

Nutrition: What You Should Know



The food and physical activity choices you make every day affect your health and how you feel today, tomorrow, and in the future.

Healthy is beautiful. Eating right and getting lots of physical activity can do wonders for your body. You feel more energetic – more confident in yourself. And when you feel good about yourself, it shows.

The ABCs of Nutrition:

To stay healthy, women should follow these **ABCs**:

Aim for fitness:

- Aim for healthy weight.
- Be physically active each day.

Build a healthy base:

- Let the Food Pyramid guide your food choices.
- Choose a variety of grains daily, especially whole grains.
- Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables daily.
- Keep food safe to eat.

Choose sensibly:

- Choose a diet that is low in saturated fat and cholesterol & moderate in total fat.
- Choose beverages and foods to moderate your intake of sugars.
- Choose and prepare food with less salt.
- If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.

Why a Healthy Diet:

Obesity in women is on the rise. Overall, about one third of all women are obese. As a woman's weight increases, so does her risk for serious health problems. Some of these problems include heart disease, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and some cancers. A woman's weight is affected by how much physical activity she does, her diet, and her genes. Having a healthy diet is one of the most important things you can do to help improve your overall health.

Please see reverse

Mix Up Your Choices within Each Food Group:

Know the limits on fats, salt, and sugars. Read the Nutrition Facts label on foods. Look for foods low in saturated fats and trans fats. Choose and prepare foods and beverages with little salt (sodium) and/or added sugars (caloric sweeteners).

Go lean with protein. Choose lean meats and poultry. Bake it, broil it, or grill it. Vary your protein choices with more fish, beans, peas, nuts, and seeds.

Focus on fruits. Eat a variety of fruits - whether fresh, frozen, canned, or dried - rather than fruit juice for most of your fruit choices. For a 2,000-calorie diet, you will need 2 cups of fruit each day (for example, 1 small banana, 1 large orange, and ¼ cup of dried apricots or peaches).

Vary your veggies. Eat more dark green vegetables such as broccoli, kale, and other dark leafy greens; orange veggies, such as carrots, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, and winter squash; and beans and peas, such as pinto beans, kidney beans, black beans, garbanzo beans, split peas, and lentils.

Make half your grains whole. Eat at least 3 ounces of whole-grain cereals, breads, crackers, rice, or pasta every day. One ounce is about 1 slice of bread, 1 cup of breakfast cereal, or ½ cup of cooked rice or pasta. Look to see that grains such as wheat, rice, oats, or corn are referred to as “whole” in the list of ingredients.

Get your calcium-rich foods. Get 3 cups of lowfat or fat-free milk or an equivalent amount of lowfat yogurt and/or lowfat cheese (1 ½ ounces of cheese equals 1 cup of milk) every day. For kids aged 2 to 8, it’s 2 cups of milk. If you don’t or can’t consume milk, choose lactose-free milk products and/or calcium-fortified foods and beverages.

Additional Resources:

U.S. Department of Agriculture

www.nutrition.gov

5 A Day Program

www.5aday.gov

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension

www.extension.unl.edu

For More Information:

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www.hhss.ne.gov/womenshealth