

## Healthy Eating and Physical Activity



A healthy lifestyle involves many decisions. These include choosing a balanced diet or an eating plan, also integrating physical activity into your daily routine. Let's start by defining what a healthy eating plan is and what it should include.

### What is a healthy eating plan?

- Highlights the importance of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, milk, and milk base products.
- Contains little amount of saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, salt, sodium and added sugars.
- You stay within your daily caloric needs.

### A healthy eating plan for weight management includes a variety of the following foods:

- **Fruits:** When it's not the season for your favorite fresh fruit, try frozen, canned, or dried depending on your preference. Read the nutrition label to find out how much sugar it contains. Be sure to choose a variety of fruits that are packed in water or in their own juice.
- **Vegetables:** You may find that you like grilled or steamed vegetables seasoned with spices and herbs, such as rosemary. If you can't get them fresh, you can try low sodium canned or frozen vegetables. This can be a quick make-ahead side dish for your main course.
- **Calcium-rich foods:** Drink a glass of low-fat or fat-free milk and eat a wide variety of flavored yogurts to replace high-sugar desserts.
- **Protein:** A healthier option to replace fried fish or breaded chicken is to cook them in the oven or on the grill. You can also try a recipe of grains (beans) instead of high-fat meats.
- **Whole Grains:** Include oatmeal, dry cereals, rice, pasta, quinoa, and bread.
- **Water:** Check with your nutritionist the amount of water you should consume, according to your weight or your health conditions.

### Some general tips about comfort foods:

- Eat them less often, either once a week or once a month.
- Eat smaller portions, especially if your food is high in calories.
- Try a healthier version using low-calorie ingredients or preparing them differently, without increasing your portion sizes.
- Eating healthy doesn't have to be overwhelming, expensive, or restrictive. Pay attention and use foods that have the potential to protect your health.



### Physical activity is important for good health. Includes any body movement that requires energy expenditure.

Some of the benefits of physical activity are:

- Reduces high blood pressure.
- Reduces the risk of type 2 diabetes, heart attack, stroke, and several types of cancer.
- Reduces pain and disability associated with arthritis.
- Improves bone health and joint function.
- Promotes weight control.
- Reduces symptoms of depression and anxiety.

## Types of activities

There are different types of body movements that promote physical activity. In moderate-intensity physical activity, breathing and heart rate will speed up, but while you're doing it, you'll be able to carry on a conversation. Some of these are:

- Brisk walk (one mile in 15 minutes).
- Moderate yard work (raking, bagging leaves, or mowing the lawn).
- Play actively with children.
- Ride a bike.



In physical activity with vigorous intensity, your heart rate will increase, you will have to breathe very hard and fast to be able to carry on a conversation.

Some recommendations are:

- Jogging or running
- To swim
- Fast-paced roller skating
- Ride a bike
- Jump rope



## Tips for getting started with physical activity:

- Reduce the time you are sedentary. Choose some type of physical activity that you find fun or interesting.
- Reserve specific times of the day for physical activity on a daily or weekly basis.
- Look for places and times that you prefer, such as walking around the neighborhood in the morning.
- Start gradually to increase the intensity of physical activity.

It is important that before you begin any type of movement, you consult with your doctor about the type and amount of physical activity that is right for you.

### Social and Emotional Aspect:

For tips, tools, and resources on how you and your family can cope with the emotional and physical concerns regarding your diagnosis, you can talk to your primary care physician or contact the following phone line:

Customer Service Department  
1-844-347-7800  
TTY/TDD 1-844-347-7805

Visit our website

[www.firstmedicalvital.com](http://www.firstmedicalvital.com)

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