



**HEALTHY
KANSAS
HOSPITALS**

HEALTHY OPTIONS ARE THE ROUTINE, EASY CHOICE.

What Is Healthy Eating?

Everyone has different likes and dislikes when it comes to food. People also have different beliefs about what healthy eating is. Regardless of your attitudes about food, remember that what you eat fuels your body, and that an appropriate weight and nutritious diet help you avoid chronic illnesses such as diabetes and heart disease.

Calorie needs depend on a variety of factors including age, gender and activity level. While some foods are healthier than others, many of your favorite foods can fit into a well-balanced diet with a little planning. Do you know what healthy eating is? Are your beliefs about eating healthy fact or fiction?

Healthy Eating

Myth vs. TRUTH

If it's healthy, it probably doesn't taste good.

TRUTH: All food preferences are acquired tastes. If your diet is high in fat and sugar, you have trained yourself to believe these foods taste the best. If you usually eat whole grains, you might not like the taste of white bread. You can modify your taste by making small changes to incorporate more healthful foods into your diet. Your taste can actually change to prefer them.

To stay healthy, I am going to have to starve myself.

TRUTH: Eating healthy does not mean you have to go hungry. It means making the best choices within your daily calorie intake. In reality, practicing proper nutrition can help you achieve a higher level of satisfaction and avoid feeling hungry all the time. Healthy fats and lean protein energize your body and give you a sense of fullness. Highly processed foods often leave you feeling sluggish. Nutritious snacks play an important role in any healthy eating plan because they can help stabilize your body's glucose levels.

LISTEN TO YOUR BODY, AND LOOK AT YOUR PLATE

Because many people have a tendency to "clean your plate," try using smaller plates, and get seconds only if you are still hungry. Many people eat quickly and continue eating past the point of fullness. By stopping when you feel satisfied and avoiding the urge to finish everything on your plate, you automatically will consume few calories.



Remember that a serving size is not determined by how much you put on your plate. It's important to strike a balance between higher-calorie foods and more nutrient-dense foods like fresh fruits and vegetables. Try to visualize your plate before filling it. MyPlate

recommends that half of the plate should be reserved for fruits and vegetables and the other half should consist of grain products (at least half of them whole grains) and lean meats, beans or an equivalent protein source.

HOW TO ESTIMATE A SERVING

1 deck of cards =
3-ounce serving of meat



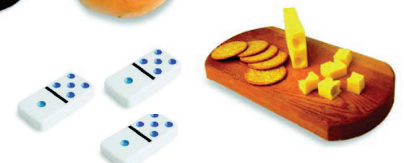
1 baseball =
1 cup fruits and vegetables



1 hockey puck =
3-ounce bagel



3 dominoes =
1.5 ounces of natural cheese,
such as cheddar



Computer mouse =
medium potato



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Myth vs. TRUTH

Eating healthy means I have to give up my snacks.

TRUTH: Snacks are part of a healthy diet. While a sugary snack may be enjoyed occasionally, nutritious snacks actually provide more energy for a longer period of time and support good health. Healthier food choices – including snacks – pay off in the long term by helping you avoid chronic diseases and have energy to enjoy life.

SIMPLE, HEALTHY SNACK IDEAS

- Almonds and walnuts. Be sure to purchase the unsalted varieties, or transition over time to unsalted nuts.
- Fresh fruits such as bananas, apples, oranges, grapes, strawberries, etc. A whole apple is a better choice than applesauce (the real things vs. processed food).
- Whole-grain crackers or mini bagels with hummus or peanut butter. Read the nutrition label carefully. The first ingredient should read “whole wheat” instead of “enriched.”
- String cheese or low-fat yogurt.
- Plain popcorn with dried fruit. Note that some brands of dried fruits are higher in sugar than others. Try to avoid the sugary “tropical” mixes.
- Carrot sticks or cut-up veggies. Ranch is a popular dip, but creamy dressings are a lot higher in fat than vinaigrettes. If you aren’t used to eating your vegetables plain, Italian or balsamic are good substitutes for Ranch dressing.
- Cottage cheese with fresh fruit.
- Half a whole wheat pita with some sliced turkey.

I can't afford to eat nutritious foods. They're too expensive.

TRUTH: Candy, chips, pastries and fast foods seem cheap and convenient. But in a cost-per-portion-size comparison, they can be much more expensive than nutritious foods. Long-term, a junk food diet can increase your expenses for illnesses that could have been prevented or controlled by better eating. A balanced diet that includes vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean meats and low-fat dairy can save money by maintaining your health.

Choosing fat-free is always best.

TRUTH: Many vitamins need fat to be absorbed and do their job. But, to maintain a tasty product, manufacturers often replace the fat they remove with added sugar. If you are choosing a fat-free product, be sure to compare its sugar content with a similar product that contains fat. If sugar is the first ingredient on the label, pass on the product. It likely offers few nutrients and lots of calories.

Pre-packaged, processed foods are just as good as regular food.

TRUTH: When it comes to eating healthy, the closer you can get to the real thing, the better! Manufacturers add salt and/or sugar to many processed and pre-packaged foods to maintain their freshness and increase their shelf life. Salt causes your body to retain fluid and contributes to high blood pressure and heart disease. Sugar is linked to diabetes and obesity. Stick to products in their most natural form, such as fresh fruits and vegetables, whole-grain products, lean meats and low-fat dairy to avoid unnecessary consumption of these additives.

It's hard to tell if a product is healthy.

TRUTH: Food labels give you all the information you need to evaluate a product, making it easier to make healthy choices. First, check out the number of servings listed on the label, paying special attention to the serving size. Some foods come packaged in pairs, yet the serving size is only for half that amount. Next, look at the amount of calories per serving. Then look at the fat (specifically saturated and Trans fats), cholesterol, sugars and sodium. You want these values to be low because a frequent intake of foods high in these items increases the risk for heart disease. Finally, look at the amount of fiber and the percentage of vitamins and minerals. High fiber is a good thing. Fiber, vitamins and minerals boast numerous health benefits, and fiber will help keep you satisfied longer.

If I eat healthy, then I can eat as much as I want.

TRUTH: Calories count, and if you consume more calories than you burn, you will gain weight. However, many of your favorite foods can fit into a well-balanced diet with a little planning. Moderation is the key so balance higher-calorie foods with nutrient-dense foods like fruits and vegetables. A good balance will help you avoid feeling deprived and help you stick to your plan to eat healthier, not just “diet.”

WORDS TO WATCH

- High fructose corn syrup = sugar
- Partially hydrogenated = Trans fat
- Enriched flour = not a whole grain, no matter what the package may claim

SERVING SIZE MATTERS

The standard serving sizes of certain popular foods have increased over time. Compare the portion sizes and corresponding calorie counts on some popular food items. You may be surprised at how portion size increases can impact your overall daily caloric intake.

20 YEARS AGO

8-oz. coffee
45 calories
(with whole milk and sugar)



2 medium pizza slices
500 calories



Chicken Caesar salad
1.5 cups, 390 calories



5 cups popcorn
270 calories



TODAY

6-oz. mocha coffee
350 calories (with steamed whole milk and mocha syrup)



2 large pizza slices
850 calories



Chicken Caesar salad
3.5 cups, 790 calories



Tub of popcorn
630 calories

