



Fit and Fabulous!



as you mature

Did You Know?

Being physically active and eating well may help you stay fit and feel fabulous over the years. If you are overweight or inactive, you may have a higher risk for:

- type 2 diabetes (high blood sugar)
- high blood pressure
- coronary heart disease
- stroke
- certain forms of cancer

No matter what your age, you may be able to improve your health if you *Move More and Eat Better!* This booklet gives you tips on how to get moving and eat well throughout your life.



Why

Move More and Eat Better?



Being physically active and making smart food choices are good for your health. In addition to improving your physical health, moving more and eating better may also:

- Give you more energy.
- Reduce stress.
- Help you feel better about yourself.
- Relieve boredom or depression.
- Set an example for your family.

Your family and friends can be great sources of motivation and support as you adopt a healthier lifestyle. Ask them to join you in healthy eating and physical activity—it is important for them, too! By making healthy choices together, it may be easier to eat right and be active.

Tips

on Moving More

Try to do at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity (like brisk walking) on most or all days of the week.

Also try to do strengthening activities two or three times a week. These activities are important because older adults—especially women—lose muscle and bone every year. Strengthening activities may help prevent or lessen this loss.

Fitting in physical activity is not as hard as you may think, and you do not have to do the whole 30 minutes at one time. Try these tips to overcome things that may keep you from being active.

“It’s too late for me to get physically active.”

It is never too late to start moving more. Physical activity may help you manage health problems like arthritis, osteoporosis (bone loss), and coronary heart disease. It may also help:

- Keep your body flexible.
- Keep your bones and muscles strong.
- Keep your heart and lungs healthy.
- Control high blood sugar, especially if you lose weight.
- Let you keep living in your own home without help.

“Physical activity is a chore.”

Physical activity can be fun—you just need to figure out which activities you enjoy. The more enjoyable it is, the more likely you are to stick with it. Some ideas include:

- Walking or taking an exercise class with a friend or a group—that way, you can cheer each other on, have company, and feel safer when you are outdoors.

Tip

If you are over age 50 or have chronic health problems such as coronary heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, osteoporosis, or obesity, talk to your health care provider before starting a vigorous physical activity program. You do not need to talk to your provider before starting a less strenuous activity like walking.

- Starting a small garden in your yard or in a community garden.
- Breaking physical activity into short blocks of time—taking three 10-minute walks during your day may be easier than taking one 30-minute walk.
- Doing different activities throughout the week to stay interested.
- If you are not comfortable being active outdoors because of safety concerns, consider joining your local recreation or fitness center or going to a relative's neighborhood to walk.



“It’s too expensive.”

There are lots of ways to be physically active that are free or low-cost. Consider:

- Finding a local park or school track where you can walk.
- Walking around a mall.
- Being active with your grandchildren—take a walk, toss a softball, or ride bikes.
- Walking your dog or meeting up with a neighbor to walk together.
- Checking out a fitness video from the library and following along at home.

“I don’t have enough time.”

No matter how busy you are, there are ways to fit in 30 minutes or more of physical activity each day. Try:

- Spreading physical activity throughout the day, rather than doing it all at once.
- Setting aside time to be active. For instance, if you make it part of your daily routine to walk after breakfast, you may not think twice about doing it.
- Walking to do your errands when possible.
- Being active while doing other things. For example, you can lift weights or march in place while watching TV, or walk around your home while talking on a cordless telephone.

“I’m not an athlete, so why strength train?”

Strengthening activities are good for everyone—and there are ways to become stronger without lifting weights. Strength training may help you perform your daily activities with more ease. Consider:

- Doing step-ups or wall push-ups in the comfort of your own home.
- Using canned foods or filled water bottles as weights.
- Walking up stairs—lifting your body weight strengthens your legs and hips.

Tip

To avoid injury, it is important to use good form when you do strengthening activities. You can learn about proper form in *Growing Stronger*, a strength training program for older adults. See the “Additional Resources” section at the end of this publication for more information.

Simple Ideas for Eating Well

- Start every day with breakfast. Try oatmeal, a whole-grain cereal like raisin bran with fat-free or low-fat milk, whole-wheat toast spread with jam, or fat-free or low-fat yogurt. Enjoy some fruit with your breakfast too.
- Try kidney or butter beans in hot dishes, on salads, or plain. Protein is important to your health as you age. Beans are loaded with protein and cost less than meat.
- Choose fat-free or low-fat milk, yogurt, and cheese instead of full-fat dairy products.
- Choose whole-grain foods like whole-wheat bread, oatmeal, brown rice, and whole-wheat pasta more often than refined-grain foods like white bread, white rice, and white pasta. Whole-grain foods offer dietary fiber, which helps keep you regular.
- Do not let sweets like cookies, candy, or soda crowd out healthy foods.



Make Healthy Meals That Taste Good

You may like the taste of fried foods and fatty meats, but if you eat them too often or in large amounts you may consume too much saturated fat, which is not healthy for your heart. There are other ways you can add flavor to your food. Try:

- Baking, roasting, broiling, grilling, or oven-frying chicken or fish—season with herbs, spices, lemon, lime, or vinegar (but not salt).

- Cooking collard greens or kale with onions, garlic, chicken broth, bouillon, smoked turkey, turkey bacon, or turkey ham (use broth, bouillon, and cured meats in small amounts because they are high in sodium, or buy low-sodium versions of them).
- Topping baked potatoes with salsa or low-fat sour cream.
- Making salads and casseroles with low-fat or fat-free salad dressing or mayonnaise, flavored vinegar like balsamic, or a small amount of mustard (but remember that mustard is high in sodium).

Save Time and Money When You Cook

You do not have to spend a lot of time in the kitchen or a lot of money to eat well.

- Cook enough to last. Casseroles, meat loaf, and whole cooked chicken may last for several days. (Be sure to freeze or refrigerate leftovers right away to keep them safe to eat).
- Buy frozen or canned vegetables (no salt added) and canned fruit packed in juice. They are just as good for you as fresh produce, will not go bad, and make quick and easy additions to your meals.
- If your local store does not have the foods you want or their prices are too high, go to another store. Start a weekly shopping carpool, share the cost of a taxi with friends, or ask a relative or neighbor for a ride.

Tip

If you cannot digest lactose (the sugar found in milk) try fat-free or low-fat lactose-reduced milk. Or try fat-free or low-fat yogurt or hard cheeses like cheddar, which may be easier to digest than milk. You can also get calcium from calcium-fortified juices, soy-based beverages, and cereals. Eating dark leafy vegetables like collard greens and kale, and canned fish with soft bones like salmon, can also help you meet your body's calcium needs.

Reading Food Labels



Food labels may help you make healthy food choices, but they can be confusing.* Following are some quick tips for reading food labels:

Check Serving Size and Calories

All the information on a food label is based on the serving size. Be careful—one serving may be much smaller than you think. If you double the servings you eat, you double the calories and nutrients, including the percent

Daily Values (DVs).

Percent DV

This number tells you whether a food is high or low in nutrients. Foods that have more than 20-percent DV of a nutrient are high. Foods that have 5-percent DV or less are low.

Saturated Fat

Saturated fat is not healthy for your heart. Compare labels on similar foods and try to choose foods that have 5-percent DV or less for saturated fat. Most of the fats you eat should be polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats. Keep total fat intake between 20 percent to 35 percent of your total daily calories.

Trans Fat

Trans fat is not healthy for your heart. When reading food labels, add together the grams of *trans* fat and saturated fat, and choose foods with the lowest combined amount.

Cholesterol

Too much cholesterol is not healthy for your heart. Keep your intake of saturated fat, trans fat, and cholesterol as low as possible.

Sodium (Salt)

Salt contains sodium. Research shows that eating less than 2,300 milligrams of sodium (about 1 teaspoon of salt) per day may reduce the risk of high blood pressure.

Fiber

Choose foods that are rich in fiber, such as whole grains, beans, fruits, and vegetables.

Sugar

Try to choose foods with little or no added sugar, such as low-sugar cereals.

Calcium

Choose foods that are high in calcium. Foods that are high in calcium have at least 20-percent DV.

Tip

Many food labels say “low-fat,” “reduced fat,” or “light.” These claims do not always mean the food is low in calories, however. Remember, fat-free does not mean calorie-free, and calories do count!

* For more information on reading food labels, visit: <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/labelman>.

For information about the 2005 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, see: <http://www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines>.

Keeping Track of Serving Sizes

Many people think that bigger is better. We are so used to value-sized portions—especially in restaurants—that it can be easy to eat more than our bodies need. Eating smaller portions will help you cut down on calories and fat (and might save you money too). Here is a 1,600-calorie per day sample menu with sensible portion sizes:*



Breakfast

- 1/2 cup oatmeal
- 1 English muffin with 1 tablespoon low-fat cream cheese
- 1 cup low-fat milk
- 3/4 cup orange juice

Lunch

- 2 ounces baked chicken without skin (a little smaller than a deck of cards)
- Lettuce, tomato, and cucumber salad with 2 teaspoons oil and vinegar dressing
- 1/2 cup rice seasoned with 1/2 teaspoon tub or liquid margarine
- 1 small whole-wheat roll with 1 teaspoon margarine

Dinner

- 3 ounces lean roast beef (about the size of a deck of cards) with 1 tablespoon beef gravy
- 1/2 cup turnip greens seasoned with 1/2 teaspoon margarine
- 1 small baked sweet potato with 1/2 teaspoon margarine
- 1 slice cornbread
- 1/4 honeydew melon

Snack

- 2 1/2 cups low-fat microwave popcorn
- 1 1/2 teaspoons margarine

Tips

Use tub or liquid margarine instead of butter. Choose a soft margarine that has less than 2 grams of saturated fat per tablespoon and has 0 grams of *trans* fat. “Liquid vegetable oil” should be first on the ingredient list. (American Heart Association)

Try keeping a food diary. Writing down what you eat, when you eat, and how you feel when you eat can help you understand your eating habits. You may be able to see ways to make your eating habits healthier. You can also use your diary to plan weekly menus, make shopping lists, and keep track of recipes you would like to try. For more information about keeping a food diary, read the Weight-control Information Network (WIN) brochure *Just Enough for You: About Food Portions*.

* Adapted from National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) sample menus.

Eating Away From Home

In real life, you cannot always cook your meals. Here are some ways to make healthy choices when you are away from home:

- Use a small plate at social functions to help keep you from eating too much.
- At restaurants, order a half portion, share a meal with a friend, or take half of your order home for another meal.
- Balance your meals throughout the day. If you have a high-fat or high-calorie breakfast or lunch, make sure you eat a low-fat dinner. If you know you will be having a higher fat dinner, make lower fat choices earlier in the day.



You Can Do It!

Set goals and move at your own pace to reach them. Ask your family and friends to help you. They can encourage you, help you with setbacks, and be there to celebrate your successes!

**No matter what, keep trying—
you can do it!**



Additional Reading From the Weight-Control Information Network

Energize Yourself and Your Family

NIH Publication No. 04-4926

Just Enough for You: About Food Portions

NIH Publication No. 03-5287

Walking... A Step in the Right Direction

NIH Publication No. 07-4155

Additional Resources

Growing Stronger: Strength Training for Older Adults

This exercise program, developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Tufts University, describes how to strength train safely. It illustrates and describes a variety of exercises that can be performed at home.

Internet: http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/growing_stronger

National Diabetes Education Program

Publications from the National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP) provide information about diabetes and obesity prevention and control. NDEP's publications catalog also offers resources specifically for African Americans.

Internet: <http://www.ndep.nih.gov/diabetes/pubs/catalog.htm>

Phone: (301) 496-3583

MyPyramid

This interactive website from the U.S. Department of Agriculture has detailed information about healthy eating and physical activity and allows you to create a personalized eating and activity plan.

Internet: <http://www.mypyramid.gov>

Phone: 1-888-7-Pyramid; 1-888-779-7264

Cookbooks

Heart-Healthy Home Cooking African American Style

National Institutes of Health (NIH) Publication No. 97-3792, 1997. This pamphlet tells how to prepare your favorite African-American dishes in ways that will help protect you and your family from heart disease and stroke. It includes 20 tested recipes. Available from NHLBI for \$3; call (301) 592-8573 or (240) 629-3255 (TTY) or download for free at: <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/other/chdblack/cooking.pdf>.

Down Home Healthy Cookin'

National Cancer Institute (NCI), reprinted 2006. This pamphlet features 12 recipes for traditional African-American foods modified to be low in fat, high in fiber, and tasty to eat. Available free from NCI; call 1-800-4-CANCER or 1-800-332-8615 (TTY).

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Publications produced by WIN are reviewed by both NIDDK scientists and outside experts. This publication was also reviewed by Steven Blair, P.E.D., and Ellen Feiler, M.S., Health Education Director, Broward County Health Department, Florida Department of Health.

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