MAYO CLINIC
HEALTH SYSTEM

Journey to Wellness — A free self-guided healthy living program

Eat smarter

Eating well can be challenging, especially when unlimited less nutritious choices surround us. While it's OK to indulge in treats occasionally, **eating a balanced diet is best.** These tips can get you started.

Adopt a healthy diet and lifestyle

You can find information about the latest dieting fad everywhere you look. Rather than following the crowd, consider adopting a healthy lifestyle that includes a healthy diet. Go simple by following guidelines that include:

- Eating various foods from the major food groups: fruits and vegetables; whole grains; low-fat dairy products; lean protein, including beans and other legumes, nuts and seeds; and healthy fats.
- Guidance for how much food to choose from each group.
- Foods you can find in your local grocery store rather than specialty or gourmet store items.
- An approach that fits your tastes, lifestyle and budget.

Shop healthy on a budget

People often think it's too expensive to eat healthful foods. Meeting the budget starts with a plan.

- Before you shop, take time to plan and think ahead.
- Plan your menus for the week to ensure you're eating a balanced diet and meeting your nutritional needs, make a list of what you will need and scan store ads for deals. Clip only those coupons that apply to the items on your list.
- Eat a snack or meal before you shop. When you're hungry, everything looks tempting.
- Avoid shopping alone since that can lead to impulse buying. Also, bringing older children shopping can teach them lifelong skills.
- Stick to your list.
- Steer clear of prepackaged convenience items, which typically are more expensive and provide fewer nutrients.

Embrace a healthy mindset for eating — no matter the occasion

Adopting a healthy eating mindset starts with identifying the reasons you want to eat healthier. Try making these tips new habits:

- Anticipate when you have more difficulty making healthy choices, and plan for those times.
- Savor your food and eat mindfully, which will help you make better choices than eating without conscious thought.
- Survey the food options in front of you before dishing up. Decide which and how much you want before adding food to your plate.
- Allow yourself a few less healthy food options. Decide when and where you will make those choices.
- Be aware of your negative emotions and manage them healthily rather than using food to deal with them.

Information adaped from mayoclinic.org:
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