

Healthy Eating for Life

Healthy eating is a lifestyle choice. Use the 80-20 rule: follow healthy eating recommendations 80% of the time and eat what you like without guilt the other 20% of the time. No food is 100% forbidden—have a treat on occasion; it will make a healthy eating plan more livable. This can be true for diabetics so long as you take the precaution of watching the glycemic load of a meal.



Retraining Old Eating Habits

- Banish unhealthy ingredients from the home and don't buy any more (better to have the occasional dessert after a balanced meal out than to have it as a temptation in the house).
- Stock pantry and refrigerator with healthy balanced choices.
- Plan ahead meal schedule for the week and have healthy choices prepared and on hand.

For example, cook extra chicken breast for a quick lunch salad or stir fry the next day, or bake tofu and have it ready in the refrigerator for an afternoon snack.

Mindful Eating

- Eat slowly, chew slowly, putting fork down between bites.
- Serve small portions on small plates (12-inch plates are recommended) and do not serve seconds. Wait at least 20 minutes before eating more if you are truly hungry. Eat to satisfaction, but not fullness.
- Savor flavors, textures, aromas, and conversation - enjoy the meal experience, not just the food. Do not read, watch TV, or do any work while eating. Try to make mealtime a peaceful, nurturing experience.
- Recognize and redirect non-hunger eating to better behavior responses. First, evaluate whether the urge to eat is true hunger. Wait at least five minutes before eating to see if the urge passes.

Final Tips

- Follow the 80-20 rule. Remember that you don't have to be "perfect" in your eating habits all of the time.
- Eat a healthy, balanced, but varied diet. There is no cause for boredom when there are so many exciting, healthy recipes, and new foods to try.
- Be kind to yourself, and forgive any lapses.
- Learn to be polite, but firm, in resisting the influence of those who may try to offer or entice you with poor food choices.

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Food Shopping Tips for Healthy Living

The key to eating well with regularity is preparation, it is now easier than ever for families to eat healthy, nutritious meals. Most ordinary super markets now carry organic and healthier brands.

FDA regulations are making companies list trans fat use and other harmful ingredients on labels. There are many selections of pre-cut vegetables that can easily be steamed and tossed with a little flax or olive oil and some culinary herbs for a quick side dish. The key is to know what to look for.

The following are some general shopping tips:



Produce

Organic produce might be more expensive, but it can be a wise purchase, especially with certain foods that naturally store a lot of pesticides. Some examples are: spinach, lettuce, apples, bell peppers, celery, imported grapes, potatoes, and strawberries. The Environmental Working Group provides a shopper's guide to pesticides at www.foodnews.org.

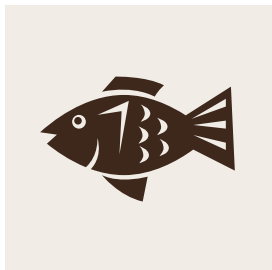
Ideally, all produce should be fresh, ripe, in season and locally grown. Frozen organic fruit is a great choice for foods like berries that are very nutritious, low glycemic, but often out of season in most parts of the country.



Meat, Poultry, Eggs, and Dairy

Although harder to find than produce, free-range, hormone and antibiotic-free meats and organic milk should be used whenever possible.

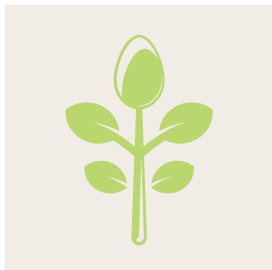
Eggs should also be organic or from free-range, antibiotic and hormone-free poultry. Because it isn't always easy to get fish high in omega-3 fatty acids into our diets, it is especially beneficial to choose eggs labeled as high omega-3, which means that these important fatty acids were fed to the chickens. Other practical sources of omega-3 fatty acids are walnuts, flax oil, and flax seeds.



Seafood

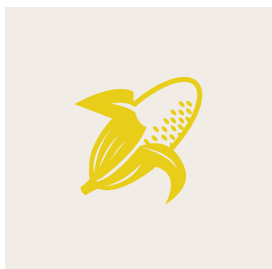
It is becoming increasingly more important to eat wild-caught, non-farm-raised fish or seafood and especially limit those fish high in mercury from the diet such as tuna, swordfish, and shark.

For people who are used to eating tuna fish several times a week, canned wild salmon which is now in many traditional super markets makes a good alternative. It can be prepared the same way as traditional tuna salad and is high in omega-3 fatty acids.



Buy whole fresh foods

It is always best to buy whole fresh foods whenever possible. In cases where this is not always practical, it is more nutritious to use frozen than canned foods. Certain foods like beans, broths, and sauces are fine from cans or jars when you are rushed and don't have time to prepare from scratch.



To Avoid

The most important foods to avoid are non-domestic produce as they are almost always sprayed with pesticides (some with DDT which is banned in the US), foods with additives, colors, preservatives, emulsifiers, chemical names that you don't understand, and packaged foods with multiple ingredients including hydrogenated fats, corn syrup and artificial sweeteners.

Look for sugar in products such as sucrose, glucose, dextrose, fructose, honey, molasses, raw and cane sugar and minimize the amounts consumed.

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