

Eat A Variety Of Nutritious Foods From All Food Groups

- Eat a variety of nutrient-rich foods like fruits, vegetables, and whole grain foods that are lower in calories.
- Choose foods low in saturated and trans fats, cholesterol, added sugars, and salt.
- Read the Nutrition Facts panel and ingredients list on food labels.
- Learn more about healthy eating from Optima's "Eating for Life" Program.

Manage Your Weight

- Use up as many calories as you eat.
- Aim for a slow, steady weight loss by decreasing calorie intake and increasing physical activity.

Be Active

- Engage in at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most days of the week. Up to 60 to 90 minutes of daily physical activity may be needed for weight loss.
- Include aerobic exercises for heart conditioning, stretching exercises for flexibility, and resistance exercises for muscle strength and endurance.

Food Groups To Encourage

- Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables; they may help lower your blood cholesterol and your blood pressure.
- Increase your fiber intake by eating beans and whole-grain foods that can help you lower your blood cholesterol and help keep your weight down.
- Examples of whole grains are oats/oatmeal, corn, brown rice, and whole wheat.
- Eat fish at least twice a week. Oily fish like salmon, trout and herring contain omega-3 fatty acids that may lower your risk of death from heart disease.

Fats

- Choose lean meats and poultry without skin, and cook by grilling, baking or broiling.
- Keep your fat intake between 20 to 35 percent of total calories, with most fats coming from polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fatty acids, like nuts, canola and olive oils.
- Choose meat, poultry, dry beans, and milk or milk products that are lean, low-fat, or fat-free.

Carbohydrate And Sugar

- Choose and prepare foods and beverages with little added sugars or caloric sweeteners.
- Cut back on candy, pastries and high-calorie bakery products.
- Choose whole vegetables and fruit in place of juices.

Sodium And Potassium

- Consume less than 2,300 mg of sodium daily, and less than 1,500 mg if you have high blood pressure.
- Choose and prepare foods with little salt and limit condiments like ketchup and soy sauce.
- At the same time, consume potassium-rich foods, such as bananas, potatoes, tomatoes and oranges.

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