

# 365 Days of Healthy Eating

## January 1 Skip Resolutions, Make Plans!

Ever make New Year's resolutions with enthusiasm, only to break them after a few days? For a better chance of success, make *plans*—not just resolutions—for fitness, healthier eating, weight loss, or whatever's important for you.

Here's how:

- *Break your big goals (resolutions) into smaller, more specific goals.*
- *List realistic changes that match your goals.*

### **Specific Goals**

Walk 30 minutes each day.

Eat more vegetables.

Lose two pounds in January.

### **Realistic Changes**

Walk 15 minutes during my lunch break.

Eat salad with dinner.

Skip second helpings.

- *Be patient.* Small steps add up over time.
- *Stick with it.* If you waver from your plan, dump any guilt or feelings of failure. Start again where you left off. That's okay!
- *Take another look.* Evaluate your progress every week or two. Update and change your plan if you need to.
- *Reward yourself*—with a new CD or recreation activity, for example, not more food.

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Take time today to think about your fit future. What's your . . .

- *Big goal:* \_\_\_\_\_
- *Specific goals:* \_\_\_\_\_
- *Realistic changes that may work for you; read through the book each day for ideas:* \_\_\_\_\_

### January 2 Get F.I.T.

Do you realize that a physically active lifestyle helps you get a deeper, more restful sleep? Gives you strength and stamina to do what matters most to you? Gives you some calorie leeway to enjoy another bite? May even extend your life?

With the holiday season over, now's a great time to see if your approach to active living passes the F.I.T. test and offers real benefits! Consider this:

- *F-requency.* Within reason, the more often you do it, the greater the benefit.
- *I-ntensity.* For cardiovascular fitness, fit in time for physical activity that gets your heart pumping. Check with your physician first if you haven't been physically active for a while or if you have a health problem.
- *T-ime.* At least sixty minutes of moderate activity daily is a smart goal. Break it up into shorter segments if you need to.

### January 3 The Cold (and Sniffles) Truth

Got the sniffles? Runny nose got you down? Too stuffed up to breathe easily or to taste a great meal? You likely have a common cold—too common during frosty winter days! That said, can any foods, nutrients, or supplements prevent it, or at least minimize your symptoms?

So far, dietary cure-all claims aren't backed by strong scientific evidence. Large doses of vitamin C won't prevent a cold, but its antihistamine effect may ease your breathing. Zinc and echinacea supplements may reduce symptoms, but they also may *suppress*, not improve, immunity. And lobelia, an herbal supplement, may cause

harm, from breathing problems and rapid heartbeat to coma, even death!

To relieve cold's symptoms and hasten your recovery:

- *Take time to rest.* Stay away from others if you can.
- *Drink plenty of fluids,* including vitamin C–rich juice (even hot chicken soup). Fluids and warmth help loosen nasal mucus.

## January 4 Weighing In on Dieting

Does January mark your renewed goal for a healthy weight? Great! For long-term success and good health along the way, take weight loss slow, steady, smart. A realistic, healthful goal? Most experts agree: ½ to 1 pound of weight loss per week.

To quickly judge a popular diet, check for these ill-fated qualities: promises of quick weight loss, little or no physical activity, rigid meal plans, odd amounts of food, or special food combinations. Diets with these qualities are often boring, dispiriting, even unhealthy. They probably won't work for long and may do harm.

Instead of “dieting,” concentrate on smart eating and active living.

- *Watch your portions.* If they're oversized, eat less. (See January 31.)
- *Eat more fruits, vegetables, and whole-grain foods.* They tend to have fewer calories, yet plenty of nutrients. Eat fewer high-calorie, low-nutrient foods (such as soft drinks, candy, salad dressings, high-fat spreads).
- *Go easy on snacks.* Pay attention to how much, how often, and how many snack calories by reading food labels.
- *Move more.* Do something physically active today, even if it's just for fifteen minutes. Gradually increase your activity.

## January 5 Peanut Lover?

Love peanuts? Then eat up. Dr. George Washington Carver (today's his birthday) discovered more than 300 ways to use peanuts!

A member of the dried bean family, not a tree nut, peanuts provide protein. And they're also packed with heart-healthy substances—

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among them *folate*, *magnesium*, *good (monounsaturated) fats*, and two plant substances called *resveratrol* and *plant sterols*—yet no cholesterol!

Enjoy chopped peanuts in salads, on cereal, in baked goods, in smoothies. For a new way to enjoy peanuts, try this:

### Peanut-Crusted Chicken

1 tablespoon flour	1 cup finely chopped, unsalted dry-roasted peanuts
1 teaspoon seasoned salt	4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
½ teaspoon garlic powder	2 tablespoons butter or vegetable oil
¼ teaspoon dried tarragon	
¼ cup prepared mustard	
2 tablespoons honey	

In a pan or shallow bowl, combine flour, seasoned salt, garlic powder, and tarragon; mix well. In a second pan, combine mustard and honey. Place peanuts in a third pan. Dip each chicken breast in flour mixture, then honey mustard, and finally in peanuts to coat. Heat butter in a 10- to 12-inch skillet; add chicken and cook over medium-low heat until internal temperature reaches 170°F and golden brown, 4 to 5 minutes per side. Makes 4 servings.

Source: National Peanut Board

## January 6 Supplements—S-age Advice

You don't need to buy out the supplement shelf. But you do need to take the right vitamin or mineral supplement for your age and unique health needs. Remember, food first! Then *if* you need a supplement, here's what health experts advise as a daily guideline, depending on your age:

- *20s, 30s, or 40s*: *folic acid* (400 micrograms for women) if you're pregnant or capable of pregnancy, to avoid birth defects; perhaps calcium (up to about 1,000 milligrams, more—1,200 milligrams—for menopausal women) and perhaps *iron* (no more than 18 milligrams) if you're a woman with heavy menstrual flow.
- *50s*: *calcium* (up to 1,200 milligrams for women and men) to protect against bone loss; and *vitamin D* (400 International Units, or I.U.). Vitamin D recommendations go up with age. Women: Stop any iron supplement now.
- *60s*: *calcium* as noted for the 50s; *vitamin D* as noted for the 50s; and *vitamin B<sub>12</sub>* (up to 2.4 micrograms) to counteract possible changes in vitamin B<sub>12</sub> absorption.

- *70s: calcium* as noted for the 50s; *vitamin D* (up to 600 I.U. or less if you drink milk); and *vitamin B<sub>12</sub>*, as noted for the 50s.

To be supplement savvy:

- *Check the Supplement Facts on any you take* so you don't overdo. A supplement with 100% Daily Value for these or any other nutrients is enough, unless your doctor gives different advice.
- *Make a personal note* to ask your doctor about the right supplements for you. *Note:* Supplements may interact with any medication that you take.

## January 7 Cook Savvy—Fat-Trimming Countdown

Ready to reduce your long-term risks for heart disease, cancer, and diabetes? Trimming fat from your food is a great step toward meeting that healthy-eating goal. Health experts advise *20 to 35 percent of calories from fat* (44 to 78 fat grams for a 2,000-calorie daily eating plan). And keep saturated fat (including trans fatty acids) as low as possible.

When you cook today, try a “fat trimmer.”

- *Pick flavorful oil.* A little extra virgin olive, sesame, walnut, or herb-infused oil goes a long way.
- *Thicken creamy soup or stew with puréed, cooked root veggies,* such as potatoes, sweet potatoes, parsnips, or turnips.
- *Buy nonstick pans*—to sauté or stir-fry with less fat.
- *Oven bake “fried chicken.”* Coat chicken with yogurt, then roll in whole-wheat bread crumbs and herbs. Spray lightly with vegetable oil spray. Oven bake at 350°F in a nonstick pan.
- *Grill or broil, roast or bake, boil or stir-fry*—all low-fat ways to cook!
- *Use a cheese with “character.”* Just a little Romano, blue, or Parmesan cheese delivers lots of flavor.
- *Go halvesies.* Toss less butter, margarine, or oil with veggies, pasta, or rice. Ladle less dressing on salad.
- *Follow the  $\frac{2}{3}$ – $\frac{1}{3}$  guideline:  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the plate with* veggies, fruits, and grain foods. Fill the rest of the plate with meat, poultry, fish, or cheese.

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### January 8 The Eyes Have It

An old wives' tale proves true: carrots *do* help you see better.

It has long been known that carrots' beta carotene (which forms vitamin A) helps your eyes adjust to dim light. Cutting-edge research suggests that other antioxidants in plant-based foods may help protect your eyesight from cataracts and age-related macular degeneration.

- Eating foods rich in *antioxidant vitamins* (beta carotene, vitamins C and E) may lower your risk for cataracts, a clouding of the eye's lens.
- *Lutein and zeaxanthin*, found in the retina's macula, protect your eyes from sunlight and other environmental damage. Increase these carotenoids in your eyes by eating plenty of lutein- and zeaxanthin-rich foods.

Choose eye-catching foods to enjoy, starting today.

- *For beta carotene*: yellow-orange fruits and vegetables, including carrots; dark-green vegetables
- *For lutein*: green-leafy vegetables, kiwifruit, eggs
- *For zeaxanthin*: citrus fruit, corn, green vegetables, winter squash, eggs
- *For vitamin C*: citrus fruit, berries, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cantaloupe, green pepper, papaya, tomato
- *For vitamin E*: almonds, corn oil, eggs, peanuts, spinach, sunflower seeds

### January 9 Ready—or Not?

Do you want to be and stay healthy? Want sound information to help you do the right thing? Good news: you're in the driver's seat!

Are you ready for healthful eating and active living? Check the statements that sound most like you:

- I want to eat better and move more, but not now.* Okay, but the sooner, the better for your health.

- *I think about smarter eating and being active, but don't know what to do.* Great mind-set! Keep a diary to pinpoint what you need to change. Perhaps review it with a registered dietitian.
- *I want to make permanent changes for smarter eating and active living.* For good health, make changes you enjoy and can sustain. Can you name one?
- *I feel successful only if I totally overhaul my eating and lifestyle.* Think again; even little steps add up and make a difference. Take one small step today.
- *I know it's best to make change slowly, step by step.* For most people, gradual change is more sustainable. For weight loss, a half pound per week usually succeeds best.

## January 10 Fit for Cold Weather

Cold weather is no excuse to skip fitness routines and nestle in by the TV. A shift of seasons simply gives you different options.

In any weather, the same guideline applies: get 60 minutes of moderate activity every day if you can. In cold weather, try these outdoor activities:

- *Winter sports:* cross-country or downhill skiing, skating, snowshoeing
- *Active leisure:* winter nature walks, snow hiking, sledding
- *Outdoor chores:* snow shoveling, chopping firewood, dog walking
- *Too cold or windy?* Go mall walking inside!

For safety's sake in cold, wintry weather, keep this in mind:

- *Cover up to stay warm.* Your head, hands, and other exposed skin need to be covered. An uncovered head gives off a lot of body heat.
- *Layer your clothing.* Several lightweight layers may keep you warmer than one or two heavier layers.
- *Stay dry.* Moisture conducts cold air toward your skin and heat away. Wicking fabrics help you stay dry as you exercise in winter.

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- *Stay hydrated.* Although it may be cold outside, you still can sweat! Bring a water bottle.

**January 11  Say OK to Oats**

What's for breakfast on this cold, winter morning? How about instant oatmeal, crunchy oat cereal, or an oat bran muffin? No matter how you eat them, oats offer benefits beyond their hearty taste.

A good source of soluble fiber, oats are well known for their heart-healthy benefits, which include lowering blood cholesterol. What's more, the plant substances in oats may help control blood pressure, even body weight (since oatmeal helps you feel full longer). How much helps with cholesterol reduction? Three grams of soluble fiber a day from *all* your foods. One serving of these oat-based foods puts you one-third there: 1 cup ready-to-eat oat cereal,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cooked oatmeal, or  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup cooked oat bran. Add oatmeal to muffins, burgers, meatloaf, or stuffing, too.

Try this breakfast treat during National Oatmeal Month:

**Peach Muesli with Berries**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 2 cups oats, uncooked   | $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon vanilla                          |
| 2 cups coarsely chopped peeled fresh or thawed frozen peaches | 1 cup fresh or thawed frozen blueberries or raspberries |
| $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups apple juice                               |   |
| 8 ounces vanilla or peach nonfat yogurt                       |   |

In a large bowl, combine all ingredients except berries; mix well. Cover and refrigerate for 8 hours or overnight. Serve muesli cold topped with berries. May be stored, covered, in refrigerator for up to four days. Makes 4 servings (1 cup plus  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup berries).

Source: Quaker Oats

**January 12  Hunger Strikes? Snack Smart**

Will you (or did you) enjoy a snack today? Fine, if you snack smart. Snack for the health of it.

- *Snack when you're really hungry*, not just when you're bored or stressed.

- *Snack with your whole day's food intake in mind*, not just as an add-on. Smaller meal portions allow room for snacks.
- *Choose smart, handy snacks*. Tuck whole fruit or a bag of pretzels in a briefcase or backpack to enjoy when real hunger strikes.
- *Take a sensible portion from the package*. Then put the rest away to put the brakes on mindless nibbling.
- *Read the food label first*. Low-fat snacks may not be low in calories.
- *Snack smart by not eating mindlessly in front of the TV*.

Save money and eat smart by packing a handy, healthful snack before leaving home.

- *Your signature snack mix*: any combination of pretzels, nuts, whole-grain cereal, dried fruits
- *Whole fruit*: apple, banana, tangerine
- *Single-serve foods*: canned fruit, applesauce or pudding cup

## January 13 Valued Customer

Shopping for value? Value isn't necessarily "supersized" or how much your food dollar buys. True value is the quality and health benefits that your food and drink choices impart.

For the best value for your food dollar:

- *Buy canned or dried beans*. Beans are an inexpensive protein food, loaded with fiber and other phytonutrients.
- *Fill your cart with veggies and fruit*. Fresh, canned, or frozen—nutrition is virtually the same, so shop for the best price.
- *Grow herbs*. It's cheaper and more convenient than buying them.
- *Buy whole-grain foods*. They have more nutrients and fiber than their processed counterparts, for about the same cost.
- *Pack your lunch bag*. You'll save money, and often have more nutrient-rich options than you might have with fast-food eating.
- *Stock your desk with bottled water*. It's cheaper than a vending machine soft drink.
- *Reach for single-serving flavored (perhaps low-fat) milk*—a nutrient-packed snack drink.

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And consider this: Down the line, the cost benefits of healthful eating extend to cost savings in your lifelong, personal health care.

### January 14 The “Write” Way to Eat Smart

A bite here, a nibble there, a sip here, another taste there. How much did you eat today?

Want to get a better picture of your day-to-day eating habits? Keep a food diary. It’s easier to spot a problem and control temptation, and you have a better chance of reaching your wellness goals and perhaps managing your weight.

Keep records for at least a week or two. Here’s how:

- *Pick a system.* A simple notebook or a daily diary works for handwritten records. Or find an electronic tracking system.
- *Track the “5 Ws and H.”* Note with whom, what, where, when, why, and how much you eat and drink. Be realistic with amounts.
- *Write down little tastes:* butter on your toast, sugar and milk in your tea.
- *Remember snacks.* That includes vending machine soda, doughnuts, and biscotti.
- *Record any eating “triggers.”* Note your mood or hunger level.
- *Give it careful review.* What have you learned about you?

### January 15 Easy as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Life’s hectic! How can you be assured of eating enough food and variety for good nutrition, but not too much?

Truth is, there’s no single way to eat for health. Even your own family members enjoy different foods and flavors, prepared in different ways, and they have different nutrient and energy needs. No matter what your individual style or tastes, there’s still an easy, flexible guide for planning a healthful day’s worth of meals and snacks for everyone, ages two years or more.

To eat for health:

- *Choose food for variety* among and within the five food groups. Variety is nutritious and tastes good, too!
- *Balance.* Follow food-group serving guidelines to “up” your chances of eating the right amount of nutrients and calories (energy) for your age, gender, and activity level. If your portions are bigger or smaller than food-group servings, that’s okay—if the day’s total adds up to *your* whole day’s serving advice.
- *Make calories count.* Pick mostly foods that deliver more nutrients. Go easy on foods high in fat and added sugars.

## How Many Food-Group Servings?

Food Group	Children ages 2 to 6, most women, some older adults ( <i>about 1,600 calories</i> )*	Older children, teen girls, active women, most men ( <i>about 2,200 calories</i> )*	Teen boys, active men ( <i>about 2,800 calories</i> )*
Bread, cereal, rice, pasta (especially whole-grain)	6	9	11
Vegetable	3	4	5
Fruit	2	3	4
Milk, yogurt, cheese (preferably fat-free or low-fat)	2 to 3**	2 to 3**	2 to 3**
Meat, poultry, fish, beans, eggs (preferably lean or low-fat)	2 (total 5 ounces)	2 (total 6 ounces)	3 (total 7 ounces)
Fats, oils, sweets	Eat sparingly	Eat sparingly	Eat sparingly

\* Calorie levels if you choose low-fat, lean foods and if you use fats, oils, and sweets sparingly.

\*\* Older children and teenagers (ages 9 to 18 years) and adults over age 50 years need 3 servings daily. During pregnancy and lactation, the milk-group recommendation is the same as for nonpregnant women.

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### January 16 Eye on Size

How much is a food-group serving? It's not necessarily a helping, a plateful, a small garnish, or the entire contents of one food package. It is a specific, standardized amount of food, meant to help you judge your own portions and estimate how much you eat.

Your portion may measure as more or less than one food-group serving; for example, a one-cup portion of cooked pasta is really two bread-group servings.

The size of your portion doesn't matter. What does matter is whether your portions add up to the day's recommendation (or a several-day average), without overdoing.

Learn visual guides. Either measure your food, or use these cues to become a good judge of your portions.

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### How Much Is a Food-Group Serving?

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Food Group	One Serving, About the Size of . . .
Bread	1 slice bread, 1 pancake, or 1 waffle = a stack of three computer diskettes 1 cup dry cereal = a baseball ½ cup cooked pasta or rice = a small computer mouse
Vegetable	1 cup raw leafy vegetables = a baseball ½ cup cooked vegetables = a small computer mouse 10 French fries = a deck of cards 1 small potato = a small computer mouse
Fruit	½ cup sliced fruit = a small computer mouse 1 medium fruit = a baseball ¾ cup juice = a 6-ounce can ¼ cup raisins = a large egg
Dairy	8-ounce glass of milk = a small (8-ounce) milk carton 8-ounce yogurt = a baseball 1½ ounces hard cheese (Cheddar) = two 9-volt batteries or a C battery
Meat and Beans	2 to 3 ounces meat, poultry, or fish = a deck of cards or a cassette tape One ounce meat equals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 tablespoons peanut butter = a roll of film or a Ping-Pong ball</li> <li>• ½ cup beans = a small computer mouse or a deck of cards</li> </ul>

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## January 17 Cho-LESS-terol

Do you know your vital signs for heart health: your cholesterol levels and your blood pressure? For total cholesterol level, normal is less than 200 mg/dL (milligrams per deciliter). The higher your level, the greater your risks for heart attack or stroke. So, even if your cholesterol level is borderline high (200 to 239 mg/dL), work toward a lower, heart-healthier goal.

Four key strategies can put you in the *total* “cholesterol countdown”: (1) if you smoke, stop; (2) eat smart; (3) move more; (4) lose weight if you need to. Make your eating style low in saturated fat and cholesterol, moderate in fat overall, with plenty of fruits, veggies, and whole-grain foods. If that’s not enough, you might need cholesterol-lowering medication, too.

Know your HDL- (good) cholesterol, LDL- (bad) cholesterol, and triglyceride levels, too. Even with normal total cholesterol, your LDLs could be too high, and your HDLs, too low for heart health. Normal is: HDLs, 60 mg/dL or more; LDLs, less than 200 mg/dL; triglycerides, less than 150 mg/dL.

Start today; eat to help bring blood cholesterol levels within a healthy range.

- *Go for five.* Have five to nine daily servings of fruits and vegetables (seven for physically active women, nine for physically active men).
- *Enjoy beans (legumes).* One or two bean meals a week gives variety.
- *Eat six to eleven grain products* (at least three whole-grain) servings daily.
- *Eat fish, poultry without skin, and lean cuts of meat.* Cook them in low-fat ways.
- *Eat mostly fat-free and low-fat dairy foods:* two to three servings daily.

## January 18 All Dried Up

Need an easy way to get your “five to nine a day” for fruits and vegetables? Reach for dried fruit. There’s lots more than raisins, dried apricots, and dried plums (prunes) on store shelves today.

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Are dried fruits as nutritious as fresh? Overall, yes, except the drying process destroys a hefty amount of vitamin C (no problem if it comes from other fruit or juice). Some dried foods, such as raisins, provide more iron, too. Why? Drying concentrates minerals, as well as sugars and calories. Dried fruits tend to have plenty of fiber, too.

Sensitive to sulfites? Look for sulfite-free dried fruit.

Try “dried”—and remember that one serving is just  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup.

- *Mix up a dried snack “to go.”* Mix any dried fruit with nuts, pretzels, and perhaps popcorn.
- *Sweeten with dried berries.* Top salad, cooked rice, yogurt, or cereal with dried berries of all kinds.
- *Batter up.* Add dried fruits to bread or cookie dough, or pancake, waffle, or muffin batter.

**January 19****Passport to Health—Eating Chinese Style**

*Gung Hay Fat Choy!* Happy Lunar New Year! Whether you eat out or in, enjoy Asian flavors and foods today, and get their good-for-you benefits.

Traditional Chinese meals have plenty of vegetables, rice, and noodles (that’s their benefit), yet they’re modest with meat, poultry, and fish. Besides their vitamins and minerals, vegetables in Chinese dishes are loaded with antioxidants, fiber, and other healthful phytonutrients, or plant substances.

If you eat out, go easy on higher-fat dishes: *fried* versions of egg rolls, wontons, dim sum, noodles, rice, fish; *breaded* sweet-and-sour dishes. Some soy sauces and dips are high in sodium. If you have high blood pressure, ask for low-sodium sauce.

Cooking today? “Wok” your way to health. Rather than deep-fry, go for stir-fry (cooked in very little oil), mixing any ingredients you enjoy!

- *Start chopping lots of different veggies:* asparagus, bok choy, broccoli, carrots, green and red peppers, mushrooms, snow peas, spinach, sprouts—all cut in bite-size pieces.

- *Add Asian flavor* with chopped garlic, ginger, lemongrass, scallions, hot peppers.
- *Prepare modest amounts of protein foods.* Use beef, chicken, pork, seafood, or firm tofu, cut in 1/2-inch pieces. Let vegetables outweigh protein foods two or three to one.
- *Heat the wok (or skillet) with 1 tablespoon of oil.* When it sizzles, start cooking: first the meat and herbs, then add veggies. Cook just until the vegetables are tender-crisp.
- *Serve over brown or white rice, or Chinese noodles.*

## January 20 Soup-er Bowl

Super Bowl Sunday is just around the corner. Why not make it a *soup-er* bowl by cooking a hearty soup, chock-full of great-tasting, good-for-you ingredients?

Celebrate National Soup Month.

- *Double up for more flavor and nutrition.* Experiment. Combine two hearty convenience soups (canned or frozen) to create your own recipe, perhaps chunky minestrone plus beef barley soup. Find convenience soups with less sodium.
- *Serve in a bread bowl.* Hollow out individual round loaves (try whole-wheat). Fill with chunky vegetable soup or your family's favorite chili.
- *Make it heartier.* Add frozen or canned legumes (beans, peas, lentils) and other veggies to convenience soups to step up the flavor, visual appeal—and the vitamins, minerals, fiber, and other phytonutrients, too.
- *Get creamy with milk.* Prepare condensed cream soups with milk (perhaps evaporated fat-free milk), not water. Any way, milk's calcium-rich!
- *Garnish for flavor and more.* Use shredded cheese for more bone-building calcium, seasoned almond slivers for extra vitamin E, chopped sun-dried tomato for a bit of beta carotene and lycopene.
- *Take it up a notch.* Spark up the taste with no-salt flavorings: hot sauce on corn chowder or chopped cilantro on tomato soup.

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## January 21 Orange You Glad!

Slice into a tangy grapefruit. Peel a tangerine. Squeeze lemon in your tea. Citrus fruit, now in its peak season, offers you an ample supply of good nutrition!

For most people, oranges mean *vitamin C*. But did you know that citrus also supplies an ample amount of *folate*, *potassium*, and *dietary fiber* (soluble), all potentially heart-protective, among their other functions?

Beyond that, citrus fruits brim with health-promoting plant substances: *flavonoids* with heart-healthy and anticancer qualities, *limonoids* that may inhibit tumors, and *carotenoids* with their antioxidant activity, of which some may protect your vision.

Add sliced citrus to your salad, or squeeze citrus into a belly-warming hot drink like this one:

### Orange Cider

- |                               |                             |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 3 cups orange juice           | ¼ teaspoon whole cloves     |
| 1 cup apple juice             | 1 orange, sliced (optional) |
| 1 2-inch piece stick cinnamon |                             |

In a saucepan combine orange juice, apple juice, cinnamon, and cloves. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Strain to remove cinnamon and cloves. Serve warm. If desired, float orange slices on top. Makes 4 servings.

Source: Florida Department of Citrus

## January 22 Mind Over Matter

At any age, most Americans aren't active enough—although they may think they are! In fact, only about 26 percent get enough exercise; about 46 percent come up short; and about 28 percent are inactive. Studies show that adults tend to overestimate how active they really are. Do you?

What's the downside of inactive living? The link to overweight and obesity, heart disease, diabetes, some cancers, osteoporosis, back pain, to name a few. What's the upside of moving more? Good health, perhaps a longer life—and a better quality of life overall!

Commit to an active mind-set to help you move more.

- *Treat your exercise routine like any important appointment.* Don't break it!
- *Get in touch with your reality.* Log real time (in a notebook or a PDA) spent on moderate activity to know how active you really are.
- *Take 10.* Get your 60 minutes of active living daily in 10-minute segments, if that's easier for you.

## January 23 Your BMI?

Do you know your BMI (Body Mass Index)? Do you know what your number means?

BMI is meant to *screen for*, not diagnose, overweight or obesity. It's a tool to evaluate your weight in relation to your height. A higher-than-healthy number (above 25) suggests a higher risk for weight-related health problems such as heart disease, hypertension, stroke, diabetes, some cancers, arthritis, and breathing problems.

Although BMI is a good health indicator, it's not the last word. With less muscle but more body fat, a person's BMI still may fit the healthy range (18.5 to 25); conversely healthy, muscular people might have a BMI above 25. What counts is your overall health. Diagnosing a weight problem and determining your healthy weight is best determined with your physician.

Learn more about your "number."

- *Check your BMI online.* Go to Partnership for Healthy Weight Management ([www.consumer.gov/weightloss/bmi.htm](http://www.consumer.gov/weightloss/bmi.htm)) or National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute ([www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/bmicalc.htm](http://www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/bmicalc.htm)).
- *Find out more about what your BMI means.* Contact a registered dietitian, or ask your health care provider to help you.

## January 24 No "Nos," No "Shoulds," No "Nevers"

Ever hear your inner voice say: "You *should* order a salad," or "No fried food!" Chances are, these mental commands are hard to stick to, at

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least for the long term. And they take pleasure away from eating to stay fit.

Truth is, healthful is full of positives: a variety of flavorful, eye-appealing food combinations, the good feeling of eating enough without being overstuffed—and the interaction of eating with others.

Smart eaters do this. Do you?

- *Focus on the positives.* Choose grilled vegetables, quick-to-eat fruit, tangy yogurt, hearty whole-grain foods, or fresh, tender seafood. Ultimately that's more motivating!
- *Dump the negatives.* Never say “never eat,” and avoid “avoid,” “cut out,” and “don't.” Skip “shoulds” and “have tos,” also. These tactics leave you feeling guilty when you “break” the rules—an almost sure bet for failure!
- *Stick to “small bite” advice.* Unless you have an allergy or perhaps another health problem, you can eat a small amount of any food if your overall choices are healthful.

### January 25 Certified, But Qualified?

Looking for a personal fitness trainer? With so much interest today in fitness, many people seek a personal trainer to help customize their physical activity regimen.

That said, being certified doesn't mean qualified. No state or federal laws regulate the many certification programs of personal trainers. Some states require a health-related university degree (perhaps in exercise physiology) and an exam; others certify with a few weeks of training. Few trainers are educated to give nutrition guidance. Don't confuse them with physical therapists or registered dietitians.

If you want the services of a personal trainer:

- *Talk to a qualified health professional.* Ask your physician or a registered dietitian (RD) for a referral. For nutrition advice, find a local RD at [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org).
- *Meet the trainer.* Before you sign up for services, ask about his or her education, experience, and training approach. Is it right for you?

- *Go prepared.* Share your medical history, health status, and any physical limitations.
- *Set goals together.* Make them attainable and safe for you. If your goal is fitness, you don't need to set goals to be an athlete.
- *Ask questions* about the approach, the equipment, the pace, the skills.
- *Follow-through—and enjoy!*

## January 26 Eat Your Broccoli

Broccoli, bok choy, brussels sprouts: what do they have in common? They're all cruciferous vegetables that begin with the letter *b*!

Cruciferous vegetables (named for their tiny cross-forming flower petals) belong to the cabbage family. The family portrait includes everything from arugula to watercress—with cauliflower, collards, kale, kohlrabi, mustard greens, radishes, rutabaga, Swiss chard, and turnips in between.

Why so healthful? First their nutrients: *beta carotene* (which forms vitamin A), *vitamin C*, and varying amounts of *calcium*, *iron*, and *folate*. Second, cruciferous vegetables have a unique phytonutrient array that includes cancer-fighting *indoles* and *isothiocyanates*, and fiber.

Enjoy this three-cruciferous-veggie dish:

### Garlicky Greens

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil  | 1 cup chopped broccoli                              |
| $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sliced leek, white part only                               | 5 cups fresh spinach                                |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped scallions (about 3),<br>both green and white parts | 1 cup fat-free, reduced-sodium<br>chicken broth     |
| 1 tablespoon minced garlic (2 large<br>cloves)                               | Salt and freshly ground black pep-<br>per, to taste |
| 3 cups chopped kale  |   |
| 3 cups collard greens cut in<br>$\frac{1}{2}$ -inch ribbons                  |   |

Heat oil in a large, heavy skillet over medium-high heat. Add leek, scallions, and garlic. Sauté until leek is limp, about 4 minutes. Add kale, collards, and broccoli, stirring until wilted. Mix in spinach. Add broth and simmer, stirring occasionally, until greens are tender, about 15 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Makes 4 servings.

Source: American Institute for Cancer Research

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### January 27 What's the Temp?

Do you wash your raw meat, poultry, or fish to remove bacteria that cause food-borne illness? Wrong approach! The only way to kill bacteria in meat, poultry, and seafood is through proper cooking to a safe inside temperature. That includes hamburgers and meatloaf; surface bacteria can get mixed inside ground meat dishes. As you cook, use a meat thermometer to check for doneness.

Not in the habit of using a meat thermometer? Today's a good day to start.

- *Shop for a meat or "instant read" thermometer.*
- *Insert the thermometer in the thickest part* (not by the bone or fat).
- *Check the temp:* 140°F for pre-cooked ham; 145°F for fish; 160°F for pork, medium-cooked beef or lamb, ham (not pre-cooked), ground meat, or egg dishes; 165°F for ground chicken or turkey, or leftovers; 170°F for poultry roast or breast; 180°F for a whole chicken or turkey.

### January 28 Plum Good

Prunes have a new name: dried plums! With it comes new data. Great-tasting dried plums offer more health benefits than just keeping your body regular.

Dried plums score high in *antioxidants*, plant substances that may help protect you from heart disease and some cancers. They're also good sources of *fiber* (soluble and insoluble)—3 grams in five dried plums. They supply minerals: *boron, copper, iron, magnesium, potassium*. And whether dried or fresh, their natural *sorbitol* is key to their laxative effect.

To cut fat from baked goods, substitute an equal amount of puréed plum for at least half the butter, margarine, or oil.

Try this snack dip on sliced apples or whole-wheat crackers:

### Curried Dried Plum Dip

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 8-ounce package cream cheese or low-fat cream cheese, softened | ¼ cup mango or other fruit chutney, chopped if needed |
| 1½ teaspoons curry powder  | ¼ cup sliced green onions                             |
| ½ cup (about 3 ounces) chopped dried plums                       | 2 tablespoons chopped almonds, toasted (See March 8.) |

In small mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and curry powder until smooth. Fold in remaining ingredients. Serve as a spread for sliced fresh fruits or crackers. Makes 14 servings.

Source: California Dried Plum Board

### January 29 Speed Read a Food Label

Pressed for supermarket time? Still want to shop healthy?

Here's how to quickly decipher the Nutrition Facts on food labels, using the "5-20 guide":

- *Nutrient Facts are listed as percentages of Daily Values (DV), in amounts per serving.* For a single nutrient, 20% or more is a lot, and 5% or less is a little.
- *For nutrients you may need less of, such as fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium, look for foods with 5% or less DV per serving.*
- *For nutrients you may need more of, such as vitamins A and C, calcium, iron, and fiber, look for foods with 20% or more DV per serving.*

A few more quick label-reading tips:

- *Check claims.* If the front of the label gives a clue for "high" or "more," "less" or "free," Nutrition Facts gives the specifics.
- *Remember the rule of doubles.* Eating double the servings means double the DV for any nutrient and for calories.

### January 30 Join the 10,000-Step Club

Venture a guess. How many steps do you think you take daily: 500, 1,000, 5,000, more? Some studies suggest that 10,000 steps daily is

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about right to help with weight management. Stepping that much may take conscious effort!

Who's counting? You!

- *Buy an inexpensive pedometer*, clip it on your belt or waistband, and watch your steps add up.
- *Start with a baseline*. For a week or two, count your total steps, then calculate a daily average.
- *Log in*. Before you hit the pillow, record your day's steps.
- *Put on your sneakers and start moving!* Set a stepped-up goal; perhaps start with your highest day so far.
- *Step up gradually*. Try 500 more steps per day for a week, until you comfortably reach the 10,000-steps-a-day target. Stick with it!

### January 31 Too Much of a Food Thing?

Imagine you're scooping a bowl of ice cream, serving a plate of pasta, or making a perfect burger. Are your portions right-sized or super-sized?

Not sure? You're not alone. Research shows many consumers underestimate their portion sizes—and their caloric intake. The causes may in part be cultural. Restaurant supersizing, larger cup holders in new cars, larger dishes and cups—all contribute to our distorted ideas about portions. And our hurry-up society means we may overeat before our body cues say, "I'm full." It takes about twenty minutes for your brain to register you're full.

The portion savvy:

- *Know visual cues*. Read January 16.
- *Compare their own portions to the package label's serving sizes*. For your size portions, figure the calories. Surprised?
- *Eat from a plate, not the package!* That way you'll know how much you really eat.
- *Enjoy "slow food."* Pay attention to your food—the flavors, the surroundings, and the amount you eat.