

nutrition

A balanced diet full of fruits and vegetables, together with drinking lots of water and engaging in exercise will ensure you are on your way to a healthier lifestyle. Eating lots of small meals during the day is important in order to help you maintain your body weight. It will also have a positive affect on your immune system and give you plenty of energy you need to get through the day.

The following will help you with your self-management:

Basics

- Good nutrition gives you energy and maintains your general health and well being
- It strengthens your immune system, whereas poor nutrition results in a weak immune system causing illness and infection which reduces your appetite and leads to weight loss
- Eating small meals regularly will maintain your blood sugar levels and provide constant energy
- Proteins, carbohydrates and fats are contained in the foods you eat and convert to calories which are a source of energy for the body. Food also contains minerals and vitamins which are essential for body performance
- It is important to have the right balance of proteins, carbohydrates and fats everyday for good nutrition. This means having lots of bread, cereals, food with grains, fruits and vegetables, and some salt and fat
- Combining a balanced diet of 2 serves of fruit (150g each) and 5 serves of vegetables (75g each) a day with exercise is necessary to achieve an overall healthy well being (refer to Exercise link)

Food

Protein, Carbohydrates & Fats

- Protein helps build and maintain muscle
- Protein can be found in meat, fish, beans, nuts, and seeds
- Carbohydrates give you energy. There are 2 types of carbohydrates:
 - Complex carbohydrates - release energy slowly
 - Simple (sugars) carbohydrates - release energy quickly
- Complex carbohydrates can be found in fruits, vegetables, grains, bread, rice, pastas, and cereals
- Simple (sugars) carbohydrates can be found in dried or fresh fruit, jam, and honey
- Fats give you added energy. There are 2 types of fats:
 - 'Good' fats are found in nuts,

seeds, fish, and olive oil

- 'Bad' fats are found in butter and animal products

Vitamins & Minerals

- Eating a variety of different coloured fruits and vegetables is important as they contain vitamins and minerals that your body needs to keep your immune system working well
- Taking supplements in the form of a pill or injection might be needed if you are still not getting enough of the correct vitamins and minerals from the food you are eating
- Artificial flavours, additives, and colourings do not provide you with the important nutrients you need so try to avoid them
- Be careful as overcooking food takes out the goodness and nutrients

Breakfast

- Breakfast is the most important meal as it provides you with energy for the rest of the day. Breakfast ideas include:
 - Eating fresh fruit with cereal or yoghurt
 - Making a smoothie by blending fresh or canned fruit, yoghurt and low fat milk
 - Cooking a hot breakfast with mushrooms, tomatoes, spinach and eggs
 - Eating wholegrain breads with toppings such as vegemite, nut paste, tahini or hummus

Snacks

- Eating more often will give you the extra energy that you need when your body is fighting infections. Healthy snacks include:
 - Fruit - such as sultanas, apples, bananas, mandarins or oranges and grapes
 - Vegetables - such as carrots, celery or cucumber with dips like yoghurt dip or hummus

Snacks (contd)

- Fruit bread, scones, crumpets, muffins, pikelets, crispbread and ricecakes
- Smoothies or milkshakes - blend fruit with yoghurt and low fat milk

Fluids

- Water helps to keep your kidneys healthy and moves nutrients throughout your body which assists in preventing medication side effects such as kidney stones
- It is important to drink at least 2 litres of water everyday
- Water helps to replace fluids that may have been lost due to vomiting or diarrhoea. In severe cases rehydration salt solutions may be needed
- Keeping up your water intake can also help to prevent a dry mouth
- Try to avoid excess tea, coffee, alcohol, stimulant beverages (e.g. V), artificial sweeteners (aspartame - NutraSweet), and drinks with caffeine

Preparation

- Preparing, touching and storing food safely is important so that you do not pick up any unwanted infections from the food or water. This means:
 - Washing fruits and vegetables in clean water before preparing a meal
 - Having a clean kitchen and clean utensils to cook with
 - Storing raw food in a different place from cooked food
 - Cooking meat, fish, chicken and eggs until they are well done
 - Keeping leftovers in the fridge for only a couple of days
 - Peeling vegetables only as necessary

Making it real - ideas to try:

- Plan meals ahead of time (refer to Time link)
- Prepare enough meals for 2-3 days at one time and freeze the portions
- Share recipes or meals with friends and arrange group cooking days
- Check the back of food packets for nutritious recipes such as bolognaise on a pasta packet
- Plan ingredients that you need to buy and how much money you will spend each week to help prevent stress which may cause weight loss
- Minimise preparation time by using tinned or frozen food and ready made sauces/marinades
- Use healthy ways to cook food such as steaming, grilling, baking or microwaving
- Use 'one pot' recipes such as stews or casseroles or stir fries
- Keep a food diary to write down what foods affect your mood or health and what foods work well with certain medications
- Meat contains all the different types of proteins the body needs but it can be expensive. For an alternative combine any type of beans with brown rice, corn, nuts, seeds or wheat. For example an Indian dish of rice and dhal, or a Mexican dish of tacos and chilli con carne
- Canned fish is easy to prepare, less expensive than fresh and you can store it in your cupboard
- If you experience oral health or digestive issues, meat can be difficult to digest so try marinating meat with lemon or kiwi fruit for no longer than 10 minutes. This breaks down the proteins in the meat making it easier to eat and digest
- Use mince meat as an alternative to steak. It is cheaper, easy to digest and can be cooked in many ways including bolognaise, burgers, lasagne, rissoles or meat balls

The information provided assists in self-management and is intended as recommendations only. For more information please see your medical or health professional.



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