



Wellness Newsletter

October 2016

Why is it important to eat your vegetables?

We have all been taught, or told by our mothers, that we need to eat our vegetables. But many times we haven't really learned why vegetables are an important part of our diet. Nutrients in vegetables can help reduce risk of chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease; as well as protect against certain types of cancer. Potassium, folate, vitamin A and vitamin C are prevalent in many vegetables. Potassium is helpful in maintaining healthy blood pressure. Folate helps form red blood cells and has been shown to reduce risk of neural tube defects during pregnancy. Vitamin A helps to protect against infections along with keeping eyes and skin healthy. Vitamin C plays a role in healing wounds, keeping teeth and gums healthy, and aids in iron absorption. Vegetables are a good source of fiber. A diet high in fiber has shown to reduce risk of diseases as well as improve bowel function. Fiber is the structure in vegetables, and when eaten helps with the feeling of fullness while providing crunch and chew. Use of vegetables in a meal helps to increase volume of the meal, while decreasing calories.

Need to eat more vegetables? Most people are aware they are not eating enough vegetables and understand the need to add more into their diet. The big question is how? Here are a few ideas to help increase vegetable intake.

1. Make it a focus to have vegetables available.
Buy both fresh and frozen vegetables, once your family has eaten all the fresh vegetables there will be frozen vegetables available until the next time your grocery shop
2. Buy in-season vegetables to decrease cost and help guide and simplify choices.
In season vegetables are usually the most flavorful and a featured item at the grocery store
3. Make the vegetable the center focus of the meal.
Choose your vegetable first then build the rest of your meal around the vegetable
4. Use vegetables in a dish as well as on the side.
Make a stir fry and have a salad; a casserole with veggies and a steamed vegetable on the side; top the meal with a vegetable such as mushrooms and have a vegetable on the side
5. Include kids in the preparation to help increase the whole family's vegetable intake.
Kids can help with meals by choosing the vegetable and then be involved in the preparation such as washing vegetables, tearing lettuce for the salad, etc.

Adapted from www.Choosemyplate.gov/vegetables

Trying to improve your eating habits, start with your choices at restaurants

Restaurants are a part of our fast paced life style. We eat at restaurants for multiple reasons – feeding a family on the go, social time with friends, date night, convenience, work meetings, etc. When trying to improve our diet and overall health a few meals per week at a restaurant can undermine our healthier lifestyle efforts. Here's some tips to help stay on track when restaurant food is unavoidable.



1. Don't be afraid to ask about the details of the dish – is it baked or fried, portion size, etc.
2. When French fries are the side dish ask if other options are available for sides – a fresh vegetable, baked potato, salad, etc.
3. Ask if a healthier, lower calorie cooking method can be used – baking instead of frying.
4. Don't hesitate to ask for a to go box at the beginning of the meal, place half of the meal in the box – out of site out of mind.
5. To decrease calorie intake, avoid calorie beverages with meals. One 24-ounce soda can add up to 300 calories to the meal.
6. Limit the number of alcoholic beverages with the meal.
7. Knowledge is power – take the time to look up the restaurants nutrition facts prior to going to help make better choices.

Diabetes Prevention



According to the American Diabetes Association (ADA) you can prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes with a few changes in lifestyle. Many people are under the misconception that if they have a family history of diabetes that they are unable to do anything to decrease their risk of

developing diabetes. The ADA recommends the first step in prevention of diabetes is to understand the risk factors. Risk factors include being overweight, high blood pressure, elevated cholesterol levels, inactivity, smoking, poor eating habits along with uncontrollable factors such as age, race, gender and family history. Although we cannot change our age, race, gender or family history we can focus on small changes to improve weight, blood pressure, cholesterol levels, activity, eating habits and quit smoking.

Making a lifestyle change is difficult and can be overwhelming. Remember small changes can add up to make an impact on your health. Start with the small things you are willing to change and make your goals attainable. For example, if you would like to become more physically active start with a goal of taking a walk on the weekends and then add additional walks throughout the week as your energy level improves. If you are a soda drinker, try to decrease the amount of soda consumed in a day by 1 or 2 cans. Every small change you

make to move toward a healthier lifestyle helps to decrease your risk of developing diabetes.

To help keep you on track remember to use available resources. Resources can include friends and family as a support system for improving your health. You are your own resource, be the leader in lifestyle changes and others will follow. Apps on your phone can provide reminders as well as support. If searching the internet for information remember to use reputable web sites such as www.diabetes.org or www.eatright.org. Your doctor's office can provide information on available support programs in your area.

www.diabetes.org – Are you at Risk? Lower your Risk. Checkup America, October 2014.

The time is now for employers to help improve the health of their most valuable resource – employees. With our expertise in healthcare, we at Savage and Associates can help you design and administer a worksite wellness program appropriate for your company's size and budget. Helping employees have the tools to live a healthy lifestyle is imperative. Let Savage help you create a culture of wellness and prevention, promoting personal responsibility.

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