

A Harvard Medical School Special Health Report

The Harvard Medical School 6-Week Plan for Healthy Eating



In this report:

Week-by-week
action plan

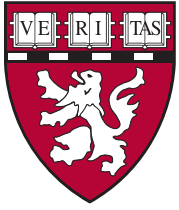
Setting goals
for success

Easy fixes for
healthier eating

Smart supermarket
choices

Weight control tips

14 delicious recipes



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**THE HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL
6-WEEK PLAN FOR HEALTHY EATING
SPECIAL HEALTH REPORT**

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617-432-1485 Fax: 617-432-4719

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ISBN 978-1-935555-61-2

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Harvard Health Publications
HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL

Trusted advice for a healthier life

Dear Reader,

Every day, you make dozens of decisions about what to eat. Will you cook at home or eat out? Will you snack from a vending machine or carry a healthy snack in your pocket? Making good decisions about what to eat is essential to lasting lifestyle change. Putting those choices into practice day in and day out is really the backbone of nutrition.

This can be challenging. There have never been so many options about what to eat. It's no longer necessary to plan, shop, and cook to produce a meal. Cheap prepared foods are everywhere, from fast-food restaurants to the frozen entrée cases at millions of chain stores. Americans now eat 77% of our calories away from home.

That's not a good thing, because if you don't prepare your own food, you don't control what you eat. Eating out typically means you eat more calories, saturated fat, alcohol, added sugars, and sodium, and fewer fruits and vegetables. That's because food manufacturers know that these ingredients tickle our taste buds, trigger our cravings, and keep us coming back for more.

Yet—and here's the good news—making healthy choices among the buffet of possibilities has never been easier, because we know so much more about what constitutes a healthy diet than we did even five years ago.

If you've read our companion report, *Healthy Eating: A guide to the new nutrition* (see back cover for information), you have a good idea of what a healthy diet is and how your diet affects your health. A healthy eating pattern emphasizes whole or minimally processed foods, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, fish, lean meat, and nuts. A consistent pattern of eating "real" foods like these lowers your risk of life-threatening diseases such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and some forms of cancer.

This report translates the latest nutrition science into practical steps. These pages will help you analyze your diet and establish goals for healthy meals and snacks. You'll also create a week-by-week plan that incorporates practical changes to help you make your goals a reality. In addition to these tools, we'll equip you with healthy recipes to have in your arsenal. Overall, you'll learn that it doesn't take a lot of work to assemble healthy meals and snacks. It does take a little planning. And that can go a long way on the road to healthier eating.

Enjoy the journey!

Sincerely,

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What is healthy eating?

The answer to this question has changed over the years, but it's no surprise that the latest nutritional science points toward a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, paired with healthy sources of protein and fats. A largely plant-based diet with protein from fish, skinless poultry, nuts, legumes, and small amounts of lean meats opens the door to good health. While lean fresh red meat can be eaten sparingly, processed or cured meats like ham, hot dogs, and corned beef are not on the healthy eating menu. Eating some fat is fine, so long as it is the healthy kind, mainly from vegetable oils. But keep portion size small, as all fat, even vegetable oil, is high in calories. Look for nonfat dairy products.

Equally important is to choose foods in forms that are as close as possible to the way they came from nature. A cherry, for example, is a better choice than a cherry fruit bar. Whole-grain bread trumps white bread, which is made from flour that is stripped of the outer casing of the wheat berry. The whole cherry and the whole-grain flour have their natural fiber and nutrients intact.

Although many processed foods are fortified with vitamins, much of their nutrients and fiber is first removed during processing. But those combinations of nutrients and fiber evolved over millions of years in nature just as humans developed and thrived, relying on those very combinations that nature created. Foods reformulated in factories can't begin to replicate the intricate nutrient matrixes that nature itself devised. In addition, processed foods are often infused with added salt, sugar, and fat. Avoiding these added ingredients is another important goal for those who want to eat for health.

Finally, keep your calories in check by carefully watching your portion size and exercising regularly to avoid unhealthy weight gain. Eating healthy, being physically active, and watching your weight are three of the most powerful things you can do to reduce your overall risk of major diseases—from cancer and diabetes to heart disease and osteoporosis.

Practical advice for healthy eating

You can simplify the process of healthy eating this way: Eat more plant-based foods, fewer animal-based foods, and only as much food as your body needs. Here are some ways to do this:

Eat more unprocessed or minimally processed foods.



By doing so, you'll naturally consume foods that have the amounts and combinations of fiber and nutrients that nature intended. Many factory-made foods, in contrast, are stripped of natural fiber and nutrients and filled with ingredients made to stimulate appetite and keep you eating more. Processed meats, in particular, are linked with heart disease and cancer. Unprocessed foods have no added sugar, fat, or salt. Most also have more fiber.

Be adventurous.



To get a broader range of disease-fighting nutrients, think beyond whole-grain pasta and broccoli. Try new grains, vegetables, and fruits. Bulgur and quinoa are good grain alternatives. Novel kinds of beans, fruits, and vegetables abound. You can experiment with new recipes (see “Cooking kickoff: Recipes for success,” page 40) that rely less on meat and make use of different ingredients and herbs and spices for flavor sources.

Mix it up.



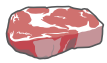
A good rule of thumb for each day is to try to get three servings of fruit, three to four servings of vegetables, some lean protein, some whole grains, healthy oils, some nonfat or low-fat dairy, and a serving of nuts or legumes. At each meal, look at your plate: about one-half should be fruits and vegetables, one-quarter lean proteins (fish, poultry, beans, or tofu) and one-quarter whole grains.

Drink enough liquids.



Because many foods contain water, most people get sufficient liquid each day without making a special effort. But it can be helpful throughout the day to drink water or another no-calorie liquid as an alternative to snacking or to wash down meals. Plus, as you increase your fiber content with whole-grain foods, water helps ferry it smoothly through your digestive tract and protects you from constipation. Drinking 4 to 6 cups of water a day is a reasonable and healthful goal.

Keep protein portions small.



For proteins like meat and chicken, 3 ounces for lunch and slightly more for dinner is a good goal. Keep in mind that 4 ounces of meat is the size of a deck of cards. (For more on lunch and dinner, see “Week 3: Healthy up your lunch,” page 21, and “Week 4: Make dinner a winner,” page 26).

Aim for at least two servings of fish each week.



However, large, predatory deep ocean fish (such as swordfish, shark, king mackerel, and bluefin tuna) should be avoided because of their higher mercury content.

Avoid impulse eating.

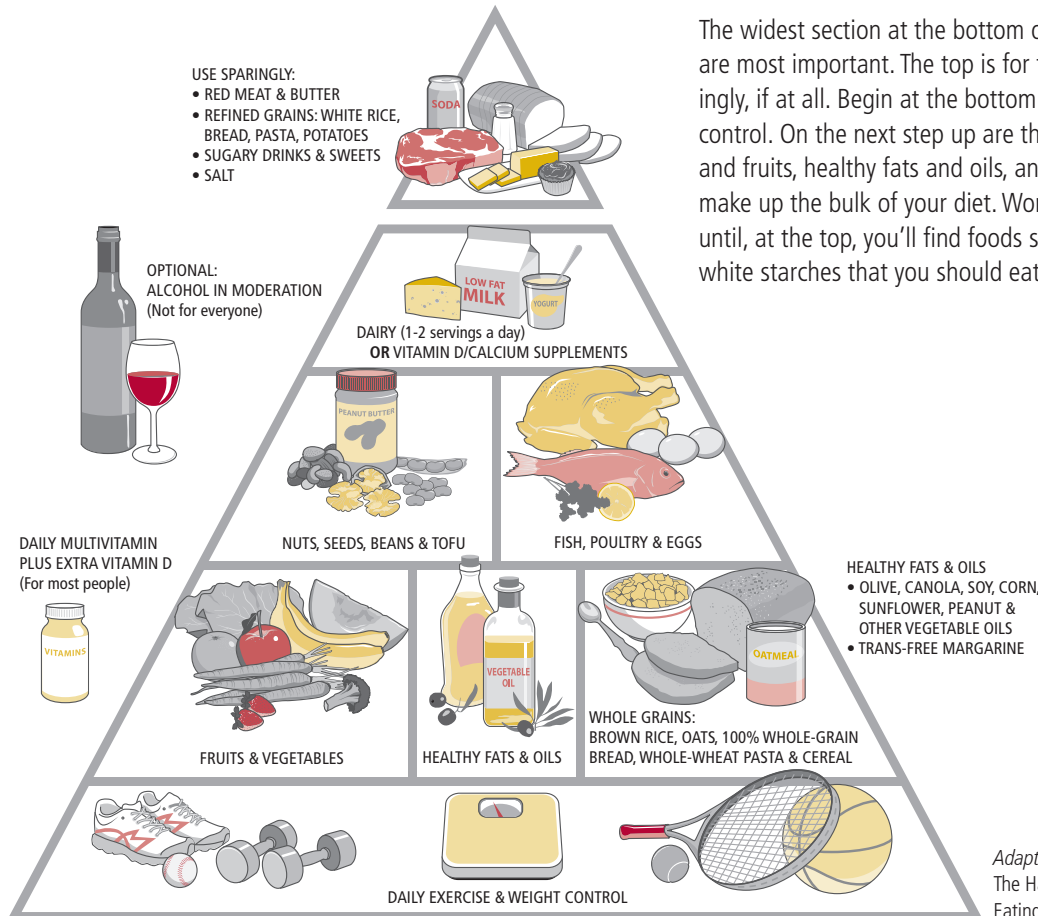


If you snack, plan ahead for healthy snacks. Avoid sugary drinks and their empty calories. (See “Week 5: Make sense of snacks,” page 32.)

Harvard’s Healthy Eating Pyramid

To help you eat healthier, faculty members at the Harvard School of Public Health created the Healthy Eating Pyramid (see Figure 1). It resembles the USDA pyramid, first developed in 1992, in shape only. The Harvard Healthy Eating Pyramid encompasses the wealth of

Figure 1 The Healthy Eating Pyramid



The widest section at the bottom of this pyramid is for things that are most important. The top is for foods to be eaten only sparingly, if at all. Begin at the bottom with daily exercise and weight control. On the next step up are the healthiest foods: vegetables and fruits, healthy fats and oils, and whole grains. These should make up the bulk of your diet. Work your way up the pyramid until, at the top, you’ll find foods such as red meat, butter, and white starches that you should eat rarely, if at all.

Adapted from Eat, Drink, and Be Healthy: The Harvard Medical School Guide to Healthy Eating, by Walter Willett, M.D. and P.J. Skerrett.

nutrition research conducted in recent years. Each level up the pyramid is smaller than the one below to suggest you eat less of each category as you climb the pyramid.

The largest part, the foundation, consists of daily exercise and weight control. That's because, to be truly healthy, it's important to maintain a normal weight and stay physically active.

Step up to the second level to find the healthiest foods: good sources of carbohydrates (fruits, vegetables, and whole grains), healthy kinds of fat (vegetable oils), and healthy grains (whole-grain breads and cereals).

The next rung has two categories: one for nuts, seeds, and beans, and another for fish, poultry, and eggs. This reflects findings that some forms of protein are healthier than others. You'll notice that high-fat animal foods don't appear here.

The next level contains foods to be eaten less often: dairy products. Choose nonfat and low-fat versions when you do eat them, and steer clear of full-fat milk, butter, and cheeses.

At the top are the foods you should eat sparingly, if at all: red meats (particularly processed meats), animal fat (butter, lard), trans fats, white starches, and sugar.

Keep this pyramid handy. People who eat according to these guidelines reduce their risk of several forms of life-threatening disease. Research following the diets of more than 100,000 health professionals found, for example, that men whose diets most closely followed the Healthy Eating Pyramid lowered their overall risk of major diseases by 20% over eight to 12 years, compared with men whose diets scored lowest on the healthy eating recommendations. Women in the study who followed the Healthy Eating Pyramid lowered their overall risk by 11% compared with those who scored lowest. The big wins came with cardiovascular disease. Both men and women who most closely followed the recommendations cut their risk of heart disease by one-third or more. Healthy diet and lifestyle lowered the risk of heart attacks even in people who were taking medications for high cholesterol or high blood pressure, showing that good nutrition has its own benefits independent of these medications.

As nutrition researchers turn up more information over time, the Healthy Eating Pyramid will

change to reflect important new evidence. And it's not the only pyramid. If you'd like to check out some other healthy eating pyramids adapted to Mediterranean, Latin American, Asian, and vegetarian diets, go to the Web site for Oldways, the respected nutrition think tank, at www.oldwayspt.org.

New Dietary Guidelines for Americans

It's the law. Every five years, the U.S. government must update its nutrition guidance for Americans. The most recent version, the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, 2010, from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, distills the latest nutritional research into a set of practical guidelines.

To produce these guidelines, a committee of scientists sifts through reams of nutritional research, debates the tough questions, evaluates and makes recommendations to the government. The latest guidelines have two main messages: Maintain a healthy weight and eat mainly foods with lots of vitamins and minerals. Turn those ideas around and you get: Stay slim and don't eat junk food. Well, we all know that, but it's easier said than done.

So these federal guidelines include recommendations in four categories. As you read, remember that "solid fats" refers mainly to animal fat and trans fat. "Added sugars" means foods with lots of sugar added to them, like sodas, sugary cereals, candy, and other sweets.

Balancing calories to manage weight

- Prevent and/or reduce overweight and obesity through improved eating and physical activity behaviors.
- Control total calorie intake to manage body weight. For people who are overweight or obese, this means consuming fewer calories from foods and beverages.
- Increase physical activity and reduce time spent in sedentary behaviors.
- Maintain appropriate calorie balance during each stage of life—childhood, adolescence, adulthood, pregnancy and breastfeeding, and older age.

Foods and food components to reduce

- Reduce daily sodium intake to less than 2,300 milligrams (mg) and further reduce intake to 1,500 mg by people who are 51 and older and those of any age who are African American or have hypertension, diabetes, or chronic kidney disease. The 1,500 mg recommendation applies to about half of the U.S. population, including children and the majority of adults.
- Consume less than 10% of calories from saturated fatty acids (mainly from animal fat) by replacing them with monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fatty acids (mainly from vegetable oils).
- Consume less than 300 mg per day of dietary cholesterol (mainly found in animal-based foods).
- Keep trans fatty acid (trans fats) consumption as low as possible by limiting foods that contain synthetic sources of trans fats, such as partially hydrogenated oils, and by limiting other solid fats.
- Reduce the intake of calories from solid fats (mainly animal fat) and added sugars.
- Limit the consumption of foods that contain refined

grains (such as white flour and white rice), especially refined-grain foods that contain solid fats, added sugars, and sodium.

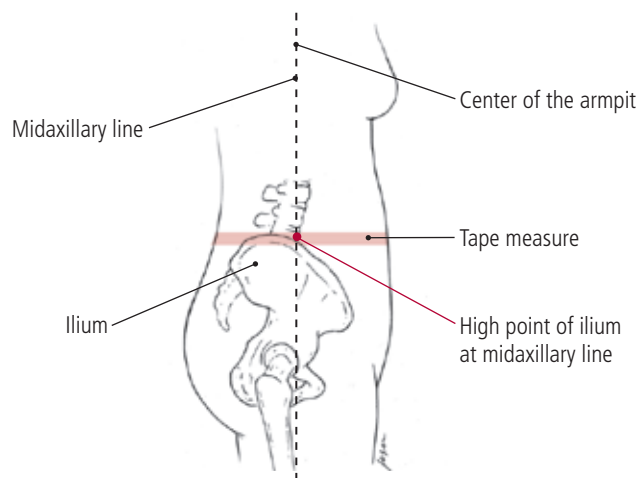
- If alcohol is consumed, it should be consumed in moderation—up to one drink per day for women and two drinks per day for men—and only by adults of legal drinking age.

Foods and nutrients to increase

Individuals should meet the following recommendations as part of a healthy eating pattern while staying within their calorie needs.

- Increase vegetable and fruit intake.
- Eat a variety of vegetables, especially dark green, red, and orange vegetables, and beans and peas.
- Consume at least half of all grains as whole grains. Increase whole-grain intake by replacing refined grains with whole grains.
- Increase intake of fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products, such as milk, yogurt, cheese, or fortified soy beverages.

Figure 2 Measuring the waist



Measure your waistline at the level of the navel—not at the narrowest part of the torso—and always measure in the same place. The bottom of the tape measure should be level with the top of the right hip bone (ilium). Don't suck in your gut or pull the tape tight enough to compress the area.

- Choose a variety of protein foods, including seafood, lean meat and poultry, eggs, beans and peas, soy products, and unsalted nuts and seeds.
- Increase the amount and variety of seafood by choosing seafood in place of some meat and poultry.
- Replace protein foods that are higher in solid fats with choices that are lower in solid fats and calories and/or are sources of oils.
- Use oils to replace solid fats where possible.
- Choose foods that provide more potassium, dietary fiber, calcium, and vitamin D, which are nutrients of concern in American diets. These foods include vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and milk and milk products.

Table 1 What's my BMI?

Health care providers use body mass index (BMI), an approximate measure of body fat based on a person's height and weight, to determine whether a person's weight falls within a healthy range. To determine your BMI, use the Web-based calculator at <http://nhlbisupport.com/bmi> or simply look it up below.

The BMI range associated with the lowest rate of illness and death is approximately 19 to 24 in men and 18 to 24 in women, so people with BMIs in this healthiest range are considered to be of normal weight. Higher BMIs are associated with progressively higher rates of illness and death. People with BMIs of 25 to 29 are considered overweight, and those with BMIs of 30 or higher are considered obese. Obesity has been further subdivided into class 1 (BMI of 30–34), class 2 (35–40), and class 3 (40 and above). Class 3 obesity is roughly equivalent to being 80 pounds overweight if you are a woman or 100 pounds if you are a man.

| HEIGHT | BODY WEIGHT IN POUNDS | | | | |
|------------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 4'10" | 91–115 | 119–138 | 143–162 | 167–186 | 191+ |
| 4'11" | 94–119 | 124–143 | 148–168 | 173–193 | 198+ |
| 5'0" | 97–123 | 128–148 | 153–174 | 179–199 | 204+ |
| 5'1" | 100–127 | 132–153 | 158–180 | 185–206 | 211+ |
| 5'2" | 104–131 | 136–158 | 164–186 | 191–213 | 218+ |
| 5'3" | 107–135 | 141–163 | 169–191 | 197–220 | 225+ |
| 5'4" | 110–140 | 145–169 | 174–197 | 204–227 | 232+ |
| 5'5" | 114–144 | 150–174 | 180–204 | 210–234 | 240+ |
| 5'6" | 118–148 | 155–179 | 186–210 | 216–241 | 247+ |
| 5'7" | 121–153 | 159–185 | 191–217 | 223–249 | 255+ |
| 5'8" | 125–158 | 164–190 | 197–223 | 230–256 | 262+ |
| 5'9" | 128–162 | 169–196 | 203–230 | 236–263 | 270+ |
| 5'10" | 132–167 | 174–202 | 209–236 | 243–271 | 278+ |
| 5'11" | 136–172 | 179–208 | 215–243 | 250–279 | 286+ |
| 6'0" | 140–177 | 184–213 | 221–250 | 258–287 | 294+ |
| 6'1" | 144–182 | 189–219 | 227–257 | 265–295 | 302+ |
| 6'2" | 148–186 | 194–225 | 233–264 | 272–303 | 311+ |
| 6'3" | 152–192 | 200–232 | 240–272 | 279–311 | 319+ |
| 6'4" | 156–197 | 205–238 | 246–279 | 287–320 | 328+ |
| BMI | 19–24 | 25–29 | 30–34 | 35–39 | 40+ |
| | NORMAL | OVERWEIGHT | CLASS I OBESITY | CLASS II OBESITY | CLASS III OBESITY |

Building healthy eating patterns

- Select an eating pattern that meets nutrient needs over time at an appropriate calorie level.
- Account for all foods and beverages consumed and assess how they fit within a total healthy eating pattern.
- Follow food safety recommendations when preparing and eating foods to reduce the risk of food-borne illnesses.

Tools for weight control as part of healthy eating

The concept of healthy eating is now fully interwoven with weight control. The obesity epidemic in the U.S. has hit full stride. Healthy food ceases to be good for you if it causes you to gain weight. Many healthy foods, such as most fresh vegetables and fruits, can be eaten without concern for weight gain. But some otherwise healthy foods like nuts, lean meats, low-fat cheese, whole-grain bread, pasta, or rice, and a few vegetables like avocados or coconuts have enough calories to pose a risk of weight gain if eaten without restraint.

With that in mind, here are some tools to help you incorporate weight control into your plan.

Size up your waist

Not sure if your paunch is a problem? A waist circumference of 35 inches (women) or 40 inches (men) or larger is generally considered a sign of excess visceral fat, but that may not apply if your overall body size is large. Rather than focus on a single reading or absolute cut-off, keep an eye on whether your waist is growing (are your pants getting snug at the waist?). That should give you a good idea of whether you're gaining unhealthy visceral fat.

What's your BMI?

Along with your waist size, determine your body mass index (BMI). BMI is a popular method of defining a healthy weight based on your height. Use your waist size and BMI together as a guide, to help estimate your amount of body fat. The two readings together can help you gauge whether you should maintain your current weight or work on reducing.

To find your BMI, use the chart shown at left.

A BMI of 30 or more defines obesity. In general, this means your body weight is 35% to 40% more than your ideal body weight. If you're at a healthy BMI now and your waist size is fine, keep close tabs on your weight. If it starts to creep up (five pounds is a red flag), stop gaining more and take steps to lose by concentrating on eating foods that are low in energy density, such as whole-grain breads and cereals as well as fruits and vegetables. These foods are bulky but low in fat, so you can fill up on fewer calories without feeling deprived. And remember to monitor the calories you drink. Research cites sugary, calorie-laden beverages, such as non-diet sodas and juice-flavored drinks, as a major contributor to weight gain.

Exercise your options

Regular physical activity stands beside healthy eating as another pillar of health and vitality. For general health and to prevent many diseases, experts

recommend at least two-and-a-half hours a week of moderate-intensity activity. This might be brisk walking, leaf raking, doubles tennis, or active housework. Or, if you choose to do more intensive vigorous activity such as running, one hour and 15 minutes per week will provide health benefits. Add strength training and stretching a couple of days a week to the mix as well. These help maintain muscle mass, bones, strength, and flexibility. Physical activity works in other ways as well, such as training muscles to respond better to insulin and take in more blood sugar. Regular exercise is also a proven treatment for existing hypertension. Moderate-intensity training (such as walking) seems to be at least as good for blood pressure as high-intensity exercises like running. To whittle your middle and build muscle, use weight-bearing exercise and curb calorie consumption. At midlife, you may find that you have to eat less and exercise more just to stay in the same shape.

How much to eat?

To help you follow the guidelines for healthy eating, consider how much food you need to maintain your current weight if you are not overweight or to gradually lose weight if you are overweight. The healthy eating plan in this report is not intended to be a weight-loss diet, but rather a way to transition from old eating habits that may be unhealthy to a new, long-term way of eating that will optimize your health. Weight control is part of this equation. Everyone is different, and caloric needs differ depending on many factors including age, activity level, and metabolic needs. Most women need between 1,600 and 2,000 calories per day, while most men require 2,000 to 2,400 calories per day to maintain their weight. If you are particularly active, you may need more calories. If you are inactive or want to lose weight, you may choose to reduce the calories. But don't go too low. To eat enough nutritious foods to maintain your health, women should consume at least 1,200 calories a day and men 1,500, unless dieting under the supervision of a health professional. ♥

Getting started on the six-week plan

You try to eat right, but something isn't working: Despite your good intentions, you stop for a fast-food burger more often than you'd like. Or you turn to the office vending machine for a candy bar too frequently. How can you turn good intentions into reality? Week 1 of your six-week healthy eating journey will help you develop awareness of what you're consuming, assess the diet changes you need to make, and set goals for yourself.

Your first step is to create a food diary. It's one of the most effective tools to help you analyze your current eating patterns and develop a healthier eating plan for the future.

Why keep a food diary?

Change isn't easy, and one of the cornerstones of making positive changes is taking a good hard look at your current behavior. A food diary is a detailed account of your eating habits that helps you target where your calories and other nutrients are coming from—and discover your areas of strength and weakness.

Are you getting enough fruits and vegetables? Not enough fiber? Eating too many sugary desserts or processed foods? Downing too much soda and not enough water? Are you eating the same meals day after day? Find out by putting pen to paper. A food diary forces you to write down and really think about your food selections. It also reveals sneaky sources of unhealthy foods and calories. After all, if you don't write down what you eat, it's easy to forget that cheese-filled croissant you snacked on while shopping.

If you're trying to lose weight, consider: a recent study of 1,685 participants in the Weight Loss Maintenance trial program at Kaiser Permanente in Portland, Ore., showed that dieters who kept a food diary more than five days a week lost almost twice as much weight in a 6-month period as those who didn't. A diary can also help you become accountable in several other ways: you can include your daily exercise in your diary and

also monitor your mealtime moods, to see if emotions are pushing you to overeat or consume the wrong foods.

A food diary can also help you pinpoint problem eating patterns. Are you getting most of your calories in one sitting instead of spreading them out throughout the day? Do you skip breakfast, then ambush the vending machine at 11 a.m.? Do your eating habits change on weekends? Are you eating out more often than you think? Do you mindlessly munch on junk food when you watch TV? You may not be aware how many unhealthy, high-calorie foods you are consuming at odd moments if you don't track your habits with a diary. Seeing it all in black and white can help you take responsibility for changing your behavior.

Finally, your diary can help you determine your food policies for healthy eating and holding your weight steady. Did you down too many desserts and tropical drinks on your vacation—and blow off the resort's water aerobics class every day as well? Don't worry. Your food diary can help you get back to your regular routine quickly so that you don't have to start a formal "diet" every time you veer off course. You can simply return to your tried-and-true personal plan of smart eating and exercise. (For more on food policies, see "Week 6: Keep it going," page 37.)

Diary dos and don'ts

The three-day diary that follows is an example of one way to prepare a detailed breakdown of your diet. You can also find online food sites that enable you to keep a diary, or, if you use a mobile device, there are applications available for the same purpose.

To begin, keep your food diary for two weekdays and one weekend day. That's all you need to get the big picture. Before you get started, though, make several photocopies of the blank food diary (see page 11). In the weeks to come, you'll be asked to record what you eat again. There's nothing like a before-and-after food diary to help you see how far you've come on your

sojourn to eating healthier and changing habits.

Here are some tips for record-keeping success.

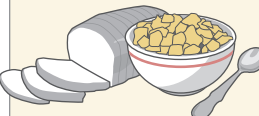
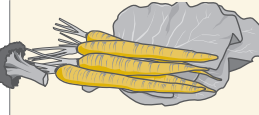




■ **Don't wait to write.** To get the most accurate impression of what and how much you consume, jot down what you've eaten as soon as you eat it. If you wait until the end of the day, it's likely you'll forget some of the things you ate earlier. If you don't have your journal page with you when you're eating, make notes on your cell phone, pocket calendar, or memo pad and record them in your food diary later. Strive to write down every mouthful of food—even tastes, snacks, and sips—within 15 minutes of consuming it.

■ **Do get the details.** Record relevant important details, including the time of your meal or snack, where you ate, whether you were doing something else while you were eating, and the type of food you consumed—whether, for example, it was a meal from scratch or fast food you picked up on the go. These added data will help reveal patterns.

■ **Do record portion sizes.** Record the specific amounts of each food you eat—for example, 1 cup of orange juice or 3 ounces of chicken. (For help in determining portion sizes, see “What's a serving?” below.) Measure your portion sizes with standard measur-

Table 2 What's a serving?

Portion sizes in restaurant meals, take-out foods, cookbooks, and packaged snacks have increased over the years, sometimes by more than double. A typical movie-theater soda, for example, once about 7 ounces, can now be “supersized” to 32 or 42 ounces. A typical bagel, once 2 to 3 ounces, now weighs 4 to 7 ounces and may contain the caloric equivalent of five or six slices of bread. This chart will help you downsize your servings so you can maintain a healthy weight. Look at the serving size as well as the calories to be sure you know how many servings (and calories) you're eating.

| FOOD GROUP | EXAMPLES OF ONE SERVING | SERVING SIZE EQUIVALENT |
|--|---|----------------------------|
| Whole grains  | 1 slice whole-grain bread | 1 compact disc case |
| | ½ cup cooked brown rice, whole-wheat pasta, or other whole-grain product | ½ baseball |
| | ½ whole-grain English muffin | ½ hockey puck |
| | ¼ whole-wheat bagel | ¼ hockey puck |
| Vegetables  | 1 cup raw leafy greens | 2 cupped hands |
| | ½ cup (cooked or raw) chopped, non-leafy vegetables | 1 rounded handful |
| | ½ cup vegetable juice | 1 small juice glass |
| | 1 small sweet potato | 1 computer mouse |
| Fruits  | ½ cup (sliced or diced) fresh or frozen fruit, or fruit canned in its own juice | 1 rounded handful |
| | 1 small apple, orange, or peach | 1 baseball |
| Dairy  | 1½ oz hard cheese | 4 dice |
| | 2 oz processed cheese | 6 dice |
| | ¾ cup low-fat milk | container of yogurt (6 oz) |
| | 6 oz yogurt | container of yogurt (6 oz) |
| Meats, fish, and beans  | 4 oz fish | 1 checkbook |
| | 4 oz meat or poultry | 1 deck of cards |
| | ¼ cup cooked dried beans | 1 golf ball |
| | ½ oz nuts or seeds | 1 walnut in shell |
| | 1 tablespoon peanut butter | ½ walnut in shell |
| Fats and oils  | 1 teaspoon butter or margarine | tip of thumb |
| | 1 tablespoon oil | about ½ shot glass |

Here's an example of how to fill out a food diary

SAMPLE FOOD DIARY

| TIME (record start and end time of meal or snack) | PLACE (kitchen, living room, bedroom, car, desk at work) | WITH WHOM (alone, or with family, friends, colleagues) | ACTIVITY (reading, watching TV, talking, cooking) | MOOD (neutral, happy, tense, depressed, angry, bored, rushed, tired) | HUNGER (rate from 0-5, 0=no hunger, 5=starving) | AMOUNT | FOOD | FRUITS OR VEGETABLES (number of servings) | FULLNESS (after eating: 1=still hungry 2=quite satisfied 3=uncomfortable) | FILLED OUT JUST BEFORE OR AFTER EATING? (X=yes) |
|--|---|---|--|---|--|----------------|-----------------------|--|---|--|
| 8:30-8:45 a.m. | Kitchen | Alone | Watching TV | Rushed | 4 | 1.5 cups | Shredded wheat cereal | | 2 | X |
| | | | | | | 1 cup | Skim milk | | | X |
| | | | | | | 1 medium | Banana | 1 | | X |
| | | | | | | 2 teaspoons | Sugar | | | X |
| 10:00-10:10 a.m. | Car | Alone | Driving | Happy | 3 | 1 medium | Apple | 1 | 2 | |
| 11:00-11:05 a.m. | Car | Alone | Driving | Rushed | 2 | 1 | Granola bar | | 2 | |
| 1:30-2:00 p.m. | Work | Colleagues | Talking | Happy | 5 | 2 large slices | Cheese pizza | | 3 | |
| | | | | | | 1 large | Chocolate chip cookie | | | X |
| 6:00-6:10 p.m. | Kitchen | Alone | Cooking | Tired | 5 | 2 pieces | Low-fat string cheese | | 1 | |
| 6:30-7:05 p.m. | Kitchen | Husband | Talking | Tired | 4 | 6 oz | Baked chicken | | 2 | X |
| | | | | | | 1 cup | Brown rice | | | X |
| | | | | | | 1 cup | Broccoli | 1 | | X |
| | | | | | | 2 glasses | Iced tea | | | X |
| 9:30-9:45 p.m. | Bed | Alone | Watching TV | Tired | 2 | 1 cup | Frozen yogurt | | 3 | |
| TOTAL: | | | | | | | | 3 | 15 | |

▶▶▶ **Quick tip** The vitamin or mineral content is less important as a basis for buying a product unless everything else adds up to a healthy choice. Calcium, iron, vitamin C, and vitamin A amounts are always on food labels. They're nice to know, but these small amounts are minor compared with other nutrients on the label.

ing utensils. This serves two purposes: it provides more precise information about your food consumption, and it helps you become accustomed to standard serving sizes. You'll probably be surprised by what a 3-ounce serving size of chicken or half a cup of pasta looks like on your plate. As you grow more familiar with these portions, you can begin to "eyeball" servings more accurately and skip the actual measuring.

■ **If you blow it, don't sweat it.** Did you inhale everything in sight after work one day? You may not want to write down the damage, but do it anyway—food records can help you regain a sense of control. Later on, a duly noted "bad" day can help you understand why you did or didn't achieve your goals. Think long-term. One day is not going to make or break anything.

■ **Don't count calories (yet).** Your goal is healthy eating, so the most important goal is to record the types of foods you are eating. Is the pasta white or whole-wheat? Is the meat lean or fatty? Is it butter, margarine, or olive oil on your bread? These are the things that make a difference to your heart, brain, and overall health.

■ **Do keep track of exercise.** Include the type of exercise and how long you worked out. Be sure to give yourself credit for everyday activities such as taking the stairs at work and walking the dog. You'll begin to see how exercise and diet are linked, which is helpful especially if you're trying to lose weight.

Keep in mind that you're keeping a food diary for your own self-discovery. No one else has to see it. The more honest and accurate you are about your diet and exercise habits, the more enlightened you will become in the next several weeks and beyond.

Shopping trip tips

In addition to your healthy food shopping list (see page 14), you'll increase your chances of loading your cart with good foods by following these guidelines:

■ **Peruse the perimeter of the grocery store.** That's where you'll find the healthiest, freshest, least-processed options. Try to shop the produce, fish, lean meat, low-fat dairy, and bread sections of the store as much as possible to avoid the temptations lurking in the aisles containing snack cakes, chips, sodas, and other packaged and processed foods. Concentrate on filling your basket with healthy fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, and lean protein. After you've shopped the outer boundary of the store, use your list to navigate the rest of the aisles. Look above and below the center shelves for the healthiest selections.

■ **Don't shop when you're hungry.** We all know what happens when you go to the grocery store when your stomach is rumbling! Everything looks good, especially those quick, easy-to-eat snacks. If you're hungry, have a healthy snack or meal before shopping. You'll be less tempted to fill your cart with impulse items.

■ **Get a system down.** Make a list of foods you need. Do your menu planning for a week at a time, and do your grocery shopping on the same day of each week. A simple routine eliminates the need for midweek trips to the store, which may tempt you to buy food that's not on your list.

■ **Become a comparison shopper.** Decide what's most important to you when selecting foods, whether it's sodium level, fiber, sugar, calories, or healthy fat, and then home in on that nutrient by reading labels. You probably won't find the perfect food, but you will surely make better decisions by comparing labels. If you're trying to lose weight, pay particular attention to calories and the serving size listed. Ignore the calories from total fat, though. A calorie is a calorie. Instead, avoid foods whose fat comes mostly from trans fats or saturated fat.

Reading labels for healthy eating

Most of the truly healthy foods like fruits and vegetables don't have nutrition labels on them. But packaged foods do, and reading the label is your best guide to choosing the healthiest options. How can you tell whether one breakfast cereal, for example, is better than another? Compare them by checking the Nutrition Facts panel. Here's a step-by-step approach to interpreting its lingo.

■ **Step 1: Check the serving size and servings per container.** Serving size is always the first item on the label.

All other information is based on that serving size. In the example below, you can see that the serving size is 1 cup. The 250 calories listed on the label refer to each 1-cup serving, not the entire package. The servings per container tell you how many portions are in the whole box, package, or can. In this example, there are two servings per container, or 2 cups total. When comparing products, make sure they have the same serving size for an accurate comparison. Most of the time a package will have more than one serving in it. If you choose to eat more than the serving size listed, you'll be taking in more calories, carbohydrate, and other nutrients. Multiply all of the data by the servings per container to get the total amounts for the container.

| 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 0g | | | |
| Trans Fat 0g | | | |
| Cholesterol 0g | 0% | | |
| Sodium 250mg | 20% | | |
| Total Carbohydrate 31g | 10% | | |
| Dietary Fiber 5g | | | |
| Sugars 5g | | | |
| Protein 5g | | | |
| Vitamin A 4% | | | |
| Vitamin C 2% | | | |
| Calcium 20% | | | |
| Iron 4% | | | |
| *Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs. | | | |
| | Calories | 2,000 | 2,500 |
| Total Fat | Less than | 65g | 80g |
| Sat Fat | Less than | 20g | 25g |
| Cholesterol | Less than | 300mg | 300mg |
| Sodium | Less than | 2,400mg | 2,400mg |
| Total Carbohydrate | | 300g | 376g |
| Dietary Fiber | | 25g | 30g |

■ **Step 2: Check the saturated fat and trans fat content of the food.** For a general healthy diet, keep saturated fat and cholesterol low and avoid trans fat. Look for foods that have 0 grams (g) of trans fat and are lowest in saturated fat and cholesterol. Avoid foods that have the words “partially hydrogenated vegetable oil” in the ingredients list.

■ **Step 3: Compare the sodium content to the calories per serving.** You'll want to keep sodium as low as possible. A rule of thumb: choose items in which the sodium content is less than or equal to the calories per serving. So for a food with 250 calories per serving, look for a sodium content of no more than 250 mg. Also look for low-sodium, low-salt, or unsalted versions.

■ **Step 4: Look at the fiber content of the food you're choosing.** Any food with more than 5 g of fiber per serving is a good choice for fiber. Aim for 25 to 35 g of fiber per day in total.

■ **Step 5: Look at the sugar content of the food you're considering.** Steer clear of foods that have sugar, honey, molasses, corn syrup, corn sugar, fructose, or high-fructose corn syrup among the first three ingredients. Other sugar aliases to watch for include agave nectar, brown sugar, cane sugar, corn sweetener, dextrose, maltose, fruit juice concentrate, and glucose.

■ **Step 6: Decipher the percent daily value.** Located on the Nutrition Facts label, the percent daily value is based on someone who eats exactly 2,000 calories a day. It's a useful tool to compare the nutritional value of two items quickly (assuming the serving size is the same). As a general rule, when the percent daily value of a particular nutrient is around 20% or more, that's considered high in that nutrient. That can be a good thing if it's fiber we're talking about, but not so good if it's sodium or saturated fat.

The “Clean-slate Club”

While you're stocking up on healthy foods, get rid of stuff that's not so

healthy. If your cupboard is loaded with chips, cookies, and candy, for example, now is the time to get it out of your life. Your environment can influence what you eat, and the mere sight of food can stimulate your appetite.

Out with the old (and unhealthy) foods

Here's a suggested list of foods to remove from your cabinets and refrigerator:

- bacon and high-fat cold cuts
- candy
- cereal bars
- chicken nuggets
- chips
- cookies
- crackers (other than whole-wheat, low-salt)
- doughnuts
- french fries
- fruit roll-ups or fruit snacks
- full-fat cheese
- granola bars, jam-filled
- ice cream
- muffins
- popsicles
- snack cakes
- soda
- toaster tarts
- white bread (not whole-grain white bread)
- whole milk.

Setting goals for healthy eating success

Whether you're trying to cook at home more, eat fewer processed foods, or consume less sodium, goal setting is an important part of your healthy-eating plan. Setting goals is helpful because it gives you something to strive for, a standard by which you can judge your success. Your task for this week is to use your food diary to determine the overall parts of your diet you need to improve. You should set your own personal goals, but here are some starting points:

■ **Fruits and vegetables.** After you've completed your food diary for three days (two weekdays and one weekend), begin to analyze your food diary by noting the fruits and vegetables you consumed. Over the past three days, how many did you eat in relation to your goal? Ideally, in three days, you should have about nine servings of fruit and about 12 servings of vegetables. How did you do? Where do you need to improve? *Write your answers here:*



Healthy food shopping ideas

To help you make healthy eating a priority, you'll need to be organized. Plan your menu for the week and take this general list to the store for ideas on what to buy. Having it with you will help you make healthier choices, stock your pantry with the right foods, and prevent impulse buying.

Fruit

Aim for two to three fruits each day. Buy at least two different fruits each week.

- apples
- bananas
- blueberries
- grapefruit
- grapes
- kiwi
- melons
- oranges
- peaches
- pears
- strawberries

Grains

Choose the whole-grain variety whenever possible.

- bread (whole-grain; the first ingredient should list the word "whole")
- cereal (choose cereals with 5 g or more of fiber and fewer than 5 g of sugar per serving)
- flour (whole-wheat; may be white or brown in color)
- oatmeal (old-fashioned rolled oats or steel-cut oats)
- pasta or noodles (whole-wheat)
- rice (brown)
- tortillas (whole-grain)

Vegetables

Eat at least 3 to 4 cups of vegetables each day. Variety can make food more interesting and delicious. Buy at least two different vegetables each week.

- asparagus
- beets
- bok choy
- broccoli
- Brussels sprouts
- cabbage
- carrots
- cauliflower
- celery
- cucumber
- eggplant
- green beans
- greens: chard, collards, kale, leeks, rabe
- lettuce: bibb, red, romaine
- mushrooms
- onions, shallots
- peas, pea pods
- peppers: green, red, yellow
- ready-to-eat veggie snacks: carrots, celery, radishes
- spinach
- squash: acorn, butternut, yellow, zucchini
- sweet potato or yam
- tomatoes

Nuts and seeds

Eat small amounts of unsalted nuts and seeds as snacks or sprinkle them on top of salads or casseroles.

- almonds, cashews, hazelnuts, peanuts, pecans, pistachios, walnuts
- peanut butter, almond butter
- pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds

Fish and poultry

Choose fish or poultry daily. Canned fish and poultry tend to be high in sodium unless you choose low-sodium products or rinse the salt away before eating.

- canned fish (low-sodium): salmon, sardines, tuna
- chicken (skinless or remove skin)
- fresh fish: cod, haddock, halibut, salmon, scrod, tuna
- shellfish: crab, mussels, oysters, shrimp
- turkey (skinless)

■ **Cooking from scratch.** Preparing your meals at home with whole, unprocessed ingredients and eating fewer processed and restaurant meals gives you more control over your intake of sodium, calories, and other nutrients. According to your food diary, how often did you eat out? How many processed foods did you consume? In those three days, how many times did you cook from scratch or make your meal with whole, unprocessed ingredients? *Write your answers here:*

■ **Eating habits.** Most of us could benefit from slowing down and devoting our attention to eating. When we multitask with food or eat quickly, we can consume more food (and therefore calories) without realizing it and sacrifice a feeling of satisfaction. How many times did you eat while also doing something else? How much time did you spend eating at each meal?

Write your answers here:

Shopping ideas *continued*

Meat

Try to limit red meat to no more than one to two servings per week. Avoid cured and processed meats like ham, hot dogs, and many lunch meats, and choose lean cuts of uncured meats instead.

- lean beef: top round, flank, rump roast
- pork: tenderloin

Dairy

Use small to moderate amounts of low-fat dairy—mostly as a topping or in a side dish.

- cheese (low-fat, part skim, 1% cottage cheese)
- eggs
- milk (nonfat or skim)
- yogurt (low- or nonfat, plain)

Beverages

Beverages may not be as satiating as solid food and can contribute to weight gain. In general, stick with drinks that are lower in calories and have no added sugar. Fruit juice has as many sugar calories as soda, so keep servings small.

- bottled water
- coffee
- fruit juices
- seltzer
- tea
- tomato or vegetable juice (low-sodium)

Oils

- canola oil
- olive oil
- peanut oil
- safflower oil
- sesame oil

Spices and other seasonings

- balsamic vinegar
- basil (fresh or dried)
- bay leaves
- chives
- cinnamon
- curry powder
- dill
- garlic
- ginger
- mint leaves
- oregano
- parsley (fresh or dried)
- pepper
- peppercorns
- poultry seasoning
- rosemary
- salsa
- salt
- soy sauce (low-sodium)
- thyme (fresh or dried)

Frozen foods

- egg substitutes
- frozen fruit such as berries
- vegetables (without added sauces): broccoli, corn, carrots, spinach, mixed
- veggie burgers
- whole-grain waffles

Canned goods

- beans: black, red, white (rinse to reduce sodium)
- broths (low-sodium, low-fat)
- evaporated skim milk
- spaghetti or pasta sauce (low-sodium)
- tomatoes, tomato paste, tomato sauce
- vegetables: mushrooms, beets, roasted red peppers, bamboo shoots, water chestnuts (rinse first to reduce sodium)

Staples

- mustard
- relish
- tub margarine (with no trans fats)
- vinegar



Take a look at your answers and establish general goals based on your current habits. To set goals successfully, keep the following guidelines in mind.

Start small

Aim to make just three or four small diet changes in the weeks to follow (one or two goals per week) rather than trying to radically overhaul your eating habits. The gradual approach is a set-up for success because it's not overwhelming and removes the pressure. Even though you're setting mini goals, you can often get lots of mileage out of them. By eating out less often or consuming fewer processed foods, for example, you'll

Sneak in fitness

While you're working on changing your eating habits, make increasing your activity level a priority. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the perceived lack of time to exercise is among the top excuses we use to keep from being active.

To fit physical activity into your routine, schedule it on your calendar just like you would a business meeting, even if it's just in 10-minute slots. Once you invest time in daily activity, you'll be buoyed to make diet changes by the motivating feeling of well-being that exercise yields.

How much should you do? The 2008 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services physical guidelines urge all adults—including people with various disabilities—to accumulate a weekly total of 150 minutes or more of moderate aerobic activity, or 75 minutes or more of vigorous activity, or an equivalent mix of the two. Keep in mind:

- Ten minutes of vigorous activity equals approximately 20 minutes of moderate activity.
- Sessions of activity should last at least 10 minutes.
- Twice-weekly strength training sessions for all major muscle groups are also recommended.
- Balance exercises are also recommended, particularly for older adults at risk of falling.

Also keep in mind that any amount of exercise beats none. Even short stints of activity (five minutes of walking several times a day to help you build endurance) are a good first step toward meeting a bigger goal.

automatically reduce the number of calories you're taking in, slash your intake of saturated fat, and consume less sodium.

Be realistic

Start from where you are now and try to improve. If, according to your food diary, for example, you ate lunch out five times in five days, a good goal to set for yourself would be to cut back to three restaurant or take-in lunches and bring your lunch to work two days. Once you get used to that change, you can add even more days to your bring-lunch-from-home routine, so that eating lunch out eventually becomes the exception.

Set specific, behavior-driven goals

Specific, short-term, behavioral goals are more motivating and easier to measure than general, long-term, end-result goals. Instead of "I want to lose 10 pounds by my birthday," for example, a specific, behavior-driven goal would be "I'll have a salad for lunch each day." Instead of "I'll stop snacking," make it your goal to set out a tangerine for your afternoon snack. Behavior-driven goals are easier to achieve because they focus on one step toward a result that can take months to accomplish.

Each week, when you reach your behavior-driven goal, you earn an opportunity to celebrate personal achievement, which helps maintain motivation. At the end of each week, assess your progress and reward yourself for the small changes you made; for instance, you might treat yourself to a movie. Moving in the right direction deserves some acknowledgment to encourage you to continue the positive, healthful behavior change.

A note about wording: state your goals throughout this six-week journey as "I will..." It's more a more powerful proclamation than "I want to..." or "I'd like to..."

Based on your food diary, what specific goals would you like to set? *List three goals for changes you'd like to make in your diet in the coming weeks.*

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____ 

Eating a small, nutritious breakfast is a great way to jump-start the day. Yet many people skip breakfast because they are in a rush, aren't hungry, or are trying to cut calories. But eating a healthful breakfast has benefits. Breakfast will be your focus for this week. We'll tackle lunch, dinner, and snacks in the coming weeks, but in the meantime, keep in mind the "Practical advice for healthy eating" (see page 2) at all meals.

Studies suggest that eating breakfast regularly can reduce the risk of high cholesterol, decrease insulin resistance (a condition that increases the risk of type 2 diabetes and heart disease), improve your performance on memory-related tasks, minimize impulse snacking and overeating at other meals, and boost your intake of essential nutrients. It may seem to defy logic, but studies also suggest that eating breakfast regularly can help keep your weight in check. A Harvard study published in *Obesity*, which examined weight gain over time by following 20,064 American men for 10 years, found that, compared with breakfast eaters, breakfast skippers gained 11 or more additional pounds.

But keep your breakfast moderate in size. A 2011 study published in *Nutrition Journal* found that people who ate a large breakfast ended up eating more total calories at the end of the day. In particular, bread, eggs, sausage, cheese, yogurt, and butter were among the items that contributed to the high calorie count. As with other meals, focus on produce and whole grains. Minimize the amounts of full-fat dairy products, meats, and eggs. Think outside the box for breakfast ideas that fit the Healthy Eating Pyramid (see page 3).

So keep your breakfast calories low and you may be like one of the five thousand members of the National Weight Control Registry. Of this group, a self-selected database of Americans who've lost at least 30 pounds and kept it off for at least a year, 78% report eating breakfast every day.

Quick tip You can prepare ordinary oatmeal in the microwave in two minutes. Just mix $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of oatmeal with $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of skim milk and heat on high for two minutes. Skip the individual oatmeal packets, which can be loaded with sugar. Slice a small banana or other fruit on top and sprinkle with cinnamon.

The healthy breakfast plate

To create a healthy, balanced breakfast, include three food groups: lean protein, whole-grain carbohydrates, and fruit. Think of a healthy breakfast in thirds: one-third protein, such as an egg, low-fat cottage cheese, or nuts; one-third starch, such as whole-grain bread or oatmeal; and one-third fruit (see Figure 3).

Notice that bacon, sausage, or other cured and processed breakfast meats are nowhere in sight. That's because these meats are high in sodium and saturated

Figure 3 Building your breakfast plate



Fill one-third of your plate with lean protein such as a hard-boiled egg, one-third with whole grain such as whole-wheat toast, and one-third with fruit. What if you like cereal for breakfast? Have $\frac{1}{3}$ cup whole-grain cereal with fruit and a scoop of yogurt on the side.



Your healthy breakfast shopping list

Take this list with you when you're food shopping so you're sure to give yourself a morning advantage. As you've probably gathered, when your kitchen is stocked with the right stuff, you're more apt to eat healthy at every meal.

- bananas
- berries (fresh or frozen)
- cinnamon
- eggs
- English muffins (100% whole-wheat)
- grapes
- low-fat cheese
- low-sodium vegetable juice
- melons
- milk (skim, 1%, or soy)
- natural peanut butter
- nuts (unsalted)
- oatmeal
- pineapple
- whole-grain oatmeal bread
- whole-grain wheat bread
- whole-grain cereal
- whole-grain crackers
- whole-grain mini bagels
- whole-wheat tortillas
- whole-grain waffles
- yogurt (plain low-fat or nonfat)

fat, a known artery-clogger. In addition, the latest science has linked cured or processed meats to a 42% increased risk for heart disease and a 9% increased risk for type 2 diabetes.

If you're not a "breakfast person," start with small portions to begin to establish a breakfast habit, but try to include all three food groups, especially protein, which can create a feeling of fullness and prevent carbohydrate cravings. Try a tablespoon of natural peanut butter on a slice of whole-wheat toast with a piece of fruit.

Setting goals for breakfast success

In addition to the overall goals you set for yourself in week 1, your goal for this week is to use your food diary to evaluate your breakfast routine, if you have one. During the three days you kept your food diary, what did you eat for breakfast? Did your breakfasts follow the basic formula (one-third healthy carbohydrate, one-third lean protein, one-

third fruit)? Are you missing any food groups? Is there a general pattern to your breakfast routine?

Write your answers here:

Now, looking at your breakfast pattern, what goal might you set for breakfast? What do you have to do to achieve it? Do you want to switch from a high-sugar cereal to a whole-grain version? Do you want to eat at home instead of grabbing a sugary, fat-loaded muffin at the coffee shop? Do you want to cut back on bacon and sausage and stock up on fruit?

Be as specific and as realistic as possible when setting your goal and planning how to accomplish it. And be sure to troubleshoot. If your goal, for example, is to eat breakfast before leaving for work in the morning, ask yourself why you haven't been doing it before, and anticipate how this change is going to affect your life. Will the extra time it takes to eat at home make you late for work? If so, can you get up 15 minutes earlier or shave the time from another part of your routine?

In any case, make sure to have quick, healthy foods on hand that don't require much preparation, such as low-fat cottage cheese, nonfat plain yogurt, whole-grain bread or cereal, fresh fruit, and nuts.

For my breakfast goal this week, I will...

Example: This week, I will get up 15 minutes earlier so I have time to eat before I leave for work.

Pizza for breakfast?

If you're not wowed by traditional breakfast foods like whole-grain cereal or eggs, there's no rule against having leftover pizza from last night's dinner if it's made with healthy ingredients. Here's how to make your own quick-fix breakfast pizza. Start with a whole-grain pita or English muffin and add a dose of tomato sauce and low-fat cheese. Even better, dice up some green and red peppers to sprinkle on top. Have a small glass of 100% juice to complete the meal, or have a piece of fruit on the side. Keep the general breakfast formula in mind: whole grains, lean protein, and a fruit, so you'll have a balanced meal.

Smart starts

Morning routines are hard to break. If your idea of breakfast is grabbing a coffee and a doughnut on your way to work, finding time to eat healthy in the morning may seem daunting. With a little planning, however, it's easier than you think. Here are some healthy breakfast suggestions, which follow the basic formula of equal parts whole grains + lean protein + fruit:

- whole-grain cereal (at least 5 g of fiber and less than 5 g sugar) + milk (skim or 1% milk or soy milk) + a small banana or ½ cup berries
- ½ cup cooked oatmeal with cinnamon + 2 tablespoons nuts + ½ cup berries
- a slice of 100% whole-grain bread + 1 tablespoon natural peanut butter + a small banana
- breakfast sandwich: 100% whole-wheat English muffin or whole-grain mini bagel + an egg or a slice of low-fat cheese + an orange
- breakfast burrito: 1 small whole-wheat tortilla + a scrambled egg or a slice of low-fat cheese and salsa + sliced mango
- 2 slices of whole-grain toast or 1 whole-grain English muffin + ½ cup low-fat cottage cheese + ¾ cup pineapple
- whole-grain French toast + milk + ½ cup berries

For a lighter breakfast, try these suggestions:

- 1 serving whole-grain crackers + 1 ounce low-fat cheese + ¾ cup grapes
- ¼ cup nuts + fruit or low-sodium vegetable juice
- 1 small apple or banana + 1 tablespoon peanut butter
- 1 hard-boiled egg + baby carrots + 2 tablespoons low-fat dip

Make a morning exercise appointment

First thing in the morning, before work or other activities, is often the best time to exercise. This way, exercise doesn't compete with other tasks and activities that can fill up the day and get in the way of a regular exercise program. Even if you're not a morning person, you can train yourself to become a morning exercise person. Set

your fitness clothes out the night before. Set your alarm a half-hour earlier, and go out the door for a brisk walk before you do anything else. Or head to an early-morning exercise class. It's just a matter of getting into a habit.

What if you'd really rather push the snooze button? Get up anyway, but give yourself the 10-minute rule. If you're still miserable after 10 minutes of working out at the gym or running or walking outside, you can skip your session for that day. Chances are, though, if you've already gotten dressed and you're there, you're much less likely to give up. To hold yourself accountable and give yourself credit, be sure to cross exercise off your to-do list when you're through. On mornings you can't work out, keep sneakers with you and look for ways to get a walk or a jog in during the day. Doing something on the days you said you would is important for maintaining momentum.

Curb coffee-drink calories

At 100 calories, a tall (12-ounce) latte made with skim milk is okay as an occasional treat. But many of today's specialty coffee shops offer coffee drinks laden with unhealthy fat, sugar, and calories. Studies show that consuming too many sugary foods and beverages can increase your risk of heart disease and diabetes. Moreover, research cites sugar-sweetened beverages like coffee drinks as a major source of added sugar in the American diet and a major contributor to weight gain. A grande (16-ounce) iced peppermint white chocolate mocha drink



Choosing a breakfast cereal

With the hundreds of types of cereal on the market, bran cereal, bran flakes, and steel-cut oatmeal are typically the healthiest bets. To choose the healthiest breakfast cereal, read the label and look for

- 5 g or more of fiber per serving
- less than 300 mg of sodium per serving
- less than 5 g of sugar per serving
- whole grain as the first item on the ingredient list.

Serving sizes for cereal can vary widely, though 1 cup is common. If you're watching calories, make sure to choose nonfat milk.

from a popular coffee chain, for example, weighs in at 530 calories, which is over a third of the daily caloric intake for someone who requires 1,500 calories per day. And liquid calories may be less filling than solid food, increasing the chance that you will consume excess calories.

Coffee, of course, contains caffeine, which boosts alertness. Coffee may also help reduce risk of type 2 diabetes. A 2005 study published in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* found that coffee drinkers who downed

BREAKFAST GROUND RULES

- ✓ Eat a small breakfast every day.
- ✓ Follow the balanced-breakfast formula: whole-grain carbohydrates, lean protein, and fruit.
- ✓ Keep breakfast at around 300 to 400 calories.
- ✓ Make coffee drinks an occasional treat if you drink them at all.

4 to 6 cups a day had a 28% lower risk of type 2 diabetes compared with those who drank less than 2 cups.

The upshot? Don't be a problem drinker. Stick with black coffee or tea with only a little milk or sugar. Once you've had your coffee boost, switch to beverages that have no sugar. To get adequate hydration, anything watery counts, including water, coffee, soup, oranges, and watermelon.

You're drinking enough if your urine is pale or clear. ♥

If you've ever skipped lunch, you know how important the noon meal is to getting through the rest of the day. Eating four hours or so after breakfast helps maintain your blood sugar level so your energy won't take a midday dive. A healthy lunch will also help you concentrate and function better at work in the afternoon and help you avoid hunger that can lead to overeating at dinner, a set-up for weight gain.

Lunch is an opportunity to enjoy high-nutrient, disease-fighting foods. Use the healthy lunch plate (see Figure 4) as your model—your basic formula for what to eat and how much. Vegetables should dominate your plate. How about a whole-wheat pita roll-up stuffed with tomatoes, carrots, green and red peppers, and about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup hummus? Add some turkey or chicken and you've got a great meal. The same formula applies to dinner, too (see “The healthy dinner plate,” page 26).

The healthy lunch plate

To create a healthy, balanced lunch—and dinner too, for that matter—include three food groups: lean protein, whole-grain carbohydrates, and vegetables. Think of a healthy lunch and dinner in halves and quarters: roughly half of your plate should be vegetables or fruit; one-quarter should be lean protein such as fish, chicken, turkey, tofu, or low-fat cottage cheese; and one-quarter should be whole grains, such as one slice of whole-grain bread, or half a cup of brown rice, whole-wheat pasta, or quinoa. Feel free to include some fresh fruit and a small amount of healthy fat, such as a tablespoon of oil-and-vinegar dressing on your salad.

Setting goals for lunch success

Your goal for this week is to use your food diary to determine how you're doing with lunch and what you can do make it healthier. Take a look now at the food diary you kept for three days. During that time,

what did you eat for lunch? Did your lunches follow the basic formula (lots of vegetables, whole grains, and lean protein)? Are you missing any food groups? Is there a general pattern to your lunches? *Write your answers here:*

Now, looking at your lunch pattern, what goal will you set for yourself for lunch? What do you have to do to achieve it? Remember to be as specific and as realistic as possible when planning to accomplish your goal. If your objective, for example, is to eat a healthy lunch even though you're so busy at work that you can't take much time to eat, you could bring your lunch to work and keep it in the refrigerator or in an insulated bag with an ice pack.

Figure 4 The healthy lunch plate



Fill half your plate with vegetables such as a mixed salad, one-quarter with whole grain such as a whole-wheat pita pocket, and one-third with lean protein such as hummus and low-fat cheese. If you prefer a traditional sandwich, choose whole-wheat bread with dark green lettuce and other vegetables plus some lean protein like slices of grilled chicken or low-fat cheese. Avoid cured lunch meats.

Also, troubleshoot by asking yourself why you haven't been doing this already. Is it because you tend to be too rushed in the morning to think ahead about lunch? If that's the case, prepare your lunch the night before, refrigerate it, and keep a note by the door so you don't forget it. Bringing lunch from home helps you control what you're eating. If you plan to buy lunch that day, bring something healthy from home with you, such as an apple, to round out the meal.

If you eat lunch at home, you can have a small plate of healthy dinner leftovers or make a sandwich with whole-grain bread, lean protein, and 1 tablespoon low-fat mayonnaise. Fill the other half of your plate with a salad or raw veggies to munch.

Many people grab food on the fly and fail to eat a real lunch, perhaps eating a croissant on the way to a meeting or other event. When that happens, acknowledge it and mentally account for those calories by saying to yourself, "This is part of lunch." Then fill in with an apple and a carton of nonfat plain yogurt as soon as you get the chance. Don't shortchange yourself on calories during the day. Research shows that people who skip lunch or dinner expend fewer calories because they don't move as much. Moreover, you'll likely feel cranky and lethargic. And by dinnertime—look out! You're apt to overeat to make up for the day's lack of fuel.

Remember to start with baby steps and to set small, process-driven goals. If you're eating lunch out five days a week now, for example, aim to bring your lunch two of those days. That's realistic and achievable for many of us.

For my lunch goal this week I will...

Example: I will bring my lunch two out of the five work days.

What's for lunch?

Once you've set your goals and looked over the healthy lunch plate, you'll need to decide what to eat for lunch. Need help getting started? Here are some lunch ideas to rotate through:

- 1 serving whole-grain crackers, baby carrots, ½ cup hummus, and an orange

- 1 whole-wheat tortilla, topped with ½ cup beans, 1 ounce low-fat shredded cheese, and 1 tablespoon salsa, heated in the microwave and rolled up, plus an apple
- 2 slices whole-grain bread with ½ recipe tuna salad with curry and apples (see page 41), plus plenty of tomatoes and romaine lettuce
- 1 serving whole-grain crackers and 2 ounces low-fat cheese, with carrot and jicama sticks (a root vegetable), apple, and flavored seltzer
- California turkey wrap (whole-wheat tortilla, 4 ounces turkey, hummus, sprouts), plus a fresh fruit cup
- 1 whole-grain roll, 1 cup lentil soup, grape tomatoes, and a peach
- peanut butter sandwich made with 2 tablespoons peanut butter on whole-grain bread with a side of carrot sticks, plus a small banana
- wasabi roast beef sandwich (whole-grain bread, 3 ounces lean roast beef, 1 tablespoon low-fat wasabi mayonnaise, and spinach) and 1 cup melon
- chicken Caesar wrap (whole-wheat tortilla, chicken, and romaine lettuce with 1 tablespoon low-fat Caesar dressing), plus an orange
- 1 cup low-sodium soup (minestrone, chicken noodle, or lentil) with a serving of whole-wheat crackers
- 1 cup chili made with lots of vegetables and ground turkey
- 1 cup whole-wheat pasta salad made with 4 ounces chicken or tuna and vegetables
- pizza made with a whole-wheat English muffin or whole-wheat pita topped with vegetables and 2 ounces of low-fat cheese, such as part-skim mozzarella or reduced-fat shredded cheeses
- stuffed peppers made with roughly ½ cup brown rice and 4 ounces ground turkey
- 1 cup low-fat or nonfat plain Greek yogurt with berries or fresh fruit and 2 tablespoons nuts
- vegetable quesadilla made with 1 whole-wheat tortilla, 2 ounces part-skim mozzarella, and vegetables
- veggie burger with lettuce and tomato on a whole-wheat bun, with a small green salad
- soy or vegetarian hot dog on a whole-wheat hot dog

bun with homemade coleslaw made with healthy vegetable oil

- 1 cup low-fat cottage cheese and a cup of fresh fruit
- beans with a whole-grain tortilla and salsa, shredded lettuce, and tomatoes
- hard-boiled egg with a green salad and ½ pear
- whole-grain crackers or bread with ¼ cup hummus and 2 ounces low-fat cheese and sliced vegetables on top.

Lunchtime strategies

Lunchtime can be a minefield of temptation. From sandwich shops exploding with high-calorie sandwiches to salad bars stocked with tempting mayonnaise-based salads, it can be difficult to get through lunch without making some poor choices. Here are some lunch survival strategies.

Salad bar survival

A trip to the salad bar is a convenient way to load up your lunch with vegetables. But if you're not careful, you can ladle on hefty doses of calories and artery-clogging saturated fat. Regular salad dressings, cheeses, mayonnaise-based salads (such as tuna, chicken, and egg salads), and desserts (such as rice pudding and ambrosia) drive up calorie counts. The good news? Many salad bars have so much variety now that it's easy to work around these potential diet pitfalls without feeling deprived.

Take these steps to raise your next visit to the salad bar to a healthier level.

■ **Step 1: Build a vegetable base.** Most salad bars have two sizes of tins—large and small. Go for the large tin at lunch and load it up with leafy greens and raw or grilled vegetables. By getting the large-size salad, you'll eat more produce when the pickings are plentiful.

■ **Step 2: Add beans and other protein.** To your veggie base, add a couple of spoonfuls of garbanzo and kidney beans, or three-bean salad—typical salad bar offerings. Beans are an excellent source of disease-fighting fiber—and they're filling! Add some grilled chicken, low-fat cottage cheese, or chopped eggs to complete the picture of a fulfilling lunch. With a large, hearty salad as your lunch, you're less apt to get

Quick tip: The deal with frozen meals

If you bring a frozen entrée for lunch to heat up in the office microwave, look for frozen entrées with no more than 350 calories, 4 g or less of saturated fat, 15 g or more of protein, and 600 mg or less of sodium per serving. Add frozen vegetables to the meal as you microwave it, or a handful of baby carrots, celery, or fresh fruit to make it more filling and nutritionally complete.

hungry in the afternoon and become susceptible to unplanned, impulsive snacking.

■ **Step 3: Add a little healthy fat.** Sprinkle on the nuts and seeds. They are high in heart-healthy unsaturated fat and healthy protein, give you a feeling of fullness, and help food stay in your stomach longer. If you opt for nuts and seeds, though, go with a low-calorie salad dressing to keep your calorie count down. Or sprinkle on a small dose of oil and vinegar.

Avoid large cheese chunks or use them only sparingly. Cheese packs a calorie and saturated fat wallop. A light sprinkle of a strongly flavored cheese like feta or Parmesan can deliver flavor with fewer calories. Feta, especially, is so flavorful that you can add less of it.

If you want to use regular, full-fat salad dressing, don't add nuts or seeds or cheese to your salad, or use only one tablespoon of dressing diluted with vinegar or light or nonfat dressing, to keep the calorie count low.

Bypass the bacon bits. They're high in fat, they don't offer much nutritionally, and they're processed—the worst kind of meat.

■ **Step 4: Finish with whole grains and fruit.** Look for whole grains like barley or bulgur wheat to sprinkle on top. Or add a few slices of fruit.

Many salad bars also offer rice pudding, ambrosia salad, and other treats. Even though they're available, don't kid yourself. They're dessert, not salads. If you're trying to control calories, choose fresh fruit instead.

Lunch on the go

Lunch is the perfect time to treat yourself to a walking break. Instead of spending all of your lunchtime sitting and eating, eat a quick healthy meal (see “Your healthy lunch shopping list,” page 24) and go for a brisk walk by yourself or with a friend or coworker. Assess your speed by taking the “talk test.” If you can walk and talk

effortlessly, consider picking up the pace at least part of the time. To gain the cardiovascular benefits, you need to walk fast enough to get your heart rate up. If you are talking while you walk, you should be walking at a pace fast enough that you need to pause noticeably to take a breath.

Take walking breaks during the rest of your day as well, such as every hour you're at your computer. Research shows that it's best to avoid sitting for long stretches. A 2010 study in the *American Journal of Epidemiology* involving 123,216 men and women over a period of 14 years found that women who often sat for more than six hours daily were 37% more likely to



Your healthy lunch shopping list

- apples
- avocados
- bananas
- beans: kidney, garbanzo, white
- canned tuna (packed in water)
- carrots
- celery
- cheeses (low-fat)
- cherry tomatoes
- chicken (baked or grilled, not processed)
- chicken noodle soup (low-sodium)
- cucumbers
- dark green leafy lettuce
- eggs
- feta cheese (low-fat)
- green peppers
- hummus
- insulated lunch bag
- lean roast beef
- lentil soup (low-sodium)
- minestrone soup (low-sodium)
- mozzarella cheese (low-fat)
- mushrooms
- peanut butter (natural) or other nut butter
- pineapple
- plain nonfat yogurt
- plastic forks, spoons, knives
- red peppers
- salsa
- sandwich bags
- snap peas
- tomatoes
- turkey (sliced, fresh baked)
- whole-grain bread
- whole-grain crackers
- whole-grain English muffins
- whole-grain rolls
- whole-grain tortillas
- whole-wheat bagels
- whole-wheat pitas
- veggie burgers
- yogurt (plain, nonfat)

die prematurely, regardless of the amount of exercise they got during the day. Men who sat for more than six hours daily were 18% more likely to die during the study period than those who sat for fewer than three hours a day.

Deli dilemmas

Let's face it: sub shops are everywhere, and at lunch time they can be a convenient choice. The downside? Many deli sandwiches are made with cured and processed meats, which have been linked to higher rates of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and colon cancer. In addition, deli meats, cheeses, and mayonnaise-based salads can be loaded with unhealthy fats, calories, and sodium. One example is the chicken teriyaki foot-long sandwich offered at a popular sub chain. It weighs in at 760 calories and packs 2,020 milligrams (mg) of sodium, which is more than a day's worth in one meal. A national upscale sandwich chain offers an Asiago roast beef sandwich with 690 calories and 1,270 mg of sodium. Before succumbing to your favorite deli sandwich, check out its nutrition profile. Many national chains offer online nutrition information that can be enlightening.

Look for sandwiches with no more than 500 calories per serving, no more than 4 g saturated fat, and under 500 mg of sodium. In general, favor protein-rich vegetables and bean fillings as well as fish, grilled chicken, or turkey, rather than red and processed meats. Plant-based sandwich fillings such as hummus, peanut butter, and other nut butters (almond, cashew) contain healthy fats as well as vitamins and minerals.

Build a better sandwich

The benefit of making your own sandwich is that you have full control over what's in it. A balanced sandwich-based lunch contains lean protein, healthy carbohydrates, and a hefty serving of vegetables. Here are three choices of basic formulas to follow for a sandwich-based lunch:

- full sandwich (2 slices of whole-grain bread)
- half sandwich (1 slice of whole-grain bread) + a salad
- half sandwich (1 slice of whole-grain bread) + 1 cup vegetable-based clear soup.

To build a balanced sandwich, follow these basic steps:

■ **Start with a healthy foundation.** You can make a sandwich on bread, crackers, pita, or any number of grain-based products so long as you choose a whole-grain variety. Some good choices include whole-wheat bread, oat-bran English muffin, whole-grain tortilla, small whole-wheat bagel, whole-grain crackers, whole-wheat pita, or oat-bran bread. Remember to choose breads that list “whole” before the grain’s name as the *first* ingredient. Beware of terms like wheat flour, stone-ground, seven-grain, multigrain, pumpernickel, enriched, fortified, and organic. They don’t necessarily indicate that a particular loaf is whole-grain.

■ **Spread on a flavorful accent.** Try a small amount of guacamole, mustard, low-fat mayonnaise, trans-fat-free margarine (check the label), roasted red peppers, tomato sauce, or salsa.

■ **Add lean protein.** Try flaked tuna, chopped chicken, turkey breast, low-fat cheese, lean beef, or hummus.

■ **Accessorize with a crunch.** Consider romaine lettuce, flat-sliced carrots or celery, sliced apples, sliced red and green peppers, sliced cucumbers, tomato, roasted red peppers, mushrooms, pineapple slices, snap peas, or cherry tomatoes.

■ **Think big.** Layer your sandwich to make a large and appetizing creation with spinach and watercress, tomato, and onion. Roll bean sprouts, shredded cabbage, and slices of green or red pepper into tortillas or flat bread.

LUNCH GROUND RULES

- ✓ Don't skip lunch no matter how busy you are.
- ✓ Follow the healthy-lunch formula: lots of vegetables, lean protein, whole grains, fresh fruit, and a small amount of healthy fat.
- ✓ Plan ahead. Know what you're going to have for lunch before leaving the house in the morning. This means either bringing your lunch from home or knowing what healthy selections you will make before going into a restaurant or cafeteria. Try to bring lunch from home more often so you can take nutritional control of this important meal.

Tap into the benefits of water

Water has no calories and few, if any, nutrients. Still, it’s an important player in your diet, and lunch is a great opportunity to partake of its benefits. Among its many duties, water aids digestion, helps prevent constipation, normalizes blood pressure, and helps stabilize heartbeat. Water also carries nutrients and oxygen to cells, cushions joints and protects organs and tissues, helps regulate body temperature, and maintains electrolyte (sodium) balance. Most people need about 32 to 64 ounces of fluids each day. Anything watery counts, but water

itself—because it’s naturally calorie-free—is an excellent choice.

Drinking water before meals may also help you lose weight. In a study published in 2010 in the journal *Obesity*, researchers at Virginia Tech followed two groups of people on a low-calorie diet for about three months. One group was told to drink 2 cups of water before every meal; the other was not required to drink water. At the end of the study, the people in the water-drinking group had lost an average of 15.5 pounds, compared with 11 pounds for the other group. The explanation makes sense: drinking water helps you feel full, and you eat less as a result.

But drinking water between meals is also a good strategy. If you wait until you’re thirsty to drink, it’s easy to mistake thirst for hunger and end up eating food when all you really needed was a tall, cool drink. ♥

Make dinner a winner

By now, you probably know that to make healthy meals you need healthy groceries in your kitchen. If you don't, you may arrive home at the end of day to an empty refrigerator. Suddenly, fast food, frozen entrées, or takeout seem like the only options. Before you even realize it, you've eaten a burger and fries or a pizza slathered with pepperoni. You've consumed lots of calories with few nutrients, almost no vegetables, and no whole grains. A little advance planning can avert this high-calorie, low-nutrient ambush.

Americans consume 77% of their daily calories away from home, up from just 18% in 1977. There are many reasons behind this shift, but in part, it's because prepared convenience foods are now cheaper and more widely available than ever before, enabling people to eat anywhere. To compete in this marketplace, the makers of fast foods and convenience foods have loaded their offerings with appetite-stimulating fats, sugars, and salt. Fresh vegetables and whole grains

are almost nowhere in sight. Meanwhile, portion sizes in restaurant meals, take-out foods, and snacks have increased, sometimes more than doubling.

Last-minute solutions such as eating take-out several times a week can temporarily make life easier and give you a break. But they can derail your health if they become a pattern. To prepare and eat healthy dinners, it all starts with organization. If you stick to a plan, yet build in some degree of flexibility, you'll be able to meet the goal of a healthy dinner more consistently. One of the easiest ways to do that is to eat dinner at home as often as you can.

The healthy dinner plate

What's for dinner? Use the healthy dinner plate (see Figure 5) as your basic model of what to eat and how much. The idea, as with lunch, is to fill half of your plate with vegetables (1 to 2 cups, cooked or raw). Then make one-quarter of your plate healthy carbohydrates and whole grains like brown rice or 100% whole-grain pasta or bread. The remaining quarter of your plate should be lean protein such as fish, chicken, beans, lentils, turkey, or tofu. Extra-lean beef or pork can be included about once a week. Aim for 4 to 6 ounces of protein-rich foods for dinner, with, ideally, fish in the protein spot at least twice a week. Keep in mind that 4 ounces of protein is about the size of a deck of cards.

Setting goals for dinner success

Your goal for this week is to use your food diary to determine how you're doing with dinner and what you may need to do to improve it. Take a look now at the food diary you kept for three days. During that time, what did you eat for dinner? Did your dinner follow the basic formula (vegetables, whole grains, lean protein)? Are you missing any food groups? Are you eating too much or too little? How often, in those three

Figure 5 The healthy dinner plate



Fill half your plate with vegetables, one-quarter with lean protein, and one-quarter with whole grains.

days, did you eat dinner out? Do you tend to eat a lot more on weekends? Is there a general pattern to your dinners that might be working against your goal of healthy eating? *Write your answers here:*

Now, looking at your dinner routine, what goal will you set for yourself for dinner? What do you have to do to achieve it? Remember to be as specific and as realistic as possible when planning how to accomplish your goal. And be sure to troubleshoot. If your goal, for example, is to prepare and eat dinner at home at least three days a week, ask yourself why you haven't been doing it already, and anticipate how this change is going to affect your life. Decide how and when you will take the time to plan healthy home dinners. If your goal is to make better choices when you must eat out, think about it in advance. If you eat too much bread at restaurants, ask the server not to bring any. Are appetizers your downfall? Scout the menu for offerings that are vegetable-based, like salads, and ask the server to hold the cheese and bring dressing on the side.

Whether they eat out or at home, many people need to reduce their dependence on meat as the main dish for every meal. To reach this goal, plan some time to look for meatless recipes or recipes that use very little meat, such as Asian stir-fry meals or Mexican burritos with mostly beans and vegetables.

Hint: become a weekend warrior. Use the weekends to plan menus, shop, batch-cook, and prep healthy meals for the work week. Pre-portion single or family-size servings of casseroles and soups in freezer-proof containers and stack them in your freezer.

Make it your mission to at least have an idea about what you're going to have for dinner before going out for the day.


For my dinner goal this week, I will...

Example: This week, I will stock up on healthy quick-fix meal options, such as frozen vegetables, precooked skinless chicken, whole-wheat pita bread and whole-wheat pasta, and low-sodium pasta sauce—items I can just heat up that need only a side salad to become a balanced meal.

Sneaky ways to get in more fruits and vegetables

Dinner is typically the largest meal of the day, the meal at which we tend to load up. So why not load up on fruits and vegetables so you can meet your quota of at least five daily servings? It's something only 14% of American adults manage to accomplish, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Dinner is also your last meal to make up for any nutrient deficits you might have incurred during the day. If you didn't eat many or any fruits and vegetables at lunch, now's your chance. Plus, piling on the produce means there's less room in your dinner for unhealthy options. Here are some sneaky ways to work more produce into dinner.

- **Roast vegetables along with whatever entrée is in the oven.** Roasting is a great way to let the deep, rich flavors of vegetables shine through because their starches start to convert to sugar at around 375° F, releasing a deep, nutty sweetness. To roast, just bake cut-up vegetables at 375° F for 20 to 25 minutes or until they're lightly browned. Any vegetable is a roasting candidate—from mushrooms, onions, eggplant, and zucchini to tomatoes, broccoli, and carrots—so don't limit yourself. Enjoy roasted veggies as a side dish or toss them into pasta and other recipes.
- **Poach veggies in low-sodium chicken broth and white wine.** Add garlic, basil, or tarragon for a flavor bonus. To poach, boil enough liquid to cover the vegetables. When it boils, add the vegetables. Turn down the heat to just below boiling and cook the vegetables for about five to seven minutes, until they're brightly colored and tender-crisp. To retain nutrients, keep a watchful eye on the pot, or set a timer so you don't overcook.
- **Smuggle fresh cut vegetables into main dishes.** Try adding mushrooms, peppers, zucchini, onions, or carrots into pasta sauce, casseroles, soup, stews, scrambled eggs, and chili.

 **Quick tip** Make your own easy pasta sauce: Sauté garlic, onions, and green peppers in 1 teaspoon olive oil. Add a can of low-sodium crushed tomatoes. Eat over whole-wheat pasta.

- **Make it your goal to have a salad with dinner most days.** Stock your salad with dark green leafy lettuce and toss in petite peas, tomatoes, onions, celery, carrots, and peppers. Bonus: in addition to the nutrient bonanza you'll get, studies show that starting meals with a low-calorie salad can help you consume fewer calories at the meal, as long as the salad is no more than 100 calories. A healthy salad consists of about 3 cups of dark green lettuce, ½ cup carrots, a tomato, ¼ cucumber, and 1½ tablespoons of low-calorie dressing.
- **Choose fruit—fresh or frozen, stewed or baked—for dessert.** It all counts toward your daily produce quota. Dried fruits are healthy but high in calories, so eat them sparingly.

Curtail cooking calories

If cooking dinner is your diet downfall because it often means you eat two suppers—one in the kitchen, one at the table—try these tactics:

Snack on the good stuff. Since vegetables should be a big part of your meal, set some out to snack on while you're cooking. Green peppers, baby carrots, and other vegetables are tasty raw.

Take tiny bites. There's no need to taste-test recipes you've made hundreds of times. But if you're making something new, go ahead and test along the way. Keep in mind that a teaspoon can get the job done just as easily as a ladle or a wooden spoon. You just want to get the flavor.

Wear your skinny jeans. Instead of wearing comfy sweatpants when you're cooking, opt for the tight-fitting clothing you'd like to wear comfortably. It'll help you stay in touch with your waistline and curb the impulse to nibble.

Drink water. Drinking water between tastes will cleanse your palate, so you won't need to taste as much to get the sense of whether the recipe is on track.

Keep a cooking food diary. If you find yourself munching away, keep a cooking food log: jot down what and how much you're eating, then tally your calories. Writing down cooking calories makes them real and helps stop the habit.

Don't cook while hungry. If you're hungry when you start cooking, have a piece of fruit, crunch on some raw vegetables, or have a cup of broth or herbal tea.

Chew gum. Chewing sugarless gum or sucking on sugarless candy can also help keep extra tastings out of your mouth.

Healthy up supermarket entrées

From the prepared foods section to the frozen food aisle, supermarkets are teeming with quick-fix dinner options that don't require any other ingredients. But like restaurant fare, these dishes are typically high in sodium and saturated fat and scant on vegetables. For example, one serving of an entrée called "grilled chicken Florentine complete dinner for two" (available in the frozen foods section at supermarkets nationwide) packs 1,090 mg of sodium (most of us need no more than 1,500 mg of sodium for the entire day) and 9 g of saturated fat. To make complete meals like these healthier when you're in a pinch, stretch the two-serving package into four servings by fortifying it with your own fresh or frozen vegetables and a can of rinsed and drained beans. You can certainly do the same with almost any supermarket or restaurant take-out dish, including the fresh prepared entrées at the supermarket. Toss fresh vegetables in with your ravioli. Cook up some Brussels sprouts to mix in with tortellini.

Bonus: by adding your own healthy ingredients, you'll reduce the cost of the meal, which is typically pricey, compared with, say, a quick pasta sauce you could make yourself. In fact, why not come up with your own fast, cheap, and delicious pasta sauce recipes to have in your arsenal?

Outwit your appetite

If you're trying to lose or maintain your weight, dinner doesn't have to be your diet downfall. That's because appetite isn't just governed by physical factors. It's also independently influenced by the sight of food and what the people around you are eating or ordering. Whether you eat out, prepare your own meals, or occasionally grab food on the run, portion control is essential to limiting your calorie intake at any meal. Here are some tips for keeping dinner portions in proportion.

At home

■ **Train your eye.** Even though you measured food servings at the start of your healthy-eating journey for your food diary, serving sizes can grow over time. Measure your food again now as a refresher course on standard serving sizes (see Table 2).

Developing an eye for serving sizes is helpful at home and when you're dining out or attending social events, where portions may be too large or the food unlimited.

Standard servings are generally much smaller than those dished out in restaurants or even what you're used to at home. In a Pennsylvania State University study, researchers manipulated the portions of baked ziti served as a main course at a restaurant. They used the regular portion on some days and one that was 50% larger on others. The price of the meal remained the same. Diners who

were served the larger portion ate 43% more baked-ziti calories, as well as more of the accompaniments (a roll and butter and a stuffed tomato), yet surveys showed that all the customers thought their portions were equally appropriate.

■ **Change your tableware.** Large plates suggest that a bigger portion is an appropriate amount. Serving your meals on smaller plates, on the other hand, can make a small serving look larger. So if your dinner plates are larger than the standard 10.5 inches, get smaller plates or use a luncheon plate or salad plate for your main dish. Save larger plates for festive dinners. Meanwhile, use smaller serving utensils, such as a soup spoon, for doling out portions. In a Cornell University study, participants at an ice cream social given a large bowl ate 31% more ice cream than those given a medium-size bowl. Similarly, with beverages, replace short, wide glasses with tall, slender ones. Research shows that people pour 28% more in short, wide glasses than they do in tall, skinny ones. Height gives the illusion of looking like more, so we pour less.

■ **Don't serve meals family style.** To discourage second helpings, pre-serve your portions onto each plate in the kitchen rather than bringing serving bowls to the dining table. Keeping the remaining food off the table makes it less likely you'll reach for more.

■ **Lighten up meals.** Studies show that dimmed lights at meals can make you eat more. In restaurants

DINNER GROUND RULES

- ✓ Plan your dinners for the week and try to eat at home more often. Remember to start from where you are now and cut back gradually. If you're eating out five nights a week, try to eat at home three nights.
- ✓ Take control of restaurant meals by looking for dishes that come with lots of vegetables, lean proteins, and only small portions of white starches like pasta, rice, and bread. Don't eat everything on your plate. Bring some home.
- ✓ Practice portion control at home, too, and be sure to pile at least half your plate with vegetables.

with soft lighting, for example, consumers tend to stay longer and maybe enjoy an unplanned dessert or an extra drink. Low lighting can also make you feel less inhibited and self-conscious; you're more apt to eat more, especially when you're with others. You can't control a restaurant's lighting level, but at home, you can keep the lights bright and reserve candlelight dinners for special occasions.

■ **Just eat.** Don't eat and drive, eat and watch TV, eat and read, or do anything else while eating. Multi-tasking while eating makes it easy to consume more food without even realizing it. Also, you sacrifice that pleasant feeling of satisfaction that comes with concentrating on your food. Instead, find a distraction-free spot and just sit down and eat. (That goes for snacks, too.) If you're on your feet, you're not paying attention.

■ **Pace yourself.** Many diet books advise people to chew slowly, so that they'll feel full after eating less food than if they ate quickly. Eating slowly doesn't always work, but when it does, the reason has as much to do with the brain as with the gut. Scientists have known for some time that a full stomach is only part of what causes someone to feel satisfied after a meal; the brain must also receive a series of signals from digestive hormones secreted by the gastrointestinal tract.

Here's the inside story: As the stomach fills with food or water, stretch receptors in the stomach activate and signal the brain directly through the vagus nerve, which connects the gut and the brainstem. Then, as partially digested food enters the small intestine, hormonal signals release. One example is cholecystokinin (CCK), released by the intestines in

▶ **Quick tip** Many people watch TV from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. each night. Studies show that TV viewing is associated with increased body weight in both kids and adults. Instead, get up and take a walk or a bike ride. Or try an indoor activity like playing Wii or doing a yoga video.

Smart easy dinners

Have the ingredients on hand for these easy dinners:

1. Spread low-fat refried beans on a whole-wheat tortilla, add thawed shrimp or leftover chicken, sprinkle with chopped green peppers, add a spoonful of salsa, roll up, and bake for 15 minutes.
2. Slice a tofu block into large slices (about three slices per block); add chopped scallions, garlic, and a little low-sodium soy sauce. Meanwhile, toss vegetables such as strips of red pepper in olive oil. Roast tofu and vegetables in the oven for 20 minutes at 375° F. Serve with brown rice or whole-wheat couscous.
3. Add ½ can of beans (rinsed and heated in the microwave) or salmon chunks to a tossed salad. Serve it with a dressing of oil and balsamic vinegar plus a hearty chunk of whole-wheat bread and olive oil.
4. Whip together a two-egg omelette (two eggs plus a teaspoon of water) and fill with any leftover vegetables you have around, such as steamed broccoli from last night's dinner and some chopped tomatoes. Season with pepper. Or sprinkle on your favorite herb combination, like *Herbes de Provence* or bouquet garni.

response to food consumed during a meal. Another hormone, leptin, produced by fat cells, communicates with the brain about long-range needs and satiety, based on the body's energy stores. Research suggests that leptin amplifies the CCK signals to enhance the feeling of fullness. Other research suggests that leptin also interacts with the neurotransmitter dopamine in the brain to produce a feeling of pleasure after eating. The theory is that, by eating too quickly, you might not give this intricate hormonal cross-talk system enough time to work.

Of course, as anyone who has tried eating slowly to lose weight can attest, it's not quite that simple. People who are obese, for example, may suffer from leptin resistance, meaning that they're less responsive to satiety or pleasure signals from this hormone. Appetite is complex, and dieting is a challenge. Even so, it's worth taking time to savor the texture, flavor, and aroma of your food. To slow yourself down, make a habit of taking one mindful bite at the beginning of each meal, which acts like an eating speed bump. Tune into the taste, texture, and smell of that bite. Put your fork down and chew it slowly. These steps can help put the

brakes on your eating velocity, which in turn will give your brain a chance to receive the message that your stomach is full. When you feel full, stop eating.

At restaurants

In general, restaurant food isn't as healthy as food you prepare using the healthy eating guidelines. For one thing, it's more likely to be high in bad fats, salt, sugar, and refined carbohydrates. It's not obvious, but butter is in everything in many restaurants—chefs like the flavor and are trained to use it liberally, even on those healthy-looking fresh vegetables. The same goes for salt and sugar. Plus, restaurant portions are often overly large. But if you're smart about what you order, you can get a healthy meal—including dessert—when eating out. Here are some guidelines.

■ **Check the restaurant's Web site before leaving the house.** Many restaurants now show their menus online. Some even list nutrition information. You might be surprised by the high calorie and sodium content in some foods you thought were healthy. You can also check menus at Web sites such as www.opentable.com. In general, menus don't tell you very much about an item's nutritional value, but they can give you a general idea of the type of food served (meat with creamy sauces? or fish with vegetables?). Knowing what to order ahead of time can give you more control over the experience so you're less distracted or swayed by what everyone else is having. Also, go to restaurants that offer plenty of options à la carte.

■ **Outsmart entrée envy.** When you're eating out with others, be the first to order so you're not influenced by what everyone else is choosing. You can be enticed by other people's food decisions. If everyone is indulging in the prime rib and twice-baked potatoes, for example, you're less likely to order the grilled fish. Conversely, if you set a healthier tone by ordering a salad and salmon for your entrée first, others may follow suit.

■ **Start with a salad or a broth-based soup.** In general, eating in courses isn't the best strategy if you're trying to lose weight, because it can lead to consuming more calories. Conversely, seeing all the food together gives you a better appreciation of your food intake. But here's an exception: studies show that starting a meal with a small salad and low-calorie dressing such as

vinegar and oil or a broth-based soup can help curb your appetite, causing you to eat less at the meal. But before ordering a salad as a starter, ask what type of lettuce is used. If it's iceberg rather than a dark green leafy lettuce such as romaine or arugula, take a pass or order the consommé instead.

■ **Ask about fried foods.** Frying usually adds more fat to a food than broiling, baking, or sautéing, so the calorie count is likely to be high. But the good news is that many restaurants are switching away from frying foods in unhealthy oils. Ask your server what kind of oil is used for frying. But beware of the high calorie count of all fried foods.

■ **Ask for extra vegetables.** Many restaurant entrées don't come with a generous serving of vegetables. But you can easily remedy that by ordering vegetables from the side dish selection, substituting vegetables or a salad for a less healthy side dish, or asking for more vegetables. Many Chinese restaurants, for example, can easily accommodate your request to add extra broccoli or pea pods to your entrée.

■ **Avoid dishes prepared with gravy and heavy sauces.** Or ask the waiter to use half the sauce. Because gravy is often made with fatty pan drippings from meat, it's relatively high in saturated fat. Many sauces are made with cream, which is also high in saturated fat.

■ **Ask the waiter how large the entrées are.** If they're bigger than the meals you usually eat, consider ordering an appetizer instead or sharing an entrée with someone else. And keep in mind that you don't have to eat everything on your plate; try eating only half the portion and taking the rest home for tomorrow's lunch.

Lunch on leftovers

While you're writing your dinner shopping list for the week, think about making dinners that leave enough leftovers for one or two lunches. Cook enough roasted chicken, for example, for a Monday dinner to have in different guises for lunch on Tuesday and Thursday. Chop the chicken and mix in fruit and a handful of nuts, then layer this over a salad, stuff it into a whole-wheat pita, or roll it into a whole-grain wrap. Or slice chicken and add a few slices of avocado, tomato, sprouts, and pesto to whole-grain bread for a great sandwich. Round out lunch with a piece of fruit and grape tomatoes or some crunchy carrot, celery, or jicama sticks.

■ **Share desserts.** If you want a sweet dessert, consider sharing it with others at your table. You'll get the full taste, but just a fraction of the calories, sugar, and bad fats. Or order the fruit plate—or skip dessert and just sip coffee or tea.

At parties

At parties and receptions, where the pickings tend to be festive and plentiful, you can look for the healthiest offerings. Start with the vegetable plate. Is there a yogurt dip? Go for it. Many parties offer a fruit plate or fruit salad. Shrimp cocktail is a good choice, as are some of the items on a Middle Eastern platter like the hummus and tabbouleh. Unfortunately, the puff-pastry hors d'oeuvres, mini quiches, meatballs, and most fancy desserts are full of unhealthy fats, salt, and sugar. So steer clear. Or have just one and leave it at that.

One good way to control consumption at a party is to put just two items on your plate and move away from the food table to eat. When you're done, avoid the food and go get a drink of seltzer or another non-caloric beverage to space out the time between trips to the buffet. If you drink alcohol, alternate between alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages.



Healthy dinner shopping list

At this point, you probably have plenty of healthy food in the house. So this week, it's time to create your own shopping list based on what you already have on hand and a little time planning meals you want to make at home this week. You can begin with the "Smart easy dinners" (see page 30) or use the recipes at the end of this report. Even better, adapt recipes you know or those you find in cookbooks to meet the healthy eating guidelines in this report. *Start your list here or use a separate piece of paper.*

It's midafternoon, and you're starving. Between now and dinner you have to give a presentation, return 10 e-mails, and make two stops on the way home. You know that nothing in the office vending machines can be good for you, but the chocolate bar, bag of cookies, or cheese popcorn is quick, easy, and filling.

Or, you're at home and the big slab of gourmet cheese left over from guests last weekend is calling from the refrigerator, too tempting to resist even though you ate lunch only two hours ago.

Snacking is often unplanned and, therefore, can erode your healthy eating goals. But it doesn't have to be that way. Even though high-calorie, high-sugar, or high-sodium processed food options such as potato chips, granola bars, and snack cakes continue to be popular, a snack can be a good-for-you experience. Depending on what you choose, snacks can be a source of healthy nutrients.

Make no mistake, snacking is not a necessary part of a healthy eating program. It poses more risks than benefits. Still, many people find it hard not to have a snack sometime between lunch at noon and dinner at 6 p.m. A healthy snack can help sustain your energy levels by stabilizing your blood sugar, the fuel required by your body's cells. When blood sugar dips, which can happen if you don't eat about every four hours, you may feel tired.

Snacks can also increase your energy and endurance levels during a workout. If you eat a snack that offers a healthy combination of carbohydrates, protein, and some fat one hour before your workout, you'll have more energy available during exercise and you won't dip into your glycogen reserves (carbohydrates stored in muscles) as quickly for energy. The result? You'll get a better workout as well as more energy for activities later in the day. It's also a good idea to eat a snack with carbohydrates and protein within 30 minutes after a long aerobic workout (one that lasts 60 minutes or more). Refueling helps to repair muscle

and replaces muscle glycogen stores so you won't feel spent the next day.

But it's no secret that popular snacks often contain exactly the kinds of foods that put you at risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, stroke, and other life-threatening conditions. Plus snacking can lead to weight gain if you're not careful. Research suggests that the more eating opportunities you have beyond three daily meals, the more calories you'll consume. A Harvard study published in *Obesity* that followed over 20,000 men for over a decade found that the men who snacked were at increased risk of weight gain—specifically—an 11-pound gain over the 10-year testing period. Other studies have found that diets high in snack food are associated with an increased waist circumference and weight gain over time.

Unlike meals, snacks are often casual and unplanned. It's easy to see how sneaky snack calories can be. For example, just one blueberry cereal bar, at 120 calories, can add up to an extra 12.5 pounds in a year if you have one every day over and above your basic calorie needs. And that's the problem. If you snack, you may not compensate for those calories by eating less at the next meal.

Setting goals for snacking success

Your goal this week is to keep a separate snacking diary to determine how you're doing with snacking and what you can do to improve your snacking routine, if necessary. To pinpoint your snacking patterns, keep track of your snacking habits for three days again (two weekdays and one weekend day) using the detailed one-day snack diary (see page 33). (You'll need three photocopies.) Note the time you're snacking, where you're snacking, with whom you're eating, what else you're doing while snacking, how you feel, whether you're hungry, what you ate and how much, and how you feel afterward. Track calories as well. Then, look

at the big picture. Are you typically snacking when you're not really hungry? When you're stressed? When you're doing something else? What are you eating? Do you tend to reach for the same kinds of snack foods at the same time each day? How many calories are you consuming? Is it more than you thought in relation to your overall calorie needs? *Write your answers here:*

Next, take a stand on snacking. If you're trying to establish a pattern of healthy eating, use your snacking diary to decide if snacking is helping or hindering you. Unless you have diabetes or a health issue that requires you to eat every few hours, snacking isn't necessary. Frequent snacking increases the chances of making poor food choices: a bag of chips can be had almost anywhere, unlike a piece of fresh fruit, which can be harder to put your hands on at a moment's notice. If you think snacking could be holding you back from reaching your healthy eating goals, try avoiding snacking for a day and see how you feel. Did you miss snacking? Did avoiding snacking for a day help you eat less or stick to healthier foods? Do you plan to curtail or avoid snacking in the future? *Write your answers here:*

If you think you can handle an occasional snack or feel you can't make it from lunch to dinner without a little sustenance, take a hard look at what you're munching on between meals. Are the snacks you're consuming unprocessed or minimally processed (as in fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, nuts, and seeds)? Low in sodium (less than 300 mg per serving)? Around 150 calories or less per snack? Are you eating them at the right time, such as before and after your workouts? Have you gotten into bad habits such as eating an unnecessary snack every night before bed? What could you do to improve your snacking habits? *Write your answers here:*

Looking at your answers, what goal will you set for yourself for snacking? What do you have to do to achieve it? Remember to be as specific and as realistic

as possible when planning how to accomplish your goal. If your aim, for example, is to eat more fruit for snacks, ask yourself why you haven't been doing it already. Maybe you need to add more fruit to your grocery list. Are leftover foods from entertaining a problem? Consider giving them to guests as they leave the house or simply throwing them out if you know they are not good for you to have around. Get rid of the foods that tempt you—no one needs that store-bought cookie dough, including your children or grandchildren.

For my snack goal this week, I will...

Example: This week, on the weekend, I'll plan ahead and buy 2 quarts of fresh strawberries from the farmer's market, then wash and bag them so I'll have a week's worth of grabbable snacks.

Smart snacks

It doesn't take much to know that many common snack foods like chips, cookies, doughnuts, and candy bars are not healthful choices. But other foods, like bran muffins, can masquerade as healthy when they are actually packed with butter and sugar. The same goes for cereal bars and energy bars. Other foods such as fruit leather, yogurt raisins, and organic candies sold in health-food sections hold out a deceitful hand, pretending to be healthful but really packed with added sugar and excess calories. The sad truth is that even snacks marketed as healthy, organic, or natural can be unhealthy. Fat-free chips and sweet snacks typically have lots of calories, salt, and sugar, and few vitamins or minerals. And an organic chocolate chip cookie is still a high-calorie, sugary cookie.

Eating these foods occasionally won't hurt, but a habit can take its toll. Because foods with a high glycemic load cause blood sugar to spike and then dip, they won't keep you feeling full for very long. So you run the risk of overeating, gaining weight, and possibly developing insulin resistance down the road. The same is true if you snack regularly on crackers and pretzels, normally made from refined flours. Additionally, foods with high sodium content can raise

blood pressure, and foods with unhealthy fats contribute to heart disease and diabetes.

What should you snack on?

Try keeping a bunch of grapes or a tangerine handy. This way, you'll see it before reaching for the calorie-dense chips or cookies. Have small containers of non-fat plain yogurt or applesauce with no added sugar within easy reach.

Bring a banana to work. Keep a bowl of cherries on the table. Fresh fruits contain plenty of vitamins and fiber. Also, try unsalted nuts, such as almonds, walnuts, peanuts, cashews, hazelnuts, and filberts, or roasted pumpkin seeds or sunflower seeds. They contain many beneficial nutrients and other substances, including vitamin E, folic acid, protein, potassium, and fiber. And although some are high in fat, the fat is healthy because it's mainly unsaturated.

Mix it up

The healthiest snacks have more than one macronutrient (protein, fat, carbohydrate) at each session. With a handful of whole-grain crackers (carbohydrate), for example, have some low-fat cheese (protein, fat). The mix of carbohydrates, protein, and fat is more satiating than straight carbohydrates. If you want to eat chips, look for brands that are unsalted or low in salt, free of trans fat, and made with unsaturated vegetable oils such as safflower, canola, sunflower, or peanut.

Snacking strategies

Snacking is not necessary, but if you take charge of your snacking habits using these suggestions, you can add healthy nutrients to your diet without an overdose of calories, salt, fats, and sugars.

■ **If snacking is more harmful than helpful, cut it out of your diet.** Once you have evaluated your snacking habits (see "Setting goals for snacking success," page 32), structure your diet by eating three healthy meals a day. Go in with the knowledge that three meals are the only food your body physically needs.

■ **If you choose to snack, limit your snack calories** to around 150 per snack or less. And make your snacks low in sodium (less than 200 mg of sodium per serving) and low in any added sugar (less than 3 g per serving).

■ **Home in on hunger.** Before you snack, ask yourself, "Am I hungry?" Many of us misidentify emotions, such as stress and fatigue, and call them hunger. If the answer is yes (your stomach feels hollow, your head is aching), make sure you're not confusing hunger with thirst. Drink an 8-ounce glass of water, then wait 10 to 15 minutes. If you're still hungry, go ahead and have a healthy snack.

If the answer is no (you're not hungry), attack cravings from a psychological level. You might be able to talk yourself out of a snack attack. Ask yourself how you're feeling. Lonely? Bored? Stressed? Try to understand what's really going on. Then, ask yourself the bigger question: will food fix what I need? The answer is always no. Eating pasta, for example, won't give you more time to get a project at work done. Then go for a walk around the block, do a few stretching exercises, put on some music, or distract yourself in another way.

Then, if you still want the food, fine. Ask yourself what food you really want. But eat only a small amount, and make it good. If you're craving chocolate, for example, eat one small square and savor it. It's important that you snack on what you're craving rather than denying it. Eating around a craving may only cause you to eat more because the craving isn't satisfied.

More snacks that satisfy, and calorie counts

- 1 carrot and 1 celery stalk cut into sticks with 1 tablespoon low-calorie Caesar salad dressing—100 calories
- ½ cup edamame (soybean in the pod)—100 calories
- 1 ounce low-fat cheese with ½ cup grapes—100 calories
- Vegetable sticks (½ cup) with hummus (2 tablespoons)—105 calories
- ½ cup low-fat cottage cheese with ½ cup fruit or vegetable—125 calories
- ½ small whole-wheat tortilla with two slices of turkey, tomato, and avocado—150 calories
- English muffin pizza: ½ whole-wheat English muffin + 2 tablespoons tomato sauce + ½ ounce low-fat shredded cheese and a few green pepper strips—150 calories
- 4 ounces plain nonfat yogurt with ½ cup berries—140 calories
- unsalted nuts (1 ounce): almonds, filberts, peanuts, soy nuts—160–180 calories

■ **Control your portion.** Rather than mindlessly munching from a box of animal crackers, have something that's calorie-contained by design, like a piece of fruit or a cup of nonfat plain yogurt. To keep a snack from turning into a meal's worth of calories, avoid handfuls of anything. Rather than randomly dipping into the rice cakes at your desk or a cereal box in front of the TV, give yourself a serving, then put the rest away before you start to eat. When possible, buy snacks in single-serving containers, and divide bulk snacks into individual sandwich bags with about 100 calories each. A study published in *Appetite* in 2009 found that participants who consumed 100-calorie packs ate about 6 fewer ounces of snacks per week compared with when they received standard-size packages of snacks.

■ **Manage unplanned snacking.** The mere sight of food you frequently cross paths with, such as the office goodie jar or that box of crackers on your kitchen counter, can stimulate your appetite. To thwart an unplanned snack session, keep cereal, crackers, and cookies hidden in a top cabinet. Also, wrap leftovers in aluminum foil, not plastic wrap, so you won't see them and be tempted when opening the refrigerator. At work, store treats (fruit is the exception) in covered containers, preferably in a distant office refrigerator, not on your desk. You'll eat even less if it takes effort, such as having to reach or take a walk to access food. If the communal goodie jar is someone else's, offer to fill it, but with treats you don't like. Or go out of your way, if you have to, to avoid walking by the goodie jar or the break room on your way to the copy machine, for example. ♥

Over the past five weeks, you've gained an awareness of your eating habits and started making healthier choices and putting your knowledge into practice by getting organized. Congratulations! Chances are, you're eating and enjoying healthier meals, controlling your portions, and generally consuming more fruits and vegetables and whole grains. How are you doing? It's time to take stock.

Taking stock

By now, you may have several specific goals you're working on in relation to breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacking. Are you continuing to meet the diet objectives you set for yourself? To find out how far you've come, keep another three-day food record (two weekdays and one weekend day), using the food diary on page 11. You may feel like you're continually going back to the drawing board, but keeping a food record again can help you assess your progress and fine-tune your diet-change plan. After doing another three-day food record, compare it to your old record from five

weeks ago. Then ask yourself: Where have I made the most progress with diet change? What do I still need to tweak? What's working? What's not? Did I make progress on my goals?

Assess your goals

Did you discover other goals you'd like to set? Restate your goals (from pages 14, 15, and 16) and note how well you've been doing:

Goal 1 progress:

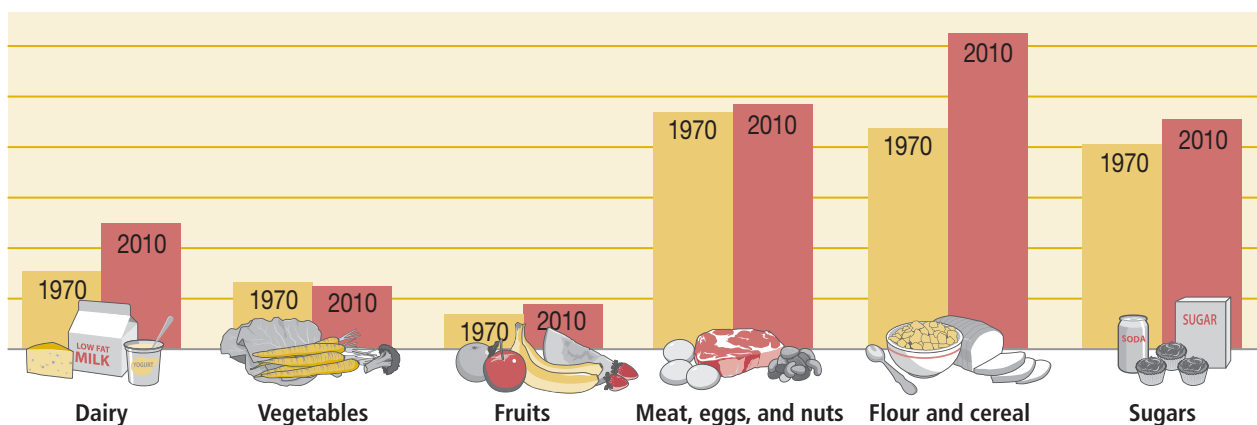
Goal 2 progress:

Goal 3 progress:

New goals:

Figure 6 What's available? Then and now

Staying on track isn't easy when faced with a constant onslaught of unhealthy choices. It's interesting to see that the availability of sugary foods in stores, restaurants, and other places has increased by 14% since 1970. The availability of flour and cereal-based foods has increased by 45%. But the availability of vegetables has decreased slightly.



Source: Report of the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010.

Food policies for the future

Next, take a look at your answers and formulate some specific food behavior policies for the future. These policies should reflect what you've learned about yourself and your eating habits over this past month and how you're going to behave going forward. Food policies aren't goals; they're your own personal set of rules to live by based on your knowledge and experience about what works for you. You can have as many food policies in relation to healthy eating as you want. To give you an idea, here are several examples of food policies that might be appropriate:

- "I will plan menus and shop for food every Saturday so I have healthy options on hand for breakfast, lunch, and dinner for the week."
- "I'm no longer going to snack. From now on, I'll eat

three meals and that's it." Or "I will limit my snacking to two 150-calorie snacks per day."

- "I will no longer eat while I'm driving, no matter how hungry I am."
- "I will always eat breakfast before leaving the house in the morning."
- "I will bring lunch with fruits, vegetables, and whole grains to work three out of five days a week."
- "I will use part of my lunch hour to walk every day."
- "I will have fresh fruit for dessert—not ice cream, pie, or cake."
- "I will not eat while watching TV."

Your food policies can be general, but typically, being specific is more helpful. So feel free to be exact. For example, if you eat out often for work and can't

► Get your friends and family on board

You don't live in a bubble. Despite your best intentions, it's not easy to eat healthfully if you have family or friends who prefer a steady diet of burgers and fries. You're more likely to succeed if you are surrounded by people who encourage you. But often, the people around you need a little support themselves. The changes you're making could indirectly affect them, and they may not want to change along with you.

To keep everyone on your side, you'll need to turn any negativity they may unwittingly toss your way into positive support. These strategies—tailor-made to address some of the most important people in your life—can help you do just that.

Your spouse and your kids. Begin by sharing some of the tastier healthy treats you are eating. Cut up a bowl of pineapple and offer it around. Make some delicious tortilla roll-ups for lunch (see "What's for lunch?" on page 22). Put out unsalted nuts and sunflower seeds for snacks. Next, begin introducing healthier meals that play to their preferences. If they love meat and potatoes, buy and prepare lower-fat cuts of meat that you can eat too. Then balance the meal with plenty of vegetables. Serving a salad and peas and carrots not only gives you plenty of good stuff to fill up on, it helps educate your family's palate. Whether they'll actually eat the vegetables is not the point (your kids may not gobble them up—at least at first). All you can do is expose them to healthy foods and hope they'll try them eventually. You're a powerful role model. If you can't refuse your child's desperate cries for cheese curls, buy 100-calorie packages, so you won't have an

open bag around. Or look for healthier, low-calorie versions of snacks you both can feel good about eating.

Respect the adjustment process; in time, your family may take to eating some of your healthier foods. Try to avoid saying, "Why did you eat that pineapple? It was for me." Instead, embrace the change.

Meanwhile, make realistic requests. Tell your spouse or partner exactly what you want: keep the bags of chips out of the house, for example, or ask your spouse or partner to join you for a walk after dinner. The more realistic your requests, the better. A couch potato isn't likely to run a marathon with you.

Your friends. Friends can be tremendously supportive in helping you follow your food policies. They can also unwittingly work against you. In fact, their influence is more powerful than you might think. With weight control, for example, if you have friends, even friends of friends, whose weight is on the upswing, your chances of piling on the pounds yourself increases by 57%, according to a Harvard study published in *The New England Journal of Medicine* in 2007. All told, obesity is contagious, spreading within social networks. We're influenced by the behaviors of those around us, and when more people you know gain weight, the behavior becomes acceptable, much like any social norm, such as getting a tattoo or wearing your pajamas in public. If you want to maintain or lose weight, try to associate with people with similar objectives. You can be a healthy influence on your friends, too, by inviting them to the gym to try out a new class or asking them over for a healthy dinner.

avoid it because it's part of your job, you could develop several ironclad restaurant behavior policies, designed to control calories, that reflect the type of restaurant you're frequenting. For example: "I will always order a vegetable, even if it means ordering an extra side dish or asking the chef to add vegetables to the entrée."

No matter what your food policies are, they should be consistent and repeatable, and they should take into account what's most important to you. If you really love dessert, for example, one of your food policies should reflect that. And to increase the chances you'll remember and stick with it, review your policies from time to time, such as before going out to eat. What are your food policies? Take the time to record them here. Remember, writing it down makes it real.

My food policies:

Example: From now on, I will substitute an apple for chips at lunch.

Keep up the good work

The idea at this stage is to establish a new way of eating that you enjoy and can stick with for life. The following steps can help you reinforce your new habits.

Reward yourself

In addition to your food policies, be sure to fortify your motivation by rewarding yourself frequently. Behavior change is hard work because habits are so ingrained. By the time you're 40, you've eaten some 40,000 meals—and probably lots of snacks. The most successful people reward themselves for following their food policies, especially in the first six months they're implementing them. After a week of cooking at home three out of five weeknights, for example, you could acknowledge your progress by treating yourself to something you've been wanting. Also, recognize other ways the changes you're making are benefiting your life. If cooking at home more often is saving you money, for example, once a week, you could put the money you didn't spend on eating out into a clear tip jar for a vacation, then watch your rewards mount.

Find a workaround

While you're at it, try to control your environment so old behaviors don't tempt you. If you're trying to break the fast-food habit, try driving a different route that doesn't take you through the fast-food district. If you want to eat a healthy breakfast, put things out before you go to bed. Find a healthy substitute for any behaviors you're trying to eliminate. That might be, for example, taking swigs from your water bottle instead of opting for your usual 3 p.m. cola or sugar fix.

When you slip

Once you put your food policies into action, realize that there will be times when you lapse into old behaviors. You're human. It will happen, and when it does, don't fall prey to thinking, "Well, I ate out every night this week, I might as well give up on the idea of cooking. It's just not happening." That's demotivating and counterproductive.

Instead, use the suffering that's associated with the slip as a learning opportunity so you can avoid it in the future. Ask yourself: What caused it? Was it something practical—such as having an especially busy week? Or was it something emotional, such as feeling stressed about work? Once you think you know what caused the slip, let it go and forgive yourself. Then get right back to your new routine. A slip doesn't need to become a fall. A lapse doesn't need to become a relapse. And pat yourself on the back each day you follow through. Just one day of making healthy food and physical activity choices—such as not having doughnuts when someone brings them into the office and taking a brisk walk at lunch—can boost your enthusiasm and self-esteem.

Finally, strengthen your resolve by seeking emotional encouragement from a support group or a network of friends. The help they provide can be a powerful motivator and make you feel accountable to someone. If you have other people watching your progress, you'll be less ready to break that commitment. If you feel you need the support of a professional, consider working with a registered dietitian. To find one in your area, visit www.eatright.org. ♥

Cooking kickoff: Recipes for success

The simple act of preparing your own meals automatically starts you on the road to healthy eating. Because you're the head chef, you can incorporate many of the principles set forth in this report, such as eating more fruits and vegetables and whole grains and consuming less salt and added sugar.

With a little planning, it's surprising how little time cooking actually takes. But planning is the operative word. Ideally, you'll want to have ideas about what

you'll be eating for several days ahead, then have the ingredients on hand from which to work. As you begin to cook more, it gets easier. You can streamline the process by batching recipes so you'll have your own ready supply of frozen dinners and take other healthy shortcuts. The simple and delicious recipes that follow can help you kick off your cooking skills and begin to build a repertoire of healthy meals you can turn to again and again. Bon appétit!

Appetizers

Crostini with goat cheese and fresh tomato

Crostini—thin slices of whole-wheat toasted baguette topped with cheese and vegetables—tastes complex, yet it's simple to make and a good use of in-season tomatoes, if they're available.

Ingredients:

- 1 whole-wheat baguette, sliced thin
- 2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon fresh rosemary, chopped (or 2 teaspoons dried)
- 2 teaspoons fresh thyme, chopped (or 1 teaspoon dried)
- 6 ounces goat cheese (chèvre)
- about 3 plum tomatoes, finely chopped

| Nutrition facts | |
|-----------------------|----|
| Servings: 15 | |
| Serving size: 1 piece | |
| Calories | 66 |
| Protein (g) | 4 |
| Carbohydrate (g) | 4 |
| Fiber (g) | <1 |
| Fat (g) | 4 |
| Saturated fat (g) | 2 |
| Trans fat (g) | 0 |
| Cholesterol (mg) | 5 |
| Sodium (mg) | 43 |

Preparation:

Heat oven to 375° F. Brush baguette slices lightly with about 1 tablespoon of the olive oil and toast in the oven until lightly browned, about 10 minutes. In a medium skillet, heat the remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil and sauté the garlic, rosemary, and thyme for 1 minute. Remove from heat and transfer to a medium bowl. Add goat cheese and mix well. Spread the goat cheese mixture lightly on the toasted baguette slices; garnish with the chopped tomatoes.

Tasty tzatziki (Mediterranean yogurt-cucumber dip) with pita bread

Tzatziki, a refreshing yogurt sauce, is delicious on pita bread, as a dip for fresh vegetables, or as a sauce for grilled vegetables, fish, or chicken. In addition to being versatile, it's low in calories and a flavorful source of calcium.

Ingredients:

- 2 medium cucumbers, peeled and seeded
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 2 cups plain, nonfat Greek-style yogurt
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 teaspoons snipped chives or dill
- 2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 1 loaf whole-wheat pita bread, cut in wedges

| Nutrition facts | |
|--|-----|
| Servings: 8 | |
| Serving size: 4 tablespoons dip and ¼ pita | |
| Calories | 96 |
| Protein (g) | 6.6 |
| Carbohydrate (g) | 9.2 |
| Fiber (g) | 1.4 |
| Fat (g) | 3.7 |
| Saturated fat (g) | .5 |
| Trans fat (g) | 0 |
| Cholesterol (mg) | 0 |
| Sodium (mg) | 209 |

Preparation:

Grate the cucumber and place in a sieve over a bowl in the refrigerator for 30 minutes. Discard any liquid that drains from the cucumber. Heat oven to 375° F. In a small bowl, mix the cucumbers, salt, pepper, yogurt, garlic, herbs, and 1 tablespoon of the olive oil. Taste for seasoning. Set aside.

Lay the pita on a baking sheet and drizzle with the remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil. Bake until golden, about 20 minutes. Serve the baked pita with the dip.

Makes 2 cups.

Classic caponata

Serve this Sicilian-inspired sweet-and-sour eggplant salad as an antipasto with whole-grain bread, or as a side dish, warm or at room temperature.

Ingredients:

- 4 medium eggplants, cut into bite-sized cubes
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 celery stalks, sliced
- 8 ripe red tomatoes, chopped
- 1 tablespoon capers, rinsed
- ¼ cup green olives, pitted
- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- pepper to taste
- 2 small whole-wheat baguettes (about 8 ounces each), each sliced into 8 pieces

| Nutrition facts | |
|---|-----|
| <i>Servings: 16</i> | |
| <i>Serving size: 1 baguette piece with caponata mixture</i> | |
| Calories | 129 |
| Protein (g) | 4 |
| Carbohydrate (g) | 22 |
| Fiber (g) | 6 g |
| Fat (g) | 3 |
| Saturated fat (g) | < 1 |
| Trans fat (g) | 0 |
| Cholesterol (mg) | 0 |
| Sodium (mg) | 176 |

For topping/garnish:

- ¼ cup chopped or slivered almonds
- about ¼ cup chopped parsley

Preparation:

Place the eggplant in a colander; sprinkle with salt and set aside for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat 1 tablespoon of the olive oil in a saucepan; add the onion and celery. Cook for 5 minutes until soft but not brown. Add the tomatoes and cook for 15 more minutes until pulpy. Add the capers, olives, vinegar, sugar, and pepper and cook for another 15 minutes.

Rinse and pat the eggplant dry. In a large saucepan, sauté the eggplant in the remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil over medium heat until softened and light brown. Stir the eggplant into the sauce. Let stand for at least 30 minutes to allow the flavors to develop before serving.

Assemble by dividing the mixture evenly on the baguette slices. Top with the almonds and parsley.

Lunch and dinner entrées

Tuna salad with curry and apples

Apples and curry sweeten and spice up this traditional sandwich filler. Prepare tuna salad at the beginning of the week and refrigerate until ready to use.

Ingredients:

- 1 can solid white tuna (packed in water, low-sodium), drained
- 1 tablespoon low-fat mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon mustard
- ½ teaspoon curry powder
- ½ cup chopped apple
- 1 tablespoon chopped onion

Preparation:

Combine ingredients in a bowl and mix.

| Nutrition facts | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| <i>Servings: 2</i> | |
| <i>Serving size: ¾ cup</i> | |
| Calories | 198 |
| Protein (g) | 22 |
| Carbohydrate (g) | 15 |
| Fiber (g) | 2 |
| Fat (g) | 6 |
| Saturated fat (g) | 3 |
| Trans fat (g) | 0 |
| Cholesterol (mg) | 39 |
| Sodium (mg) | 237 |

Bean and lentil soup

Make this soup on the weekends for the week ahead or the same day. Though it's quick to prepare, it tastes like you spent hours.

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 cup peeled and chopped onion
- 2 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- 15 ounces cannellini beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 cup green lentils
- 1 cup peeled and chopped fresh carrots
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 teaspoon crumbled bay leaf
- 2 fresh tomatoes, chopped
- black pepper to taste

| Nutrition facts | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| <i>Servings: 6</i> | |
| <i>Serving size: 1 cup</i> | |
| Calories | 194 |
| Protein (g) | 11 |
| Carbohydrate (g) | 36 |
| Fiber (g) | 9 |
| Fat (g) | 1.4 |
| Saturated fat (g) | 0.1 |
| Trans fat (g) | 0 |
| Cholesterol (mg) | 0 |
| Sodium (mg) | 200 |

recipe continued on page 42

Preparation:

In a 5- or 6-quart Dutch oven, heat the oil. Cook onion in hot oil over medium heat until tender, stirring occasionally. Add broth, beans, lentils, carrots, and celery. Bring to boiling. Add oregano, basil, thyme, and bay leaf. Reduce heat. Simmer, covered, 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Stir in tomatoes. Remove from heat. Season with black pepper.

Healthy turkey meatloaf

Ground turkey is a delicious alternative to ground beef, with less fat and fewer calories. Feel free to use ground turkey breast rather than regular ground turkey in this recipe to save even more fat and calories.

Ingredients:

- 1 medium red onion, diced fine
- 4 ribs celery, washed and diced fine
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 2 medium Granny Smith apples, cored and diced fine with skin left on
- 3 slices of whole-wheat bread, broken into crumbs
- ¾ cup shredded Parmesan cheese
- 2½ teaspoons poultry seasoning
- 2 whole eggs
- ¼ cup skim milk
- 1 pound ground turkey

| Nutrition facts | |
|-------------------------------|------|
| <i>Servings: 8</i> | |
| <i>Serving size: 1/8 loaf</i> | |
| Calories | 238 |
| Protein (g) | 18.8 |
| Carbohydrate (g) | 12.3 |
| Fiber (g) | 2.1 |
| Fat (g) | 13.7 |
| Saturated fat (g) | 5.1 |
| Trans fat (g) | 0.2 |
| Cholesterol (mg) | 126 |
| Sodium (mg) | 319 |

Preparation:

Preheat oven to 350° F and grease a 9-inch loaf pan.

In a pan, sauté the onion and celery in the canola oil until slightly soft, and add the apple pieces; cook on low heat for 6 minutes, then let this mixture cool.

In a large bowl, mix together the bread crumbs, cheese, poultry seasoning, eggs, milk, cooled apple mixture, and turkey for no more than 2 minutes to keep it from getting tough. Place into greased pan and cook in the center of the oven for 45 minutes or until the center is cooked through.

Multitasker's sautéed chicken breasts with roasted garlic sauce

Made for multitaskers, this chicken can marinate during the day while you're off doing something else.

Ingredients:

- 4 (4-ounce) boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 2 tablespoons fresh rosemary plus 5 rosemary sprigs
- 1 garlic clove, minced, plus 1 large garlic bulb
- ½ cup dry white wine
- ¼ cup low-sodium chicken stock
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper

| Nutrition facts | |
|---------------------------------------|------|
| <i>Servings: 4</i> | |
| <i>Serving size: 1 chicken breast</i> | |
| Calories | 232 |
| Protein (g) | 24.5 |
| Carbohydrate (g) | 3.5 |
| Fiber (g) | 0.2 |
| Fat (g) | 10.1 |
| Saturated fat (g) | 1.7 |
| Trans fat (g) | 0 |
| Cholesterol (mg) | 73 |
| Sodium (mg) | 283 |

Preparation:

Marinate chicken breasts in 1 tablespoon of the olive oil, 2 tablespoons rosemary, and minced garlic for at least 2 hours in the refrigerator.

Preheat oven to 350° F. Slice off the top of the garlic bulb and lightly sprinkle it with the remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil. Roast garlic for about one hour, or until soft and golden brown. Set aside to cool, about 10 minutes. (This step can also be done ahead.) When garlic has cooled, squeeze out garlic pulp and mash with a fork; set aside.

Sauté chicken in a non-stick pan for a couple of minutes on each side. Put in baking pan and bake in preheated oven at 350° F for about 15 minutes. Meanwhile, heat wine, 1 sprig of fresh rosemary, mashed roasted garlic, and chicken stock. Add salt and pepper. Leave on high heat until sauce thickens. Strain through fine sieve. Place one chicken breast on each plate and pour sauce over chicken. Garnish with rosemary sprigs. Serves 4.

Sides and salads

Carrot and squash sauté

Pear-shaped with smooth or prickly light green skin, chayote squash is native to Mexico. Feel free to substitute butternut or acorn squash if chayote isn't available at your local supermarket or farmer's market.

Ingredients:

- 3 fresh carrots, peeled
- ¼ cup chopped green onion
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1½ pounds fresh chayote squash, peeled and cut into julienne strips
- 2 large garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme (or ¼ teaspoon dried crushed thyme)
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 pinch pepper
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

| Nutrition facts | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| <i>Servings: 6</i> | |
| <i>Serving size: ¾ cup</i> | |
| Calories | 82 |
| Protein (g) | 1.5 |
| Carbohydrate (g) | 9.6 |
| Fiber (g) | 3 |
| Fat (g) | 4.8 |
| Saturated fat (g) | 0.7 |
| Trans fat (g) | 0 |
| Cholesterol (mg) | 0 |
| Sodium (mg) | 129 |

Preparation:

Blanch carrots in boiling water for 3 minutes. Drain and refresh under running cold water. Cut carrots into thin julienne strips.

In a large pan, sauté green onion in olive oil until soft. Add carrots, squash, garlic, and thyme. Cook, stirring frequently, until vegetables are crisp-tender, about 10 minutes. Season with salt, pepper, and lemon juice. Serve immediately.

Lemon spinach

It's amazing how a little lemon and garlic can zest up vegetables. We use baby spinach here, but feel free to substitute broccoli rabe or another favorite leafy green.

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 6 ounces baby spinach (about 3 large handfuls)
- juice of 1 lemon
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- pepper to taste

| Nutrition facts | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| <i>Servings: 4</i> | |
| <i>Serving size: ½ cup</i> | |
| Calories | 94 |
| Protein (g) | 1 |
| Carbohydrate (g) | 6 |
| Fiber (g) | 2 |
| Fat (g) | 7 |
| Saturated fat (g) | 1 |
| Trans fat (g) | 0 |
| Cholesterol (mg) | 0 |
| Sodium (mg) | 213 |

Preparation:

Put olive oil in a wok or 10-inch sauté pan. Add minced garlic. Cook on medium-high heat for 20 seconds. Add baby spinach to garlic and oil. Cook 2 to 3 minutes. Squeeze the lemon juice over the spinach while cooking. Add salt and pepper.

Greek couscous salad with walnuts

This great-for-you salad can be made ahead and doled out daily. Whole-wheat couscous is a versatile food that's a snap to prepare.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup whole-wheat couscous
- ½ cup chopped red peppers
- ⅓ cup chopped scallions or chives
- ⅓ cup chopped red onion
- ¼ cup diced black olives
- ½ cup chopped walnuts
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1½ ounces feta cheese
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice

| Nutrition facts | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| <i>Servings: 8</i> | |
| <i>Serving size: ½ cup</i> | |
| Calories | 157 |
| Protein (g) | 5 |
| Carbohydrate (g) | 20 |
| Fiber (g) | 2 |
| Fat (g) | 6.3 |
| Saturated fat (g) | 1 |
| Trans fat (g) | 0 |
| Cholesterol (mg) | 3 |
| Sodium (mg) | 91 |

Preparation:

In a large saucepan, bring 2 cups of water to a boil. Add couscous and simmer for 8 minutes. Drain and cool. Add remaining ingredients. Toss and serve.

Chickpea salad

Chickpeas, also known as garbanzo beans, are a nutrient powerhouse. They're loaded with protein, folate, and fiber as well as vitamin B₆, phosphorus, and iron.

Ingredients:

- 1 (15-ounce) can chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- 2 ripe tomatoes, halved, seeded, and chopped
- 1 celery stalk, diced
- 2 scallions, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup kalamata olives, pitted and chopped
- 4 basil leaves, julienned
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- juice of 1 lemon
- 1 tablespoon capers
- pepper to taste

| Nutrition facts | |
|----------------------------|------|
| <i>Servings: 2</i> | |
| <i>Serving size: ¾ cup</i> | |
| Calories | 322 |
| Protein (g) | 12 |
| Carbohydrate (g) | 41.7 |
| Fiber (g) | 10.6 |
| Fat (g) | 13.4 |
| Saturated fat (g) | 1.3 |
| Trans fat (g) | 0 |
| Cholesterol (mg) | 0 |
| Sodium (mg) | 546 |

Preparation:

Combine the chickpeas in a large bowl with remaining ingredients; toss and serve. This salad can be made a day ahead.

Tabbouleh salad

If you've never tried bulgur (whole-grain wheat kernels), this refreshing salad offers a nice introduction.

Ingredients:

1 cup bulgur wheat, rinsed and drained
1½ cups cold water
¼ teaspoon salt
1½ cups chopped Italian (flat leaf) parsley
4 ripe tomatoes, chopped
1 bunch scallions (about 6), minced
⅓ cup chopped mint leaves
3 stalks celery, finely diced
3 tablespoons olive oil
6 tablespoons lemon juice
¼ teaspoon pepper

Preparation:

Combine the bulgur and water in a small saucepan and season with salt. Bring to a boil, cover, and remove from heat and let sit for 15 minutes. Uncover and allow to cool. Combine the remaining ingredients in a large serving bowl and toss well. Add bulgur and toss.

| Nutrition facts | |
|---------------------|------|
| Servings: 4 | |
| Serving size: ¾ cup | |
| Calories | 278 |
| Protein (g) | 6.9 |
| Carbohydrate (g) | 40.6 |
| Fiber (g) | 9.6 |
| Fat (g) | 11.7 |
| Saturated fat (g) | 1.6 |
| Trans fat (g) | 0 |
| Cholesterol (mg) | 0 |
| Sodium (mg) | 210 |

Desserts

Simple fruit smoothie

If you've got fruit around that needs to be eaten, by all means, whip up a smoothie for a nutritious dessert or snack.

Ingredients:

1 cup plain, nonfat Greek yogurt
¼ cup orange juice
½ banana, cut into pieces
½ cup fresh or frozen blueberries
½ cup ice

Preparation:

Combine all ingredients in a blender or food processor and blend until smooth. Pour into a glass and serve.

| Nutrition facts | |
|-------------------------|------|
| Servings: 1 | |
| Serving size: 12 ounces | |
| Calories | 310 |
| Protein (g) | 21.7 |
| Carbohydrate (g) | 56.5 |
| Fiber (g) | 3.4 |
| Fat (g) | 0.6 |
| Saturated fat (g) | 0.1 |
| Trans fat (g) | 0 |
| Cholesterol (mg) | 0 |
| Sodium (mg) | 87 |

Pumpkin muffins

Ingredients:

3 small ripe bananas (or 2 medium-large bananas)
1 (15-ounce) can pumpkin puree
2 egg whites
1 whole egg
½ cup unsweetened applesauce
1 cup nonfat dry milk
2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
1 cup whole-wheat flour
1¾ cups oat bran
1½ teaspoons baking soda
⅔ cup raisins (3 ounces)
olive oil cooking spray

Preparation:

Preheat oven to 350° F. Puree bananas and pumpkin in blender or food processor. Add egg whites, whole egg, and applesauce, and puree until smooth. Add dry milk and pulse until blended. Add pumpkin pie spice to mixture and blend. In separate bowl, combine flour, oat bran, baking soda, and raisins. Mix to combine. Add banana-pumpkin mixture to flour mixture and mix well. Spray muffin pan with cooking spray and spoon mixture into cups, distributing batter evenly. Bake for 30 minutes or until toothpick inserted into muffin comes out clean.

| Nutrition facts | |
|------------------------|------|
| Servings: 12 | |
| Serving size: 1 muffin | |
| Calories | 160 |
| Protein (g) | 7.7 |
| Carbohydrate (g) | 35 |
| Fiber (g) | 5.6 |
| Fat (g) | 1.8 |
| Saturated fat (g) | 0.4 |
| Trans fat (g) | 0 |
| Cholesterol (mg) | 18.4 |
| Sodium (mg) | 209 |

Resources

Organizations

American Dietetic Association
120 S. Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000
Chicago, IL 60606
800-877-1600
www.eatright.org

This large organization of food and nutrition professionals provides information and advice to the general public through its Web site, outreach efforts, and publications.

The Nutrition Source—Knowledge for Healthy Eating

Harvard School of Public Health
Department of Nutrition
www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource

This Web site provides free public access to the latest information on nutrition and health.

Books and publications

Eat, Drink, and Weigh Less: A Flexible and Delicious Way to Shrink Your Waist Without Going Hungry
Mollie Katzen and Walter C. Willett, M.D.
(Hyperion, 2007)

This book teams Mollie Katzen, author of the landmark *Moosewood Cookbook*, with Dr. Walter Willett, head of the Harvard School of Public Health's Department of Nutrition. Together they've created a weight-loss plan that's easy to implement and filled with delicious foods and more than 100 fabulous recipes.

Eat, Drink, and Be Healthy: The Harvard Medical School Guide to Healthy Eating

Walter C. Willett, M.D., with P.J. Skerrett
(Simon & Schuster, 2005)

This book provides practical advice on eating for health based on proven scientific links between diet and health. An extensive selection of recipes helps readers put the latest nutrition findings into practice.

Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010

U.S. Department of Agriculture and
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
www.dietaryguidelines.gov

This 95-page report from two federal agencies sets out practical guidelines for healthy eating based on the latest nutritional science. It is available online and in print.

Glossary

body mass index (BMI): An estimate of the body's fat content, calculated from measurements of height and weight.

cholecystokinin (CCK): A hormone that aids digestion, released by the intestines in response to food consumed during a meal.

dietary fiber: The edible, nondigestible component of carbohydrates naturally found in plant food.

glycemic index: A measure of how soon and how much a serving of food causes blood sugar to rise. Foods with a high glycemic index are thought to increase the risk of insulin resistance and other health problems.

hypertension: High blood pressure, a condition that raises risk for heart attack and stroke, among other health problems.

julienne: To cut food into thin, matchstick strips.

leptin: A hormone produced by fat cells that acts on the brain to suppress appetite and burn stored fat.

monounsaturated fats: Beneficial fats found primarily in vegetable oils such as olive oil and canola oil.

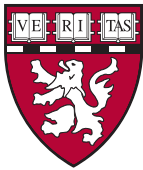
omega-3 fatty acids: Beneficial fats also known as n-3 fatty acids. These are polyunsaturated fats in which the last double bond between carbon atoms is located three carbons from the end of the chain.

polyunsaturated fats: Beneficial fats found primarily in vegetable oils such as corn oil and soybean oil.

saturated fats: Unhealthy fats found primarily in animal products such as meat, butter, and dairy. Also found in palm and coconut oil.

trans fatty acids (trans fats): Unhealthy fats that occur naturally in meat but come mainly from processed foods made with hydrogenated oils. Hydrogenated oils are polyunsaturated fats that have been chemically altered to be made more like saturated fats.

visceral fat: Belly fat that lies beneath the abdominal wall, in the spaces surrounding the liver, intestines, and other organs.



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| Diabetes | Incontinence | Thyroid Disease |
| Diabetes & Diet | Knees and Hips | Virus |
| Energy/Fatigue | Living Longer | Vitamins & Minerals |
| Erectile Dysfunction | Living Wills | Weight Loss |
| Exercise | Memory | Women's Health |
| Exercise Your Joints | Neck & Shoulder Pain | Workout Workbook |

Periodicals

Monthly newsletters and annual publications including:

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| <i>Harvard Health Letter</i> | <i>Harvard Heart Letter</i> |
| <i>Harvard Women's Health Watch</i> | <i>Harvard Mental Health Letter</i> |
| <i>Harvard Men's Health Watch</i> | <i>Prostate Diseases Annual</i> |