

From the Food Bank Kitchen

Quick Tips for Eating Healthy

Yeah, yeah, yeah...you hear the advice from health experts to eat more fruits and vegetables. Cut back on salt, saturated fat, and sugar. Switch to whole grains. Exercise at least an hour a day. Many people know all that and more. But how do you translate these recommendations into the dozens of diet and exercise decisions you make each day? Here are favorite tips to get you started from the publication Nutrition Action health letter.

AT THE STORE

- Buy a bag of cut veggies for times you are too tired or rushed to wash and cut your own (ex, broccoli, carrots, cauliflower).
- Replace processed meats with no-nitrite-added deli meats. Eat no more than 18 oz of red meat a week.
- Try a veggie burger. Explore new vegetables and aim for variety in colors; vegetables displace higher-calorie foods.
- Switch to "thins" or light breads with about 100 calories per roll or 2 slices, and with the first ingredient a whole grain.
- Read the Nutrition Facts label on competing brands of canned and packaged foods to choose products lowest in sodium.
- Buy frozen fruit like unsweetened frozen strawberries, blueberry, peach or mango to make healthy smoothies at home.

AT HOME

- Eat fish twice a week. Their omega-3 fats may protect your heart.
- Cover half your plate with vegetables or fruits. Squeeze in extra bits of fruits and veggies into as many dishes as you can.
- Replace a side of rice, potatoes or pasta with beans or lentils.
- Drink mostly calorie-free beverages. Liquid calories in sodas, iced teas and fruit juices and drinks add up quickly.
- Check serving sizes when planning portions and reading labels. Does your frozen mac & cheese serve 1, 2, or 4?
- Drink water before meals if you are trying to lose weight; or have a cup of broth-based soup.
- Stick to one *small* cookie or chocolate or other sweet a day; sugars can raise triglycerides and represent empty calories.
- Buy a pedometer and wear it. Aim for a 10,000-a-day step goal. This motivates many people to walk around more.

AT A RESTAURANT

- Pack up half your meal. Get a take-out container when the meal is delivered and package part of it for later.
- Pizza: order thin, not thick crust to save calories and carbs. Get veggie toppings instead of meat.
- Choose a main-dish salad, not a sandwich when you have the choice. Get dressing on the side so you can add less.
- Order a side salad rather than a high fat, high calorie appetizer. Skip the basket of bread or tortilla chips.
- Think petite. Look for appetizers, sandwiches, and desserts that the restaurant calls "mini", "demi" or "treat" size.

Basic Vinaigrette

Whisk together the ingredients and keep in the fridge for the next time you want a quick salad -based meal.

- 1 Tbs. Dijon mustard
 - 3 Tbs. mayonnaise
 - 2 Tbs. red wine vinegar
 - 1/4 tsp salt
 - 1 tsp honey
 - 1/3 cup canola oil
- Toss 1/4 cup of the dressing with any of these combinations for a healthy lunch or dinner:*
- 2 cups cooked lentils or edemame (comes frozen) + 1 cup shredded carrots + 3 sliced scallions
 - 8 cups salad greens + 1 lb shrimp + 1-2 chopped tomatoes
 - 1 1/2 c black beans + 1 pint halved cherry tomatoes + 1 diced avocado

Other Options to Try

- 6 c chopped Romaine + 1 cup sliced bell peppers, red onion, and cucumber + 1/4 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 6 c mixed salad greens + 1 can tuna or salmon + 2 chopped roasted red peppers
- 1 lb steamed asparagus (or green beans or snap peas or snow peas) + 1/4 cup toasted sliced almonds

*Source: Center for Science in the Public Interest, Nutrition Action, July/Aug 2011
EASY: Insider Tips to Keep You Healthy*