

# 20 TIPS FOR healthy eating



- 1. EAT A VARIETY OF FOODS.** Choose foods wisely from all of the food groups.
- 2. BALANCE YOUR CALORIES.** Use the food guide pyramid as a guide to help you eat a nutritious, well balanced diet. A majority of calories should come from complex carbohydrates, vegetables and fruits. Milk products and meats should be used moderately, while fats and oils should be used sparingly.
- 3. CHOOSE FOODS LOW IN FAT.** The American Heart Association recommends limiting your daily fat intake to no more than 30% of your total caloric intake.
- 4. LIMIT YOUR INTAKE OF ANIMAL FATS.**  
A diet high in saturated fat and cholesterol is associated with elevated blood cholesterol levels. Try to avoid high fat dairy products, fatty meats, poultry skin, lard, palm oil and coconut oil.
- 5. REMEMBER TO EAT FIVE A DAY.** It is important to include at least five servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Fruits and vegetables are high in vitamins, minerals and fiber and low in fat. Some may also play a protective role against certain types of cancer.
- 6. INCLUDE HIGH COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATES IN YOUR DIET.** The food guide pyramid recommends 6-11 servings of complex carbohydrates per day. Foods high in complex carbohydrates are breads, cereals, rice, pasta and starchy vegetables.
- 7. USE SUGARS ONLY IN MODERATION.** Concentrated sweets like those found in candy, cookies, sodas, etc. provide calories with little nutritional value. These foods also contribute to tooth decay.
- 8. USE SALT IN MODERATION.** Many prepared foods, frozen foods, cured foods and snack foods are high in salt. Try preparing meals with fresh herbs or spices.
- 9. LIMIT YOUR ALCOHOL INTAKE.** A moderate alcohol intake for women is 1 drink per day, and 2 drinks per day for men. However, alcohol isn't calorie free and provides very little nutritional value.
- 10. CHOOSE FOODS HIGH IN FIBER.** A high fiber diet may reduce the risk of certain types of cancer and may help to control blood cholesterol levels. Whole grains, fruits and vegetables are high in fiber.
- 11. EAT THREE MEALS OR MORE EACH DAY.** Skipping meals often leads to overeating or eating the wrong foods. Try keeping nutritious food on hand for a healthy snack.
- 12. SELECT NONFAT OR LOWFAT DAIRY PRODUCTS.** These milk products will supply needed calcium without the extra fat. Calcium is important in the prevention of osteoporosis.
- 13. READ FOOD LABELS.** Limit foods that provide more than 3 grams of fat per 100 calories. Pay attention to serving sizes, the amount of sugar, cholesterol and sodium.
- 14. CHOOSE LEAN CUTS OF MEAT, CHICKEN WITHOUT SKIN AND FISH.** Trim all visible fat off meat before cooking and limit serving sizes to 3-4 ounces, which is equivalent to the size of a deck of cards.
- 15. SUBSTITUTE WITH LOW FAT TOPPINGS.** Substitute mustard, vinegar and salsas for butter, mayonnaise and salad dressings.
- 16. COOK LOWFAT.** Cook foods by baking, broiling, steaming, poaching, roasting and microwaving using little or no added fats.
- 17. SNACK ON HEALTHY FOODS.** Eat snacks that are low in fat and high in nutrients such as: fruits, vegetables, unbuttered popcorn, pretzels, rice cakes and unsweetened cereals.
- 18. TRY A VEGETARIAN MEAL AT LEAST ONCE EACH WEEK.** Use grains, pasta, rice or beans to provide the foundation for a healthy, delicious, lowfat meal.
- 19. DINE LEAN WHEN EATING OUT.** Ask for sauces and dressings on the side. Choose fish or lean meats and avoid fried foods. Try ordering fruit as your dessert. If serving portions are large, eat half and take the rest home.
- 20. STILL NEED HELP?** Contact your local American Heart Association, or ask your Primary Care Manager.