



Eat healthy

Tips to improve your diet

Eating healthy is good for you, both inside and out. By making a few simple changes, you can cut your chances of developing obesity, heart disease, stroke, diabetes and even some cancers. And the best part is that even simple changes can create big results.

Eat fruits and vegetables

Eating at least seven portions a day can help you fight off heart disease, stroke and cancer. You're also getting fibre, vitamins and essential nutrients — without the high fat and calories. Here's how to add fruits and vegetables into your day:

- Add fruits like chopped bananas or apples to hot or cold breakfast cereals
- Snack with fruit rather than sweets
- Aim to include at least two different vegetables with most main meals
- Try out new recipes that include fruits and vegetables
- Snack on cherry tomatoes, carrot sticks, dried apricots or healthy nuts
- Steam, stir-fry or lightly boil vegetables to keep the nutrients in
- Put vegetables on your plate before adding any other food groups

Eat the right carbohydrates

Some people think that all starchy foods are fattening. But starchy foods contain a lot of fibre which gives you that full, satisfied feeling. The secret is reaching for the starches that work best for your health:

- Eat brown or black rice, whole-grain pasta, sweet potatoes or wholegrain bread where possible
- Replace white flour with wholegrain flour
- If you have cereals for breakfast, choose porridge or oatmeal, high-fiber cereals or wholegrain cereals without sugar
- Replace sugary snacks, biscuits or cookies with healthy snacks like fruit or raw healthy nuts such as almonds or walnuts

Cut down on sugary foods

Sugar can damage your teeth and also cause weight gain.

Here are some ways to avoid sugary foods and drinks:

- Use fruit or a natural sugar substitute as an alternative to sugar in recipes
- Replace sugary drinks with water
- Avoid using sugar in tea, coffee or breakfast cereals
- If you have to sweeten try a natural sugar alternative, which you can buy at most grocery or health food stores

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Cut down on fatty foods

Fat helps protect our organs, keeps us warm, gives us energy and much more. But a diet too rich in fats can increase the risk of heart disease and stroke. So don't only watch the total amount of fat, but the type of fat you eat each day. These tips can help:

- Avoid saturated fats like butter, lard, ghee and/or margarine
- Grill, bake, poach, barbeque or boil food instead of frying
- If you fry foods, use unsaturated oil and drain before eating
- Choose lean cuts of meat, and cut off excess fat before cooking
- Watch out for hidden fat in pastries, chocolate, cakes and biscuits
- Choose low-fat milk, cheeses and yogurts over full-fat varieties

Eat the right type of protein

We all need protein. But if we eat too much of the wrong kinds of protein (fatty meats and cheeses), our health can suffer. These tips can help:

- Choose lower-fat meats like chicken, turkey or lean steak
- Avoid meat-based recipes that include creamy or fatty sauces
- Eat fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids, like salmon, halibut, mackerel, kippers and herring, at least once a week or more
- Add beans, lentils or peas to your diet for a low-fat source of protein, fibre, vitamins and minerals

Take charge of what you eat — get on the path to a healthier you today.

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