

HEALTHY EATING GUIDELINES

WHAT SHOULD I EAT?

1. Nutrition 101: Within each day, aim to include all of the following: fruits, vegetables, whole grains, fat, a protein source and a calcium source. Eating a variety of these foods can act like a multivitamin and provide your body with an array of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, fiber, “super” nutrients, and energy.

2. Eat What Nourishes: Like every other animal on this planet, we all have an innate ability to feed ourselves exactly what our body needs. Listen to your body’s cravings, be guided by your body’s wisdom and attuned to how what’s going on in your life influences this. Notice how the amounts and kinds of foods you eat make you feel and what foods inspire your senses.

3. Eat Food: No food is “good” or “bad;” allow space for all food. At the same time you can recognize that foods that have ingredients or additives that you can’t pronounce can often bypass innate hunger and satiety signals, making it harder to know when you’ve eaten enough.

4. Eat Mostly Plants: Plants are very nutrient dense and can provide us with energy, vitamins, minerals, phytochemicals, antioxidants, fiber, and everything good you can think of. Eat a variety of grains, nuts, legumes, fruits, and vegetables.

5. Eat a Rainbow: In nature, most plants create phytochemicals that help protect them from being eaten by animals and insects. These same phytochemicals, when ingested by humans can help fight cancers and other diseases. Different colors of fruits and vegetables such as blue, purple, red, orange, yellow, and white have different types of phytochemicals, each with unique health benefits.

HOW SHOULD I EAT?

6. Eat With Hunger, Stop With Satiety: When you start eating when you are hungry, you can stop eating when you are comfortably full. When you eat for other reasons you no longer have these reliable body signals to guide you. What is your experience of hunger? Do you feel hunger, ignore it, or let yourself get too hungry before eating? Does it seem like you eat to a point where you feel too full? How can you notice when you’ve eaten just enough?

7. Be Flexible: Our food choices are constantly evolving and can change based on our life stage, obligations, season of the year, level of attunement with our bodies, demographic location, physical condition, mood and as we learn more about nutrition. Like the dynamic process of life, allow yourself to be flexible and open to the possibilities of a changing diet as you yourself change. With more flexibility and compassion for where you are in your life, notice how your food can be savored, enjoyed, help ground you and contribute to your overall wellbeing.

8. Mindfully: Eat mindfully when possible and notice how different sensations of various foods can impact your experience. Is its texture soft and creamy or tough and bitter? Are its colors stimulating and inviting or calming and relaxing? Does it crunch when you bit it or sizzle when you’re frying it? Does the smell remind you of a pleasant memory or the changing of a season? Does it taste like too much of something or is it just right?

9. Listen to Your Body’s Wisdom: Take a moment to check in with yourself before, during, and after eating. Listen to your needs and be receptive to if you are still hungry or if you have eaten beyond your hunger. Notice that at different times of the day, month, season, and with different activities, your body might be asking for different types of foods and for different amounts of foods.

10. Schedule Breaks to Eat: Life can be busy and it’s understandable that sometimes food can take a backseat to other priorities. When you schedule time to eat each day, you can provide your body with adequate rest and fuel, and need not rely on substitutes like caffeine, energy drinks or high levels of stress to get you through the day.

HOW SHOULD I SHOP?

11. Frozen, Bulk, Seasonal: Buying foods frozen, in bulk, and/or seasonally will not only help keep things at a reasonable cost but can be very nutritious. Foods that are frozen are often picked at their peak and flash frozen to seal in nutrients. Likewise, seasonal produce is also picked at its peak and doesn’t have to travel as far to get to your table.

12. Shop with a Full Stomach or End Up With an Empty Wallet: If you’re starving and walking in a room filled with food, chances are you might end up with foods that you didn’t really need.

13. Plan Ahead, Make a List: Planning ahead can be as simple as looking through 2-3 recipes you want to make for the week and making a list with the ingredients you need. Making a list before you go shopping can help you stay focused and not end up with any unnecessary purchases.

14. Try New Things: Don’t be afraid to experiment with different flavors, cooking techniques, cuisines, and unfamiliar foods. Walk the aisles of the market to find something new and appealing. Learning to cook is a process and can take time. The key is to keep at it and find what inspires you.

15. Keep a Well-Stocked Pantry: Foods that don’t spoil quickly are convenient to have on hand and include: Olive, canola and/or sesame oil, balsamic vinegar, soy sauce, mustard, ketchup, sea salt, pepper, a few spices (cumin, Italian seasoning or oregano, chili powder, red pepper flakes, curry powder), canned tomatoes, pasta (whole wheat), rice (medium or short grain brown), rolled oats, box tofu, nuts, dried fruit, canned beans (white, pinto, black, garbanzo, etc.), canned corn, tuna, and more.