Making food choices for a healthy lifestyle can be as simple as using these 10 Tips.

Use the ideas in this list to balance your calories, to choose foods to eat more often, and to cut back on foods to eat less often.

1. balance calories
   Find out how many calories YOU need for a day as a first step in managing your weight. Go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov to find your calorie level. Being physically active also helps you balance calories.

2. enjoy your food, but eat less
   Take the time to fully enjoy your food as you eat it. Eating too fast or when your attention is elsewhere may lead to eating too many calories. Pay attention to hunger and fullness cues before, during, and after meals. Use them to recognize when to eat and when you've had enough.

3. avoid oversized portions
   Use a smaller plate, bowl, and glass. Portion out foods before you eat. When eating out, choose a smaller size option, share a dish, or take home part of your meal.

4. foods to eat more often
   Eat more vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and fat-free or 1% milk and dairy products. These foods have the nutrients you need for health—including potassium, calcium, vitamin D, and fiber. Make them the basis for meals and snacks.

5. make half your plate fruits and vegetables
   Choose red, orange, and dark-green vegetables like tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and broccoli, along with other vegetables for your meals. Add fruit to meals as part of main or side dishes or as dessert.

6. switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk
   They have the same amount of calcium and other essential nutrients as whole milk, but fewer calories and less saturated fat.

7. make half your grains whole grains
   To eat more whole grains, substitute a whole-grain product for a refined product—such as eating whole-wheat bread instead of white bread or brown rice instead of white rice.

8. foods to eat less often
   Cut back on foods high in solid fats, added sugars, and salt. They include cakes, cookies, ice cream, candies, sweetened drinks, pizza, and fatty meats like ribs, sausages, bacon, and hot dogs. Use these foods as occasional treats, not everyday foods.

9. compare sodium in foods
   Use the Nutrition Facts label to choose lower sodium versions of foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals. Select canned foods labeled “low sodium,” “reduced sodium,” or “no salt added.”

10. drink water instead of sugary drinks
    Cut calories by drinking water or unsweetened beverages. Soda, energy drinks, and sports drinks are a major source of added sugar, and calories, in American diets.

Go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov for more information.
10 tips
Nutrition
Education Series

be choosey in the dining hall

10 tips for healthy eating in the dining hall

Dining halls are full of healthy food options. You just need to know which foods to put on your tray. Use these tips to plan your food choices and know which options are best for you.

1. know what you’re eating
   Many dining halls post menus with nutrition information. Look at the menus ahead of time, so you can be ready to create healthy, balanced meals when you get there. Having a plan is the first step in making smarter eating decisions! Visit ChooseMyPlate.gov to find information and tools like SuperTracker to help you make meal selection a breeze.

2. enjoy your food, but eat less
   Everybody loves the all-you-can-eat dining hall! To resist the urge of eating too much, take smaller portions and use a smaller plate. Remember you can always go back if you are still hungry.

3. make half your grains whole grains!
   Whether you’re at the sandwich station or pouring yourself a bowl of cereal in the morning, make the switch to whole grains like 100% whole-grain bread and oatmeal.

4. re-think your drink
   Americans drink about 400 calories every day. Consider how often you drink sugary beverages such as sodas, cappuccinos, energy drinks, fruit beverages, sweetened teas, and sports drinks. Drinking water instead of sugary beverages can help you manage your calories.

5. make half your plate fruits and veggies
   Fruits and veggies can make your meals more nutritious, colorful, and flavorful. Add to pastas, eggs, pizza, sandwiches, and soups. Try spinach in a wrap or add pineapple to your pizza.

6. make it your own!
   Don’t feel like you have to choose pre-made plates. Design your own meal! Fresh veggies from the salad bar can be thrown into your omelet for brunch, or grab some tofu on your way to the pasta station for lean protein.

7. slow down on the sauces
   Sauces, gravies, and dressings tend to be high in fat and sodium. Watch out for foods prepared with a lot of oil, butter, or topped with heavy condiments, such as mayonnaise. You don’t have to do away with sauces and condiments all together; just ask for less or put them on the side. Reducing extras will help you manage your weight.

8. be on your guard at the salad bar
   Most veggies get the green light but limit foods high in fat and sodium such as olives, bacon bits, fried noodles, croutons, and pasta or potato salads that are made with mayo and oil. Stick to fat-free or low-fat dressings on the side.

9. make dessert special
   Save dessert for a Friday night treat or on special occasions. When you can’t resist, opt for something healthy, such as a fruit and yogurt parfait.

10. don’t linger
    Dining halls should be just that, where you eat. Although it’s great to chat with friends while you eat, avoid staying for long periods of time to reduce your temptation to keep eating.

Go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov for more information.

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Young girls, ages 10 to 19, have a lot of changes going on in their bodies. Building healthier habits will help you—now as a growing teen—and later in life. Growing up means you are in charge of foods you eat and the time you spend being physically active every day.

1. **build strong bones**
   A good diet and regular physical activity can build strong bones throughout your life. Choose fat-free or low-fat milk, cheeses, and yogurt to get the vitamin D and calcium your growing bones need. Strengthen your bones three times a week doing activities such as running, gymnastics, and skating.

2. **cut back on sweets**
   Cut back on sugary drinks. Many 12-ounce cans of soda have 10 teaspoons of sugar in them. Drink water when you are thirsty. Sipping water and cutting back on cakes, candies, and sweets helps to maintain a healthy weight.

3. **power up with whole grain**
   Fuel your body with nutrient-packed whole-grain foods. Make sure that at least half your grain foods are whole grains such as brown rice, whole-wheat breads, and popcorn.

4. **choose vegetables rich in color**
   Brighten your plate with vegetables that are red, orange, or dark green. Try acorn squash, cherry tomatoes, or sweet potatoes. Spinach and beans also provide vitamins like folate and minerals like potassium that are essential for healthy growth.

5. **check Nutrition Facts labels for iron**
   Read Nutrition Facts labels to find foods containing iron. Most protein foods like meat, poultry, eggs, and beans have iron, and so do fortified breakfast cereals and breads.

6. **be a healthy role model**
   Encourage your friends to practice healthier habits. Share what you do to work through challenges. Keep your computer and TV time to less than 2 hours a day (unless it’s school work).

7. **try something new**
   Keep healthy eating fun by picking out new foods you’ve never tried before like lentils, mango, quinoa, or kale.

8. **make moving part of every event**
   Being active makes everyone feel good. Aim for 60 minutes of physical activity each day. Move your body often. Dancing, playing active games, walking to school with friends, swimming, and biking are only a few fun ways to be active. Also, try activities that target the muscles in your arms and legs.

9. **include all food groups daily**
   Use MyPlate as your guide to include all food groups each day. Learn more at www.ChooseMyPlate.gov.

10. **everyone has different needs**
    Get nutrition information based on your age, gender, height, weight, and physical activity level. Use SuperTracker to find your calorie level, choose the foods you need, and track progress toward your goals. Learn more at www.SuperTracker.usda.gov.
A healthy meal starts with more vegetables and fruits and smaller portions of protein and grains. Think about how you can adjust the portions on your plate to get more of what you need without too many calories. And don’t forget dairy—make it the beverage with your meal or add fat-free or low-fat dairy products to your plate.

1. **Make half your plate veggies and fruits**
   Vegetables and fruits are full of nutrients and may help to promote good health. Choose red, orange, and dark-green vegetables such as tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and broccoli.

2. **Add lean protein**
   Choose protein foods, such as lean beef and pork, or chicken, turkey, beans, or tofu. Twice a week, make seafood the protein on your plate.

3. **Include whole grains**
   Aim to make at least half your grains whole grains. Look for the words “100% whole grain” or “100% whole wheat” on the food label. Whole grains provide more nutrients, like fiber, than refined grains.

4. **Don’t forget the dairy**
   Pair your meal with a cup of fat-free or low-fat milk. They provide the same amount of calcium and other essential nutrients as whole milk, but less fat and calories. Don’t drink milk? Try soymilk (soy beverage) as your beverage or include fat-free or low-fat yogurt in your meal.

5. **Avoid extra fat**
   Using heavy gravies or sauces will add fat and calories to otherwise healthy choices. For example, steamed broccoli is great, but avoid topping it with cheese sauce. Try other options, like a sprinkling of low-fat parmesan cheese or a squeeze of lemon.

6. **Take your time**
   Savor your food. Eat slowly, enjoy the taste and textures, and pay attention to how you feel. Be mindful. Eating very quickly may cause you to eat too much.

7. **Use a smaller plate**
   Use a smaller plate at meals to help with portion control. That way you can finish your entire plate and feel satisfied without overeating.

8. **Take control of your food**
   Eat at home more often so you know exactly what you are eating. If you eat out, check and compare the nutrition information. Choose healthier options such as baked instead of fried.

9. **Try new foods**
   Keep it interesting by picking out new foods you’ve never tried before, like mango, lentils, or kale. You may find a new favorite! Trade fun and tasty recipes with friends or find them online.

10. **Satisfy your sweet tooth in a healthy way**
    Indulge in a naturally sweet dessert dish—fruit! Serve a fresh fruit cocktail or a fruit parfait made with yogurt. For a hot dessert, bake apples and top with cinnamon.

Go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov for more information.
choose the foods you need to grow

10 tips

Nutrition Education Series

Feed your growing body by making better food choices today as a teen and as you continue to grow into your twenties. Make time to be physically active every day to help you be fit and healthy as you grow.

1. get over the idea of magic foods
There are no magic foods to eat for good health. Teen guys need to eat foods such as vegetables, fruits, whole grains, protein foods, and fat-free or low-fat dairy foods. Choose protein foods like unsalted nuts, beans, lean meats, and fish. SuperTracker.usda.gov will show if you are getting the nutrients you need for growth.

2. always hungry?
Whole grains that provide fiber can give you a feeling of fullness and provide key nutrients. Choose half your grains as whole grains. Eat whole-wheat breads, pasta, and brown rice instead of white bread, rice, or other refined grains. Also, choose vegetables and fruits when you need to “fill-up.”

3. keep water handy
Water is a better option than many other drink choices. Keep a water bottle in your backpack and at your desk to satisfy your thirst. Skip soda, fruit drinks, and energy and sports drinks. They are sugar-sweetened and have few nutrients.

4. make a list of favorite foods
Like green apples more than red apples? Ask your family food shopper to buy quick-to-eat foods for the fridge like mini-carrots, apples, oranges, low-fat cheese slices, or yogurt. And also try dried fruit; unsalted nuts; whole-grain breads, cereal, and crackers; and popcorn.

5. start cooking often
Get over being hungry by fixing your own snacks and meals. Learn to make vegetable omelets, bean quesadillas, or a batch of spaghetti. Prepare your own food so you can make healthier meals and snacks. Microwaving frozen pizzas doesn’t count as home cooking.

6. skip foods that can add unwanted pounds
Cut back on calories by limiting fatty meats like ribs, bacon, and hot dogs. Some foods are just occasional treats like pizza, cakes, cookies, candies, and ice cream. Check out the calorie content of sugary drinks by reading the Nutrition Facts label. Many 12-ounce sodas contain 10 teaspoons of sugar.

7. learn how much food you need
Teen guys may need more food than most adults, teen girls, and little kids. Go to www.SuperTracker.usda.gov. It shows how much food you need based on your age, height, weight, and activity level. It also tracks progress towards fitness goals.

8. check Nutrition Facts labels
To grow, your body needs vitamins and minerals. Calcium and vitamin D are especially important for your growing bones. Read Nutrition Facts labels for calcium. Dairy foods provide the minerals your bones need to grow.

9. strengthen your muscles
Work on strengthening and aerobic activities. Work out at least 10 minutes at a time to see a better you. However, you need to get at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day.

10. fill your plate like MyPlate