

Wellness News

Tips to stay healthy throughout the year
Issue X ■ March 2021 ■ Go Further with Food



Go Further with Food

March is National Nutrition Month

A nutritious diet can help you achieve a healthy weight and reduce your risk of heart disease, cancer, and diabetes. Eating a balanced diet is so important but knowing what is good for you can be confusing.

All Food and Beverage Choices Matter

Food fuels your body and determines not just your weight but your health and mood. Start with focusing on what is on your plate and in your glass at each meal:

- Half your plate should be fruits and vegetables. Strive for a variety of colors - a rainbow of orange, green and purple could be carrots, spinach, and grapes. Fruits and veggies are the best source of vitamins and minerals our body needs for optimal physical and mental health, but no one fruit or veggie has all the nutrients you need. Oranges, grapefruit, and broccoli contain antioxidants which help prevent cancer. Red peppers have vitamin C – both are needed for eye health. Avocados and kiwifruit have vitamin E which is important for healthy skin and hair.
- Half your plate should be grains and proteins. Aim for mainly whole grains like whole wheat bread, brown rice, oatmeal and more. Proteins should be small servings of lean poultry, fish, and meat. Vegetarians

would count beans, peas, and nuts in their protein group. Proteins are your body's building blocks and are needed to build and repair muscle, bone, blood, and skin.

- Dairy. Choose skim or low-fat milk, yogurt, and cheese for good sources of protein and calcium which are essential to your body's processes, such as blood clotting and nervous system function. Dairy portions differ depending on your age. The average adult should consume three servings from the dairy group each day.
- Water is always your body's best hydrator. Instead of the empty calories found in sodas and juice drinks, try green tea for a healthier alternative. Studies have shown green tea contains antioxidants and can improve blood flow, lower cholesterol, and even help stabilize blood sugar.

Food labels are your friend

While buying fresh foods is ideal, much of our food comes in packages. The U.S. government requires Nutrition Facts labels on packages. Refer to these labels to help make smart and healthy choices. Do not rely on front package wording such as low fat, low-sodium, or low-sugar. Choose foods with Nutrition Facts that accurately show the product is:

- Low cholesterol
- Low sodium
- Low fat
- High fiber

- Counting toward your vitamin needs

If you are already eating healthy, keep up the good work. If not, making small changes slowly will be more successful than trying to change everything at once. Encourage the entire family to make changes with you and celebrate the small victories.

Aim for a healthy weight

Find someone in your friend group, at work, or in your family who also wants to reach or maintain a healthy weight. (If you are overweight, even a small weight loss of 5–10 percent helps your health.) Check in with them regularly to stay motivated. Do healthy activities together, like walking or playing on a neighborhood sports team. Share low-calorie, low-sodium meals or recipes.

National Nutrition Month

[National Nutrition Month](#) is an annual campaign created by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. During the month of March, everyone is invited to learn about making informed food choices and developing healthful eating and physical activity habits.

- Weekly Key Messaging
- Personalize Your Plate- there is no one-size-fits all approach to nutrition and health. We are all unique with different bodies, goals, backgrounds, and tastes.
 - Cook & Prep
 - Meal Planning
 - Vary Your Diet
 - Visit a Registered Dietitian
- The [Toolkit](#) offers tip sheets and handouts, games and activities, PowerPoint Presentations and more.
- [Videos](#) on how to eat right on a budget

Remember to Exercise!

When you exercise regularly, you reduce your risk of chronic diseases like diabetes and heart

disease while increasing your chances of sleeping better and living longer. Plus, physical activity can help you manage your weight. If you have not been exercising at all, talk with your doctor about ways to start slowly.

If you start slowly and keep going you will reap health benefits and reduce your risk of injury or burnout. Find ways to make exercise fun. The possibilities are endless. Below are a few suggestions but find out what works best for you.

- Go for a walk with a friend
- Squat while you brush your teeth
- Do 10 push-ups every morning.
- Take the stairs instead of elevator.
- Take calls standing up.

Diabetes Alert Day

American Diabetes Association [Diabetes Alert Day®](#) is on March 24, 2020! Observed annually on the fourth Tuesday in March, Diabetes Alert Day is a one-day “wake-up call” that focuses on the seriousness of diabetes and the importance of understanding your risk.

- Diabetes affects about 30.3 million Americans or about 9.4 percent of the U.S. population.
- Nearly 1 in 4 adults living with diabetes, or 7.2 million Americans, are unaware that they have the disease.
- Another 84 million Americans have prediabetes, a condition in which blood glucose levels are higher than normal, but not high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes.
- Nine out of 10 adults with prediabetes do not know they have it.

We encourage you to find out if you – or someone you love – is at risk for type 2 diabetes by taking this quick and simple [Diabetes Risk Test](#).



Click to find out more about [your](#) risk of diabetes

CareFirst Member Resources



- RealAge® test:** In just a few minutes, the RealAge online health assessment will help you determine the physical age of your body, compared to your calendar age.
- Personalized timeline:** Receive content based on your health and well-being goals, along with your motivation and interests.
- Trackers:** Connect your wearable devices or enter your own data to monitor daily habits like stress, sleep, steps, nutrition and more.
- Challenges:** Stay motivated to achieve your health goals by joining a challenge.
- Health Profile:** Access your health data like biometric and lab results, vaccine information and medications, all in one place.

- [**Scale Back Lifestyle Change Program**](#) – A personalized solution to reach a healthier weight through gradual lifestyle changes that become lifelong habits.
- [**One-on-One Health Coaching**](#) – Confidential support to help improve your overall well-being that can help you achieve the best possible health. Call 877-260-3253 and press option 7 to enroll.
- [**Sharecare Inspirations & Relax 360**](#) – Soothing video content in the palm of your hand designed to help reduce and eliminate daily stress.

National Resources

- [Food and Health](#)- How can you bite into a healthy lifestyle?
- [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics](#)- Eat Right
- [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#)- Nutritional needs, recipes, cooking and meal planning.
- [My Plate- Kitchen](#)- Find recipes, watch cooking videos, and learn about other important dietary information.
- [American Diabetes Association](#)- learn more and understand diabetes.
- [Diabetes Risk Test](#)- Take the test for yourself or a loved one.
- [Diabetes Alert Day](#)- observed annually on the fourth Tuesday in March.