

# Eat Well Live Well

Making Healthy Choices

## Eat Well, Live Well

Your diet has a profound effect on your life. What you eat can change how you feel, both emotionally and about yourself as a whole. An over-caffeinated person may be aggressive in traffic or confrontational at work; someone with high-calorie, low-nutrient eating habits may feel lethargic and find it hard to focus; under-eating causes numerous health issues, depression and low energy among them.

Unfortunately, “eating better” is hard to do. Many foods claim to be good for you—which ones actually are? How can you eat healthy while rushing from work and home, and how do you make nutritious meals on a budget?

section 01

### Your March Activity: Monitor Your Diet and Meal Plan

This month's activity focuses on gradually improving your diet. Each week will build on the previous week's progress!



## Eat Better On the Go

Between travel, off-hour schedules, working through lunches and every other hectic thing, today's work week is a little different for everyone. We all face difficulties sticking to a healthy diet when we're busy, but there are actions you can take to set yourself up for success.

One way to do this? **Willpower!** If you're eating out with friends or co-workers, or if you're traveling, you can almost always find a healthy option — the hard part is actually ordering it. To avoid temptation, try and remember how much better you feel when you eat foods that don't come out of a fryer. Then, do what you need to do to eat healthy: ask for whole grain buns and bread, order salads with a small amount of vinaigrette dressing on the side, and stop eating when you're comfortably full, not when your plate is clean.

## Lose Weight, Not Money

Better food doesn't have to cost oodles of cash. While fresh, natural ingredients can cost more than frozen or processed foods, it's possible to eat a diet that is healthy for you and your budget.

### Healthy on a Budget

#### Plan your meals, make a list and don't shop hungry

Know what you're going to the store for and stick to those items! Unplanned purchases add up in a hurry, and they're usually items that dent your diet as well as your bank account.

#### Use coupons when you shop

This one seems obvious because it is. Most people don't make an effort to look online or in newspapers for grocery coupons, but those that do save a lot of money over time! Start clipping coupons (or seeking out deals and specials online). If you track how much you save, you'll be pleasantly surprised by the results!

#### Compare brands

When you want to purchase a name-brand item (e.g., soda, cereal, even health and beauty products), compare it with cheaper brands and see if you can tell the difference—often, you really are just paying for the name on the box.

#### Join your store's loyalty program

Many grocery store chains offer additional discounts, coupons or incentives to customers who sign up for a loyalty program. Most of these programs are free to join. If your local store offers one, take advantage of it!

#### Buy in bulk

If there are non-perishable, durable items you know you'll use, see if it's cheaper to buy in bulk! You'll typically see cost savings and avoid adding another small purchase to your list each time you go to the store.



## Reading a Nutrition Label

You're ready to start eating healthy—that's great! But how do you know where to start? Here are a few simple tips and tricks you can use to help determine if a food is good for you.

### Tip #1

#### You'll Feel Better When Your Food Is Actual Food

Do you know what xanthan gum or glycerol monostearate looks like? We don't either. The best and simplest tip for reading food labels is to only consume foods with ingredients you can picture and pronounce. This means buying products made with whole, natural ingredients. Two big ones to avoid: high fructose corn syrup (now sometimes listed as just "corn syrup") and partially hydrogenated oil, which contains trans fats.



### Tip #2

#### Avoid Trans Fats and Limit Sodium

If you see trans fat in the ingredients list or partially hydrogenated oil on the ingredients list, put it back on the shelf. Trans fats, a synthetic product rarely found in nature, contain no nutritional value and are extremely difficult for your body to process.

Sodium, on the other hand, is fine in proper doses — just be aware that most canned, packaged and processed foods use preservatives that spike a food's sodium level. Too much sodium can lead to high blood pressure, increased risk of heart disease and stroke, and kidney problems.



### Tip #3

#### Pay Attention to Serving Size

The nutrition listed on a food label applies to the amount per serving, not the amount in the entire container. Serving size has been better regulated in recent years, but companies still try to mask unhealthy ingredients when they can. To use a past example: 20 oz. Cokes used to claim that one bottle contained approximately 2.5 servings (at a still-excessive 27 grams of sugar per serving) instead of 1 serving with 65 grams of sugar. Monitor serving size and don't inadvertently overeat!





## March Recipe

### Yogurt Parfaits

*Next time you're craving a processed treat with added sugar, try this yogurt parfait instead.*

#### INGREDIENTS

2 cups fresh fruit (your choice!)

2 cups low-fat vanilla yogurt

Raisins, dried fruit, chopped nuts, sunflower seeds and/or granola (optional)

#### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Wash fruit and cut into bite-sized chunks
2. Put 1/4 cup of fruit in the bottom of four glasses
3. Top with 1/4 cup vanilla yogurt
4. Top with optional ingredients if desired
5. Keep chilled until ready to serve

**Total Time (Cook and Prep):** 10 minutes  
**Servings:** 4



#### NUTRITION INFO:

272 calories

7 g fat

73 mg cholesterol

405 mg sodium

27 g carbohydrates

3 g fiber

24 g protein





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## Do You Know What Your Diet Is Up To?

How often are you consuming unhealthy ingredients and foods, such as high fructose corn syrup, partially hydrogenated oils (trans fats) and items high in sodium? Do you have a handle on how much you casually snack during the day? If you're extremely busy, travel often or work in an office with an abundance of snack foods, it is very difficult to control and monitor what you eat.

This month's activity focuses on gradually improving your diet. Each week will build on the previous week's progress!

### Week 1

#### Track What You Eat!

You don't have to change your diet just yet (although you're welcome to get a head start). This week, simply track what you eat each day. At the end of the week, pick three items to avoid and list a healthy substitution you enjoy for each item. You can list an ingredient (high fructose corn syrup), a category (trans fats) or a specific food item (cookies)—whatever works best for you. Going forward, swap out the junk and eat the healthy foods instead!

Week 1	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Breakfast							
Lunch							
Dinner							
Snacks, Misc.							

#### Foods to Avoid Next Week

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

#### Healthy Substitutions

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## Week 2

### Use Your Substitutes

Don't make this a burden—choose substitutions you enjoy and ease yourself into a healthier diet! This week, implement last week's substitutions and continue to track what you eat each day. Then, choose another three unhealthy ingredients or foods to avoid, as well as another three substitutions. You'll continue to eat healthier every week!

Week 2	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Breakfast							
Lunch							
Dinner							
Snacks, Misc.							

#### Foods to Avoid Next Week

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

#### Healthy Substitutions

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_



## Week 3

### Meal Plan

Okay, now we're swapping out enough food that a little planning is in order. This week, continue to write down what you eat, and implement your substitutions from both week one and week two. At the end of the week, plan your next week of meals in advance to help you stay on course! If you need to, continue to gradually trade unhealthy foods and ingredients for more nutritious options.

Week 3	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Breakfast							
Lunch							
Dinner							
Snacks, Misc.							

Week 4 PLAN	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Breakfast							
Lunch							
Dinner							
Snacks, Misc.							

#### Foods to Avoid Next Week

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

#### Healthy Substitutions

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_



## Week 4

### Set Yourself Up for Success in April

Once again, track what you eat each day. Were you able to stick to your meal plan? What obstacles made it more difficult, and how can you plan for them in the future? Consider what works best for you, then do your best to maintain these changes—and continue to meal plan—in April and beyond.

Week 4 ACTUAL	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Breakfast							
Lunch							
Dinner							
Snacks, Misc.							

#### Foods to Avoid Next Week

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

#### Healthy Substitutions

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

The information in this activity document is provided for general informational purposes only and should not be considered medical advice, diagnosis or treatment recommendations.



# Employer Activity Tracking

Please complete the following information and submit it to your employer to receive credit for this activity:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Did you track your food consumption each week?

YES     NO

Did you make healthy substitutions in weeks 2-4?

YES     NO

Did you complete a meal plan in week 4?

YES     NO

Are there food substitutions you plan to continue making after completing this activity?

YES     NO

*Optional:* List the healthy substitution(s) you plan to continue making here:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



FEAT

GOOD

FOOD

## Every Day, Everywhere and Without Breaking the Bank

- Plan your meals, make a list and don't shop hungry
- Use coupons when you shop
- Compare brands
- Join your store's loyalty program
- Buy in bulk

## MARCH ACTIVITY

Monitor Your Diet  
and Meal Plan

This month's activity focuses on gradually improving your diet. Each week will build on the previous week's progress! Your first tip? Eliminating foods that contain high fructose corn syrup or partially hydrogenated oils is an easy way to improve your diet fast!



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