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Making Healthy Food Choices

Knowing what to eat can be confusing. Everywhere you turn, there is news about what is or isn't good for you. Some basic principles have weathered the fad diets, and have stood the test of time. Here are a few tips on making healthful food choices for you and your entire family.

- Eat lots of vegetables and fruits. Try picking from the rainbow of colors available to maximize variety. Eat non-starchy vegetables such as spinach, carrots, broccoli or green beans with meals.
- Choose whole grain foods over processed grain products. Try brown rice with your stir fry or whole wheat spaghetti with your favorite pasta sauce.
- Include dried beans (like kidney or pinto beans) and lentils into your meals.
- Include fish in your meals 2-3 times a week.
- Choose lean meats like cuts of beef and pork that end in "loin" such as pork loin and sirloin. Remove the skin from chicken and turkey.
- Choose non-fat dairy such as skim milk, non-fat yogurt and non-fat cheese.
- Choose water and calorie-free "diet" drinks instead of regular soda, fruit punch, sweet tea and other sugar-sweetened drinks.
- Choose liquid oils for cooking instead of solid fats that can be high in saturated and *trans* fats. Remember that fats are high in calories. If you're trying to lose weight, watch your portion sizes of added fats.
- Cut back on high calorie snack foods and desserts like chips, cookies, cakes, and full-fat ice cream.
- Eating too much of even healthful foods can lead to weight gain. Watch your portion sizes.

Want more information on foods that are healthier, or how to establish a plan for eating healthy foods? Let the American Diabetes Association help point you in the right direction.

[Diabetes meal plans & a healthy diet](#)

Whether you need to lose weight, gain weight, or stay where you are, your meal plan can help. A healthy diet is a way of eating that reduces risk for complications such as heart disease and stroke.

[Diabetes Food Pyramid Guide](#)

The Food Guide Pyramid divides food into 6 food groups and emphasizes eating a certain number of portions from each food group.

[Rate Your Plate](#)

A fun way to make sure you eat a variety of healthy foods at each meal.

[Food Choice Lists](#)

Food choice lists group together foods that have similar carbohydrate, protein, fat, and calories. They can be a great guide to planning balanced meals.

[Holiday Meal Planning](#)

The holidays can be a tough time for families, especially families dealing with diabetes. But there's no reason you can't take it all in stride. With a little preparation and some diabetes know-how under your belt, you'll be ready to face any holiday head-on.