



Fuel Your Body With Healthful Foods



a healthy
weight for
a healthy
heart

When it comes to the health of your heart, what you eat is as important as the medicine you take. Having a healthy weight helps your heart, blood pressure, glucose and cholesterol levels. In general, it helps your body work and feel better.

The amount of calories in food tells you how much energy it has. Your body needs energy (calories) to work properly. The calories that your body does not burn turn into fat. This means if you eat more calories than your body needs, you will gain weight.

If you are trying to lose weight, your goal is gradual weight loss. (There are no magic diets or products.) You should lose no more than 1 to 2 pounds a week.

Losing 5 pounds of fat spares your heart from pumping blood through an extra 10 miles of blood vessels. The only healthy, successful way to lose weight is by making smart food choices and getting regular exercise.

You also want to eat foods high in fiber, whole grains, low fat dairy products and limit your sodium (salt) to less than 1,500 mg each day.

Weighing too much puts stress on your heart and puts you at risk for diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure, coronary artery disease, heart attacks and strokes.

A calorie is a calorie, whether you get it from a cookie or an apple. Every calorie counts but so too does the quality of the food. An apple gives you vitamins that a cookie doesn't.



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Healthful Eating Tips

- Make half of your plate vegetables and fruits.
- Choose low-fat or fat-free milk, yogurt and cheeses.
- Make sure half of the grains you eat are whole-grain.
- Eat lean proteins.
- Eat smaller portions.
- Avoid foods and drinks with added sugar and caffeine.
- Use less salt when you cook and eat.
- Cut back or eliminate: processed foods (luncheon meats, prepackaged soups and sauces, Hamburger Helper® and Tuna Helper®, TV dinners) and salty foods (pickles, olives, sauerkraut, salted snacks, flavored salts, seasoned salts).
- Avoid products with these words on the labels: monosodium glutamate (MSG), sodium nitrate, sodium benzoate, sodium bicarbonate.
- Use herbs, spices or lemon juice to add flavor.
- Remove all fat from meats and skin from poultry before cooking.
- Prepare foods by boiling, broiling, baking, roasting, poaching, steaming, sauteing, or by using the microwave instead of frying.
- Use a low-calorie vegetable oil cooking spray instead of shortening, butter or margarine when cooking.
- When making a salad or sandwich, watch the calorie and fat content of each ingredient. For example, 2 teaspoons of regular mayonnaise equals 10 grams of fat (about 2 servings from the fat group).

A dietitian can help you if you need to lose weight. Ask your doctor for a referral. Call your insurance provider to ask if the dietitian's services are covered.



Energy Drinks: the 411

Energy drinks are beverages that claim to increase energy and alertness, improve athletic or mental performance, or provide other health benefits (such as heart health).

It has not been proven that energy drinks are safe. Some ingredients may be harmful to your health.

It is recommended the following people avoid drinking energy drinks:

- children and teenagers
- people who have high blood pressure or heart disease
- women who are pregnant or breastfeeding.

Caffeine is usually the main ingredient in energy drinks. Energy drinks may also have sugar, B vitamins or herbs and plants (ginseng, guarana).

