily food records lose twice as much weight as those who did not. Why is this?

- Journaling helps you move from mindless to mindful practices
- Helps you identify the changes you need to make
- Shows that you are serious about wanting to change
- Moves you toward the concept of planning, where you think before you eat
- You will eat less or make different choices when you know that it is being recorded in a journal

Getting started

Start with recording 3 or 4 days in a row. Try to make 1 day a weekend day. Write down all foods and beverages as you consume them. It's easy to forget extra calories from unplanned snacks or beverages with calories.

Include in your record:

- What you ate or drank and the amount
- Time of day – meal spacing is very important
- Your mood
- Who you were with
- What activities you were doing

Options for journaling

- Paper journal
- Computer-based program or spreadsheet
- Mobile device apps, such as My Plate Calorie Counter. This app has a large database of foods, is based on the USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans, offers food suggestions based on your dietary preferences and has meal plans.



Foods to Limit: Where Are They?

In lesson 9, we talked about the parts of food most Americans eat too much of:

- Added sugar
- Saturated fat
- Sodium (salt)

Let's take a closer look at where these foods are and what you might replace them with. Keep in mind that many of the foods that are high in added sugar, saturated fat and sodium are highly processed as convenience foods and fast food or restaurant foods.

Food part	Where commonly found	Replace with or limit
Added sugar	Beverages, such as soda, sweet tea, fruit-flavored drinks, sports drinks, etc.	Water (plain or sparkling), low-fat milk, unsweetened tea or coffee
	Snacks and sweets, such as cookies, cakes, candy, ice cream, brownies, doughnuts, syrups, jam and jelly	Fruit, lower sugar sweets like graham crackers, lower sugar Greek yogurt Use less jam and jelly
Saturated fat	Burgers and sandwiches	Make your own with lower fat ingredients
	Pizza	Eat less often, leave off fatty meats and add veggies
	Higher fat protein foods, like beef, pork, chicken with skin	Choose more seafood, lean beef and pork, remove skin from poultry
	Cheese	Use lower fat versions, use less cheese or eat less often
Sodium (salt)	Burgers and sandwiches	Make your own with lower sodium ingredients (meat, bread)
	Pizza	Eat less often, leave off salty meats
	Processed meats and lunch meats	Bake your own meat for sandwiches
	Pasts and rice dishes	Use lower sodium ingredients
	Soup	User lower sodium broth and other ingredients

Thinking back to our food shifts, what is one food shift you could make in each category?

	Shift FROM:	Shift TO:
Added sugar		
Saturated fat		
Sodium (salt)		

Remember, you do not have to give up all of your favorite foods that are high in added sugar, saturated fat or sodium. It is more about shifting from eating them often to eating them less often and in smaller quantities AND adding in healthier options.



Recipe Substitutions

Instead of:	Use:
Whole and 2% milk	Fat free or 1% milk
Sweetened condensed milk	Fat free sweetened condensed milk
Evaporated milk	Fat free evaporated milk
Heavy cream	Fat free evaporated milk
Light cream	Fat free evaporated milk
Whipped topping	Fat free non-dairy whipped topping
Butter or margarine	Light or fat free tub margarine
Shortening or lard	Light or fat free tub margarine
Mayonnaise	Light or fat free mayonnaise
Sour cream	Plain low fat yogurt, fat free sour cream
Cream cheese	Reduced fat or fat free cream cheese
High fat cheese	Reduced fat or fat free cheese
1 egg	2 egg whites or ¼ cup egg substitute
Fat or oil for greasing cookware	Non-stick cooking spray
1 ounce of baking chocolate	3 tablespoons of cocoa powder and 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil
Ground beef	Ground skinless turkey or leaner cut of beef
Sausage	Sausage substitute, soy-based
Bacon	Canadian bacon
Regular broth or bouillon	Low-sodium broth or bouillon
Oil in baked goods	Equal parts of applesauce or fruit puree

Mindful Eating

Food is a needed and often enjoyable part of life. However, you may not always eat because you are hungry. You may eat when you are bored, stressed, sad or simply because you enjoy eating. Understanding **why** you eat is just as important as **what** and **how much** you eat. Learning to eat mindfully will help you avoid extreme hunger and overeating.

Hunger scale

Listen to your body's cues for hunger and fullness. Use the hunger scale to help you learn to **eat when you feel slightly hungry (level 4) and stop when you are satisfied (level 6)**. Eating in this zone is known as mindful eating. **Key decision points exist at levels 3 and 7**. Waiting to eat past level 3 puts you at risk for overeating and making poor food choices. Eating beyond level 7 will cause you to feel tired and uncomfortable and may lead to weight gain.

	1	Beyond Hungry	I have no energy. I may feel faint, irritable and eat whatever food is available.
	2	Famished	My energy level is decreasing, and I am preoccupied with hunger.
Key Decision Point	3	Hungry	I have a strong urge to eat.
Mindful Eating Zone	4	Slightly Hungry	I am beginning to think about food and feel a light urge to eat.
	5	Neutral	I have enough energy to perform tasks and feel neither hungry nor full.
	6	Satisfied	I am aware of the food in my stomach and feel entirely satisfied.
Key Decision Point	7	Full	I am full to the point that taking any more bites will cause discomfort.
	8	Uncomfortable	I feel uncomfortable. Eating more food will intensify my discomfort.
	9	Stuffed	I feel heavy, tired and bloated.
	10	Beyond Full	I have discomfort and pain. My fullness affects my ability to work and be physically active.

10 tips to avoid extreme hunger and overeating

1. **Think about why you are eating.** Are you eating because you are hungry? Or are you eating to soothe your emotions or to experience taste?
2. **Use the hunger scale to help you decide when to eat and when to stop eating.**
3. **Wait 20 minutes before eating a second helping or dessert.** This gives your stomach time to tell your brain that it is full.
4. **Distract yourself when you want to eat for emotional reasons.** Try one of the 30 tips below.
5. **Set limits for eating when you want to taste food.** Decide on a limited portion and enjoy the experience. Realize that the second portion will not taste any better than the first one. You may also decide to take the food to-go and wait to eat it when you are hungry.
6. **Eat breakfast every day.** Eat breakfast at about the same time every day to create a healthy eating pattern and avoid extreme hunger by mid-morning.
7. **Eat every 4 to 5 hours.** Plan for snacks if meals are more than 4 hours apart to avoid extreme hunger. Have healthy snacks on hand in case meals are delayed and to avoid temptation.
8. **Order half-portions at restaurants, ask the waiter to put half your meal in a to-go container, or share an entrée with a friend.**
9. **Drink at least 8 (8-ounce) glasses of water a day.** Drink water with and in between meals. This habit is good for your body and prevents you from confusing thirst with hunger.
10. **Focus on the food you are eating.** Enjoy the food and eat slowly. Do not eat while watching TV, reading, doing homework or surfing the internet as this may cause you to eat more food than your body needs.

30 things to do instead of eating

1. Drink a glass of water.
2. Go for a walk.
3. Chew gum.
4. Do a puzzle, crossword puzzle, or other mind game.
5. Go to the gym.
6. Read a book.
7. Call a friend or family member.
8. Commit to spending time on a hobby.
9. Clean a room in your house.
10. Make something, such as a craft or crocheted blanket.
11. Listen to music or a podcast.
12. Do your laundry.
13. Play a game on your phone, such as solitaire.
14. Start a garden or pot some plants.
15. Watch a favorite movie or TV show.
16. Walk your dog.
17. Take a nap.
18. Get out of the house, such as go to the park or the mall.
19. Do jumping jacks or run in place to get moving.
20. Use an adult coloring book.
21. Learn a new skill.
22. Plan a family or friend night.
23. Run errands.
24. Paint or draw.
25. Brush your teeth.
26. Go to the library.
27. Read the newspaper.
28. Wash your car.
29. Organize something, such as your closet or a box of photos.
30. Take a class to learn something new.

Shopping on a Budget

It may seem easier to run through the drive-through and pick up a quick lunch or dinner. It may also seem cheaper since that dollar menu is only a buck! But these items add up over time, and it has been proven that you can cook at home cheaper and healthier.

Here are some tips for shopping and eating on a budget.

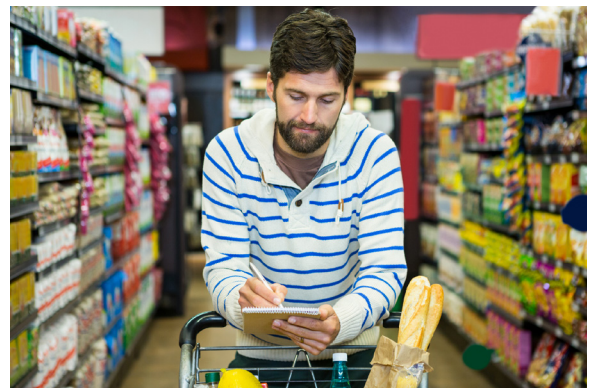


Planning your meals and snacks

- Plan your meals and snacks for the week to save money and cut down on waste. Even if you don't use recipes to plan your meals, you can plan what you will eat through the week.
- Be realistic and consider your schedule. Don't plan to cook every night if you barely have time now to cook even once or twice a week.
- Cook once, eat twice. Use leftovers! This is cheaper and saves time.
- Use your list of weekly meals to help create your grocery list.
- Don't forget to include healthy snacks like fruits, vegetables and nuts for snacking.
- Add foods to your weekly list as you run out of them.

Shopping for food

- Buy "in season" fruits and vegetables as they are cheaper.
- Try canned or frozen fruits and vegetables. Choose low sodium versions.
- Buy in bulk when healthy foods you like are on sale.
- Buy plain, unflavored whole grains instead of pre-packaged and pre-flavored options, such as oatmeal, rice, quinoa, bulgur, couscous and whole wheat pasta.
- Keep your whole wheat bread in the fridge or freezer to extend its shelf life.
- Go meatless a few times a week, such as eating beans, peas, lentils, tofu, tempeh and eggs.
- For meat, buy the family-sized or value packs, and freeze what you don't use.
- For fish, try buying canned tuna, salmon or sardines.
- Eggs are low cost and easy to prepare.

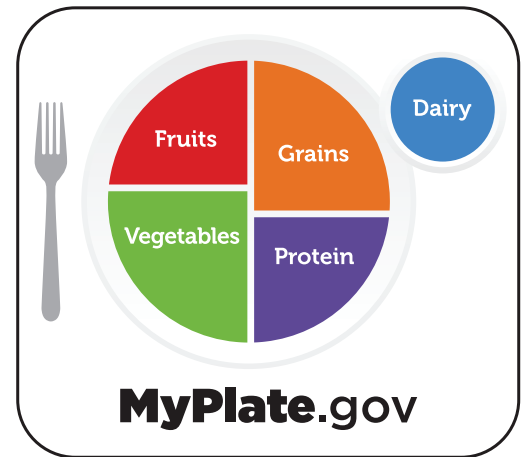


Putting It All Together

What It Looks Like in Real Life

You have learned a lot about nutrition and how to make healthier food choices. Let's put it all together and take a look at some real life examples.

One tool that is easy to visualize when making healthy changes to how you eat is MyPlate. MyPlate took the place of the food guide pyramid in 2011. MyPlate gives people a good idea of how to eat with just one picture.



As you can see, fruits and vegetables should be about half of your plate and the other half should be split between a grain or starch and protein. Add a serving of dairy like low-fat milk or yogurt, or just drink water or unsweetened tea or coffee to finish off the meal to make it complete.

MyPlate real food examples

Breakfast

- How many food groups are offered in this meal?
- What is the whole grain shown in the meal?
- Is this meal high or low in saturated fat?



Lunch

- How many food groups are offered in this meal?
- Would you eat this meal? Why or why not?



Dinner

- There is a very nutrient rich vegetable in this meal. Do you know why?
- What could you add to get all 5 food groups in at this meal?



Have you ever gone grocery shopping planning to pick healthier foods only to get there and be overwhelmed by all the choices? We've all been there (even dietitians can get overwhelmed at times!).

Much of the food industry that makes highly processed foods tries to keep consumers confused. They add claims to their foods, like they are "all natural", that don't really mean anything.

You now have the knowledge to look at something and tell if it is good for you or not. The goal is to pick foods that are:

- Minimally processed and closer to their natural state. For example, choose a baked potato over potato chips.
- High in nutrients, like vitamins and minerals, to help your body work well. For example, choose foods like dark leafy greens, lean meats and healthy fats from vegetables and nuts.
- High in fiber, plant foods that also contain many other nutrients. For example, choose whole grains, beans, fruits and vegetables.
- Balance healthy foods with less healthy foods. For example, eat mostly healthy foods with smaller amounts of less healthy foods.

What will make you feel fuller?



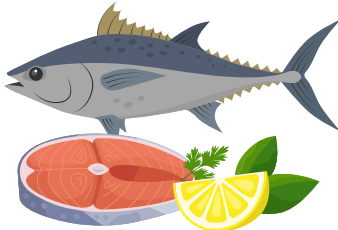
This is the end of our program. We hoped you enjoyed your time learning about healthy eating for your brain and body. The image on the next page recaps the healthy eating patterns we have discussed throughout this program.

Remember, changing or making new healthy eating and exercise habits is not always easy. It takes time and practice. If you don't succeed at first, go back and try a different way to find what works for you.

Eat healthy foods for a healthy brain



Seaweed and Shellfish



Oily fish



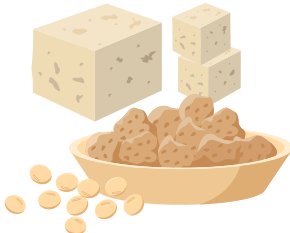
Turmeric



Olive and Coconut oil



Different nuts



Soy Products



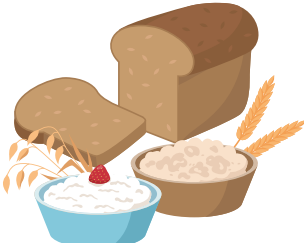
Fruits and Berries



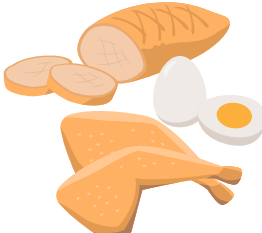
Vegetables



Coffee, Chocolate, Green tea



Whole grains



Eggs and Chicken



Pumpkin, Sunflower Seeds, Beans



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