

Healthy Habits

What is the prescription to not fall ill?



- Eat right
- Exercise
- Socialize

Surely, this isn't new information to anyone. But why is it so difficult for us to do? Is there any help we can get to improve our habits?... Let's answer these questions by looking at these key healthy habits individually.

Eat right

Eating right means eating healthy and making healthy choices with your food. There are many trendy fads in the world of dieting and clean eating, but there are a few that are consistently recommended and evidence-based. They include eating lots of fruits and vegetables, consuming the necessary amount of nutrients (such as the correct ratio of protein-rich foods proportionate to your weight), decreasing caloric intake, and paying attention to portion sizes.

Eating healthy has been proven to reduce chemicals associated with inflammation, improve sleep and mood, boost energy levels,

improve memory, and lower the risk of Alzheimer's disease.

One of the simplest tools that is available to you in your traditional healthcare system is a consultation with a nutritionist. If proper diet can help keep high blood pressure, high cholesterol and the chronic ailments away, why would a nutritionist not be as important, if not more so, than a primary care provider who will diagnose the ailment only after some damage has been done?

Although today, Americans enjoy longer lifespans compared to past generations, they also live some of their additional years with



increased disabilities. One major cause is the poor American diet. It isn't only bad eating habits that plague the American diet but a lack of information as well.

Recent developments in nutrition studies suggest that what many of us were taught even twenty-five years ago was largely incorrect (just look at a food pyramid from the 1990s where it recommends eating six to eleven servings of bread and pasta a day). This illustrates why a nutritionist is so important. Not only do

they encourage good eating habits, but they also clear up misconceptions using the latest nutritional science and research.

Although nutritionists are valuable assets when it comes to your health, not all insurance carriers cover the services of nutritionists. Call your insurance company to see if your insurance covers a nutritional consultation. If not, consider opting into a program that does. Take a look at your own eating habits.

These habits include:

- **Eating lots of fruits and vegetables**
- **Eating the needed amount of nutrients (such as the correct ratio of protein-rich foods proportionate to your weight)**
- **Decreasing caloric intake**
- **Paying attention to portion sizes**

It is important to take an honest look at what you eat and how much, then make decisions on how you can improve. Let's define how we rate eating habits:

Excellent: You have excellent eating habits if you identify with **ALL** of the following:

- You pay close attention to creating varied, well-balanced meals.
- You eat the right portion sizes for your physical requirements, age, and size.
- You strictly follow personalized dietary instructions from your medical team for any existing health concerns.

Fair: Your diet is considered Fair if your habits fall **MOSTLY** in this category:

- You eat a varied diet but you don't deliberately strive for balanced meals.
- You eat reasonable portion sizes but you don't monitor caloric intake.
- You try to limit foods you know aren't good for you but you cheat sometimes.

Poor: Your diet would qualify as poor if you identify with **ANY** of these statements:

- You rarely monitor the foods you eat to maintain a balanced diet.
- You don't moderate the amount of food you consume.
- Your diet consists mainly of processed foods or fast food.
- Your weight is a concern because of your diet.
- You ignore dietary recommendations from your doctor about things that are contributing to a health condition (such as gastrointestinal problems, allergies, diabetes, etc.).

Where there is room for improvement, make plans to move up a level from where you are currently. Set a goal to make this improvement this month.

How are you doing with your eating habits lately? Select the options that most reflect your habits and make notes about what you'd like to focus on regarding this topic.

Healthy Lifestyle: Eat Right

My current eating habits are: (Select one)

- Excellent
- Fair
- Poor

I would like to meet with a nutritionist:

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

Notes regarding my Healthy Eating Plan: