Getting Started with Healthy Eating

Making healthy food choices when you're busy can be hard – but it's one of the most important things you can do for your health. A healthy diet helps control your weight, blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar, which reduces your risk for type 2 diabetes. Start with small steps that can make a big difference.

5 Healthy Choices to Make Today

1 Fill up on non-starchy vegetables

Eat as many non-starchy vegetables as you want. Examples of these are spinach, kale, cauliflower, peppers, or green beans, so eat up!

Frozen vegetables that can be steamed in their packaging are great time-savers.

Canned vegetables with no added salt are just as healthy as fresh produce and cost less!

Limit potatoes and potato-based foods, which contain a lot of starch and cause blood sugar to go up quickly. This is especially important for people with diabetes.

2 Go for healthy proteins

Healthy proteins include lean meats like chicken and turkey, as well as fish, beans, low-fat cheeses, and soy products. Limit red meat, especially processed red meat like bacon, sausage, and hot dogs.

3 Choose whole grains

Brown rice, whole grain bread and whole grain pasta are healthier than white rice, white bread, or regular pasta. Whole grains contain more fiber, so your body has to work harder to break them down. This means when you eat whole grains your blood sugar rises more slowly and you feel more satisfied.

4 Use healthy oils - sometimes

Oils from vegetables contain healthy fats, so choose oils like olive or canola for cooking, or to have on salads. Limit butter, since it contains a lot of unhealthy saturated fat.

5 Skip sugary beverages, save the calories

Don't drink your calories by having soda, juices, or sweetened iced teas! Have water with every meal. To add flavor to plain water, try citrus slices, mint or basil leaves. When you have juice, choose 100% juice and limit it to 8 oz.

Stay on track with healthy eating

Look for free mobile apps in the app store, such as **My Fitness Pal** and **Lose It!** These apps can help you track your food choices and physical activity. They also offer tips and healthy recipes.

Prevent Diabetes

Healthy eating and physical activity are two of the most important steps you can take to prevent heart problems, diabetes, or high blood pressure. For more information about healthy eating, visit: **www.mass.gov/massinmotion**

What does a healthy lunch or dinner look like?

VEGETABLES and FRUIT ½

Make **half of your plate** vegetables and fruit. Salads and soups are an easy way to get a lot of vegetables on your plate. Add nuts, like almonds, to your salad for more healthy fats.

PROTEIN ¼

Have a healthy protein on **¼ of your plate.** If you have meat, be sure your portion is not bigger than the **size of a deck of cards.**

WHOLE GRAINS ¼

Make only **¼ of your plate** a healthy grain, like brown rice. Fiber from **whole grains, vegetables, and fruit** helps keep blood sugar stable, which is a big help for people with diabetes.

Choose water or low-fat/non-fat milk with your meals.
Having juice? Stick to a cup (8oz) or less.

How can I eat more fruits and vegetables every day?

- Add fruit to your breakfast by topping low-fat or non-fat yogurt with berries.
- Add chopped vegetables like peppers, onions, and tomatoes to scrambled eggs.
- Chop vegetable sticks to enjoy with healthy dips.
- Make a fruit smoothie instead of a sweet dessert.
- Keep fruit, carrot sticks, or pepper strips with you when you're traveling so you have a healthy snack option.

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