

# To Your Health

## Savvy Choices

*Is it possible to dine out without falling completely off the wagon in your efforts to eat wisely?*

- Request all dressing and sauces "on the side;" use sparingly.
- Make certain all things toasted, such as a sandwich roll, come "dry;" spread something on yourself - only as needed.
- Request double vegetables.
- Watch your beverage order. How many calories are you drinking? Always a good choice: water and/or 1 cup of nonfat or low fat milk.
- Order baked, broiled or roasted foods.
- Avoid anything with fried components.
- Ask how a food is prepared - fried, no salt, etc.
- Split oversized portions.
- Use a "to-go" box for part of your portion. Put half in the box before you dig in.
- Slow down your eating. Give your body time to register that you're getting full.

Source: Tufts Health & Nutrition Letter, February 2008

## Ways to Cut 100 Calories

Maintaining a healthy weight depends on achieving energy balance. This is accomplished by balancing the amount of energy burned and the food consumed in your day. To stop weight gain, most of us need to: add 2000 more steps each day and eat 100 fewer calories daily. Small changes in the types of foods you eat and in the portion sizes you choose will quickly make a difference.

To cut 100 calories a day, try two or three of these ideas:

- Split a bagel in half; eat half today and half tomorrow.
- Use a nonstick skillet and cooking spray in place of butter or margarine as you fix eggs for breakfast.
- Prepare tuna or chicken salad with fat-free mayonnaise.
- Make pizza at home - with half the cheese, more vegetables.
- Choose 1% or fat-free cottage cheese instead of regular.
- Enjoy your tossed salad without the croutons and with half the dressing you usually use.
- Bake, broil, or grill chicken and fish rather than frying.
- Reduce the amount of cheese in casseroles and appetizers.
- Season steamed vegetables with fresh lemon and herbs instead of butter or margarine.

## Choices...

Low-fat and fat-free versions of cottage cheese, sour cream, and cream cheese can make delicious dips and spreads. Check them out! Also remember that everything doesn't have to be low-fat, fat-free, or sugar-free. Controlling portion size of high-calorie items allows us to 'have our cake and eat it, too.' It's all about choices.

## Enjoy a Better Night's Sleep

Sleep is one of the most important - but too often neglected - aspects of a healthy lifestyle. Many surveys indicate that we (Americans) are not getting enough sleep, which may contribute to a number of problems. Too little sleep has been linked to overeating and overweight, increased risk of diabetes and heart problems, decreased attention span, poorer performance on the job, poorer grades in school, and more depression.

For overall health and well-being a good night's sleep (7 to 8 hours for adults, more for children) is essential.

**Create a sleep-friendly space.** A cool, dark, comfortable, uncluttered bedroom, free of interruptions is helpful. Blackout shades or curtains, eye shades, ear plugs, humidifiers, fans and other "white noise" devices can help make a sleep space more restful. Mattress and pillows should be comfortable and supportive. Put the television and computer in another room.

**Maintain a regular schedule.** Keep your bedtimes and wake-times as regular as possible, even on weekends. This helps set your internal clock or sleep-wake cycle. Regular physical activity can help you sleep well.

**Rethink your daily drinks.** Alcoholic beverages and those with caffeine can seriously affect sleep patterns. Alcohol is not the sedative some think it is. It actually disrupts sleep. Caffeine is a strong stimulant - increasing alertness and disrupting deep sleep. For a better night's sleep, avoid caffeine for 6 to 8 hours before bedtime.

**Get into a relaxing bedtime routine.** Parents know that a regular bedtime routine - warm bath, reading a story, cuddling a favorite toy - is the best way to get children settled down and ready to sleep through the night. The same concept works for adults as well. A relaxing, soothing routine lets your body and brain know that it is time to sleep.

**Think sleep for driving safety:** Sleepiness and driving is a dangerous combination - just as fatal as drinking and driving. Driving while drowsy can lead to impaired reaction time, judgment, and vision, as well as problems processing information and increased aggressive behavior.

Source: Eat Right Montana - a coalition promoting healthy eating and active lifestyles

## Right Steps to Good Health

It's spring! Longer, warmer days - time to get out and enjoy the weather. How about a walk? The benefits might surprise you.

- Just 30 minutes of brisk walking a day can burn calories, lower blood pressure, and strengthen muscles. This can lead to weight loss, lower risk for cardiovascular disease and cancer, and decreased risk for osteoporosis.
- Walking and physical activity enables your body to release certain chemicals that positively affect your mood - making the winter doldrums disappear.

Develop a plan, or simply a schedule, to help keep you committed to your new routine. Consider your lifestyle. Do what works for you - a 15-minute walk at lunch time and again after work, or a 30-minute walk in the evening.