



Diet

Nutrition and diet is very important for overall health and well-being. The foods we eat provide our bodies with the energy and nourishment we need to carry out everyday activity. Eating healthy and nutritious food allows you to function at your best.

The healthy diet pyramid is a good place to start when you are trying to decide what to eat. The foods you should “eat most” include: vegetables, fruits, nuts, beans and lentils, breads and cereals. These foods provide great amounts of energy from carbohydrates, as well as protein, vitamins and dietary fibre. The “eat moderately” foods include fish, lean meat, eggs, chicken (without skin), milk, cheese and yoghurt. Eating a serving or two of some foods from this section of the Healthy Eating Pyramid should help to provide protein, minerals (especially iron and calcium) and B vitamins. The foods that you should “eat in small amounts” include: fats, oils, sugar and salt. These foods lack a good supply of the nutrients for growth, health and energy.

Following the Healthy Diet Pyramid should keep you healthy. But what about variety? You do not always need to eat the same “boring healthy” food. There are heaps of resources such as cookbooks and magazine articles that can help individuals prepare foods that are interesting and nutritious. Be aware that when you select a meal, be sure to limit the amount of fats and oils used. A small amount of these are ok, but in order to prevent health issues such as heart disease, diabetes, obesity and high cholesterol, you should find alternates, or simply decrease the amount you use.

Below are some simple ways of increasing variety, limiting fats and sugars, and enjoying an interesting diet:

- ▶ Choose hamburgers and steak sandwiches with salad and pineapple rather than “the lot”
- ▶ Ask for no mayonnaise or margarine on the bun
- ▶ Opt for a baked potato with a little cheese and low-fat filling. Ask for no butter or sour cream
- ▶ Souvlaki or doner kebab with extra salad or tabouli rather than loads of meat
- ▶ Oven baked or wood fired pizza with lean meat, chicken or vegetarian toppings and a light sprinkling of cheese
- ▶ Pasta with tomato-based sauces
- ▶ Stir-fry with steamed rice
- ▶ Hot roast meat rolls - lean meat or chicken. Add salad and corn on the cob
- ▶ Low-fat smoothies and milkshakes
- ▶ Low-fat frozen yoghurt or ice creams for dessert

By combining these ideas along with a regular exercise regime, you will be able to see changes occurring in your body. These are all HEALTHY changes that will prevent the onset of disease, and allow you to live a fulfilled life with loads of energy and vitality.

