

HEALTHY EATING

January is

- Canned Food Month
- Egg Month
- Family Fit Lifestyle Month
- Fiber Focus Month
- Hot Tea Month
- Oatmeal Month
- Prune Breakfast Month
- Slow-Cooking Month
- Soup Month
- Wheat Bread Month

New Year, New You: 5 Tips to a Healthier You

Happy New Year to a New You! Millions of Americans make New Year resolutions every January to improve their health by losing weight, getting fit, or eating healthy. My goals for the new year are to eat healthier by cooking at home more often, stay active while increasing my physical activity minutes, and balance life with my busy schedule. I want to challenge you to improve your health in 2013 by making healthier decisions.

Five Tips to a Healthier You

1. Eat the Right Amount of Calories for You

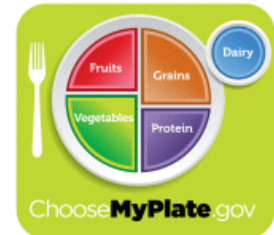
We all need different amount of calories depending on our age, gender, height, weight, and physical activity level. There are several free websites or apps that will help you achieve your calorie goals. I like to use the Daily Food Plan from ChooseMyPlate.gov to determine the appropriate amount of calories for me. Then, I like to use MyFitnessPal, an app on my phone, to keep track of my food and exercise on the go.

Another great tool is the SuperTracker at <https://www.supertracker.usda.gov/default.aspx>. This website not only allows you to personalize your nutrition and physical activity plan, but you are able to track your foods and physical activities while receiving tips and support to help you make healthier choices and plan ahead.

2. Build a Healthy Plate

I prefer to build a healthy plate by using MyPlate.

- Try to make half of your plate fruits and vegetables by choosing fresh, frozen, canned or dried fruits and vegetables.
- When consuming dairy foods, switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk.
- Make at least half your grains whole grains by choosing 100% whole grain cereals, bread, crackers, rice, and pasta. One of the easiest ways to find out if your food product contains whole grains is to look for the whole grain stamp. When I started to increase whole grains in my diet, I replaced half of the pasta with whole wheat spaghetti in my recipe to ease into it. Now, I only add whole wheat spaghetti.
- Vary your protein food choices by keeping meat and poultry portions small and lean. In addition, eat beans, which are a natural source of fiber and protein, and make seafood the protein on your plate twice a week.



3. Cut Back on Foods High in Solid Fats, Salt, and Added Sugars

Some of my favorite foods fall into this category, but it is all about moderation or modifying the recipe to incorporate them into a healthy lifestyle.

Eat fewer foods that are high in solid fats.

- Limit beef, pork, or chicken fat, butter, milk fat, cream, and shortening
- Replace solid fats with oils (e.g., canola oil, olive oil, and vegetable oil)
- Reduce foods high in solid fats (e.g., pizza, french fries, hot dogs, cheese, cookies, & cake)
- To reduce fat in french fries, I love to bake them in the oven
- Select lean cuts of meats or poultry and fat-free or low-fat milk, yogurt, and cheese

Watch for salt (sodium) in foods.

- Decrease intake of highly processed foods (e.g., cured meats, such as bacon, sausage, hot dogs, and deli/luncheon meats; and ready-to-eat foods, like canned chili, ravioli, and soups)

- Read the Nutrition Facts label to find packaged and canned foods lower in sodium
- Limit adding salt to foods
- Eat fresh foods since they are generally lower in sodium
- Add spices or herbs to season food without adding salt
- Request salt to be left off when eating out



Choose drinks with little or no added sugars.

- Drink water instead of sugary drinks
- Choose 100% fruit juice instead of fruit-flavored drinks
- Select fruit for dessert
- Eat sugary desserts less often
- Select low-fat or fat-free milk or fortified soymilk
- Use the Nutrition Facts label to choose beverages at the grocery store

4. Cook More Often at Home

Cooking at home may not only save you money, but it allows you to be in control of what is in your food and how your food is made. My husband and I end up eating out more when I am not able to plan ahead and go grocery shopping on the weekend. When we cook more often at home, we tend to eat more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, and lean protein foods.

5. Be Physically Active Your Way

It is important to be physically active your way whether that includes walking, running, playing sports, yoga, weight lifting, or any other type of exercise. It is hard to continue or make time for exercise you do not enjoy. To gain the most health benefits, adults should aim for at least 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week. Learn more about physical activity guidelines from UNL Extension at <http://food.unl.edu/web/fnh/physical-activity>.

Source: <http://makinghealthierdecisions.com/2013/01/02/new-year-new-you-5-tips-to-a-healthier-you/>

Tips for Spending Your Food Dollars Wisely

The current drought in the Midwest is impacting families in a variety of ways, including through higher food prices and sometimes, reduced family incomes. Now, more than ever, it's important for families to budget their food dollars wisely. The following information can help you manage your food budget while providing nutritious meals for your family.

Develop a spending plan that works for you and your family. Follow the four steps below from the UNL Extension Family Budget Guide & Worksheet to develop a customized guide for your family.

Step 1: Identify the income you have available to spend and identify where you are spending your money.

Step 2: Develop a budget.

Step 3: Establish a tracking system for recording pay periods, expenses, and promises. The simplest tracking system is a calendar.

Step 4: Evaluate.

For a complete copy of the UNL Extension Family Budget Guide & Worksheet visit:

http://nep.unl.edu/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=fd885905-4ffa-44f5-bfa8-db3966b3774c&groupId=4091401

Prepare an overall budget for your family so you can identify how much money you can spend on food. For tips on establishing a budget, see Family Budgets: Getting the Most for Your Money

http://nep.unl.edu/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=24c9dad7-450f-40ac-bf34-e21d23359575&groupId=4091401.

Once you know how much money you can spend on food each month, **plan meals that fit within that budget**. For more information on how to create a budget, manage food dollars, and plan meals visit the UNL Extension Nutrition Education Program <http://liferay.unl.edu/web/nep/food-resource-management>.