

HEALTH CONNECTION



EAT YOUR WAY TO BETTER HEALTH

The old saying, “you are what you eat,” has never been more accurate than it is today. With so many demands on our time and financial resources, the way Americans eat is a far cry from three home-cooked meals a day.

While fast food is tasty and fine dining can be tempting, there’s no mistaking how our diets affect our physical and mental wellbeing. To help get you started, check out these small nutrition tips that can make a big impact on your health.

Maintain a Healthy Weight

Ask any health professional and they’ll say that maintaining an appropriate weight is key to overall health and disease prevention. While factors like exercise, sleep and stress reduction all impact our weight, eating the right foods can be the most difficult part. Before making any changes, take a few minutes to understand and calculate your body mass index (BMI) on the Centers for Disease Control’s site.

www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/index.html

Protect Your Heart

February is American Heart Month. This a great time to make some dietary changes to protect your heart and improve your overall health by following these guidelines provided by the American Heart Association (AHA):

- ✔ Eat a wide variety of fruits and vegetables
- ✔ Choose whole grain products
- ✔ Use liquid non-tropical vegetable oils (ex: olive oil)
- ✔ Select minimally processed foods without a lot of sodium, added sugars and saturated fats
- ✔ Opt for healthy sources of protein (legumes, nuts, fish, low-fat/nonfat dairy, lean and unprocessed meats)
- ✔ Reduce foods with added sugars and salts
- ✔ Limit or eliminate alcohol

WHAT’S NEW AT YOUR HOSPITAL

- **Victor Carrasco** has been appointed interim chief executive officer. Carrasco is a veteran healthcare executive with experience in underserved communities.
- We received the **American College of Emergency Physicians Geriatric Emergency Department Accreditation**, which recognizes emergency departments that provide exceptional care for older adults.

Drink Your Water

Our bodies are about 50% to 70% water and rely on it for survival. Water helps rid our bodies of waste, helps us maintain normal temperatures, lubricates and cushions joints, and protects sensitive tissues.

According to the U.S. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, in general men need about 15.5 cups of fluids per day and women need about 11.5 cups (each cup equals eight ounces). It's also important to remember that older people also have less of a thirst sensation, so they often become dehydrated without realizing it.

CUPS OF FLUID/DAY	
15.5	11.5
MEN	WOMEN

Maintain Healthy Blood Sugars







The occasional ice cream cone or high-carb meal is fine for most people, but a prolonged diet that's high in sugar can lead to diabetes. This chronic condition affects how your body turns food into energy and can result in heart disease, vision loss and kidney disease.

The good news is that Type 2 diabetes can be prevented or delayed with healthy lifestyle changes like losing weight, increasing physical activity and eating a healthy diet. Start by filling half your plate with non-starchy vegetables, then add some lean meats and plant-based sources of protein. Keep the sugar to a minimum and avoid processed foods.

Learn more about controlling your blood sugars: diabetes.org/nutrition/healthy-food-choices-made-easy.

Strengthen Your Immune System

Your immune system works constantly to protect your body from illnesses and diseases. Many factors go into maintaining a healthy immune system, from avoiding smoking and only drinking alcohol in moderation to getting adequate sleep and exercising. But did you know your diet is important as well? Be sure that the micronutrients below are part of your regular diet. Talk to your healthcare provider if you think you need a supplement.

IRON	VITAMIN A	VITAMIN C	VITAMIN D	VITAMIN E	ZINC
					
▼ SOURCES ▼					
Red meat, beans, nuts and fortified breakfast cereals	Orange and red fruits, and vegetables like carrots, apricots and bell peppers	Citrus fruits like oranges, grapefruit, strawberries and tomatoes	Fatty fish like salmon, egg yolks and fortified dairy	Seeds, nuts, vegetable oils and peanut butter	Meats, whole grains, milk, seeds and nuts

Limit Sodium

Many foods have loads of hidden sodium in them, even those labeled "diet." The AHA recommends that most people limit their salt intake to 2,300 mg per day. Check with your doctor to see what's right for you. Also beware of the AHA's "salty six" foods that are commonly loaded with salt.

1. Breads & Rolls
2. Pizza
3. Sandwiches
4. Cold Cuts & Meats
5. Soups
6. Burritos & Tacos

LIMIT SODIUM

2300 MG

PER DAY

Eating healthy is far more than a New Year's resolution that's forgotten by February. It's a lifelong endeavor that will help protect your body from many illnesses and diseases throughout your lifetime. The next time you're visiting with your healthcare provider, be sure to allow enough time to discuss your nutritional habits.