

# Health Insights

August 2021

## Eat Well, Live Well

Replacing unhealthy eating habits with healthier ones can be difficult, especially if unhealthy habits are all you have ever known. One key to making lasting improvements in your diet is to make changes one at a time. Start with a small, simple change, and stick to it for a week. After mastering that change, add another.

### Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Eat breakfast every day.
- Replace one sugary drink per day with a glass of water.
- Eat one to two more fruits or vegetables each day.
- Plan a healthy snack for each day of the week.
- Switch to a low-fat version of one of your favorite foods.
- Plan three meals and two snacks every day.

### Set an Example

Parents play a big role in guiding their children's eating habits with the examples they set, the foods they make available in the home, and the mealtime experiences they create for their families.

Offer healthy snacks such as fruit, low-fat cottage cheese or yogurt, frozen juice bars, applesauce, celery, apples with peanut butter, raw vegetables, graham crackers, fig bars, or whole wheat crackers with low-fat cheese.

### Make Eating Fun for the Whole Family

Family meals can be a time to monitor what children are eating and to reconnect with each other. Involve children in food preparation and cleaning up; sit down with them when they eat. The idea is to build healthy lifelong eating habits.

### Some healthy eating tips include:

- Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables—half your plate at each meal should be vegetables or fruit.
- Beware of sweetened drinks—sodas and sports drinks are high in calories. Keep in mind that the calories in juice can also quickly add up.
- Choose food sensibly when eating out. Restaurants are often required to make nutrition information readily available—if you do not see brochures sitting out, or nutrition information listed on the menu, ask.

### Eating Healthy When Eating Out

- Ask if you do not know what is in a dish or the serving size.
- Eat the same portion size you would at home.
- Ask for sauces, gravy, and dressings on the side—or avoid them altogether.
- Order foods that are not breaded or fried.
- Order fruit for dessert.
- Ask for substitutions, such as a vegetable instead of fries.
- Ask for low-calorie versions of food. Vinegar, oil, or a squeeze of lemon are all better than high-fat dressings or sauces.

# Mental Health Moment



## Diet May Help Preserve Cognitive Function

According to a recent analysis of data from two major eye disease studies, following the Mediterranean diet correlates with higher cognitive function. Dietary factors play a role in slowing cognitive decline. Researchers at the National Eye Institute (NEI), part of the National Institutes of Health, led the studies.

Researchers examined the effects of nine components of the Mediterranean diet on cognition. The diet emphasizes consumption of whole fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, legumes, fish, olive oil, and reduced consumption of red meat and alcohol.

The Age-Related Eye Study (AREDS) and AREDS2 were studies, performed over the course of years, on the effects of vitamins on age-related macular degeneration (AMD), which damages the retina. The researchers assessed participant's diet at the start of the studies. The AREDS study tested participants' cognitive function at five years and AREDS2 tested cognitive function in participants at baseline and again two, four, and ten years later. The researchers used a Modified Mini-Mental State Examination to evaluate cognitive function and assessed diet with a questionnaire that asked participants their average consumption of each Mediterranean diet component over the previous year.

Participants with the greatest adherence to the Mediterranean diet had the lowest risk of cognitive impairment. High fish and vegetable consumption appeared to have the greatest protective effect. At ten years, AREDS2 participants with the highest fish consumption had the slowest rate of cognitive decline.

The numerical differences in cognitive function scores between participants with the highest versus lowest adherence to a Mediterranean diet were relatively small, meaning that individuals likely won't see a difference in daily function. But at a population level, the effects clearly show that cognition and neural health depend on diet.

NIH/National Eye Institute. "Diet may help preserve cognitive function." ScienceDaily. [www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/04/200414084316.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/04/200414084316.htm) (accessed July 27, 2021).

## Coping with Change in the Workplace

If you are the type of person that dislikes change, be mindful of your reactions. When changes occur, acknowledge your negative reaction and then determine if you are resisting for a valid reason or simply because it is your typical reaction to change. Then, think through the issue and become fully aware of your feelings. If the change may actually benefit you or will not cause harm, consider dropping your barrier and accept the change that is occurring. This reaction will lower your stress level significantly.

### Other Suggestions for Coping with Change:

- Develop a support system at home with your family and at work with your coworkers.
- Take care of yourself by eating a balanced diet, exercising, getting enough sleep, taking time to relax, and enjoying your hobbies. This will keep your mind off changes at work and keep your body healthy too.
- Do not turn to negative habits to cope, such as tobacco, alcohol, or junk food.
- Believe in yourself, your talents and your contributions to your job.
- Try to be open and flexible and recognize that your present routine may be only temporary.
- Take control of the choices that you make for yourself. What are the positive and negative outcomes of these choices? Remind yourself that it is not what actually occurs that will make you unhappy.

If you have experienced a big change or are experiencing stress and grief, please contact human resources or a mental health provider.



## Jicama and Watermelon Salad

### Ingredients:

- ½ C fresh orange juice, plus 1 teaspoon zest
- ¼ C fresh lime juice, plus 1 teaspoon zest
- 2 Tbsp honey
- 1 tsp ground black pepper
- Kosher salt
- 1 jicama, cut into matchstick pieces
- 4 C watermelon in 2-inch chunks
- ½ C roughly torn fresh mint leaves

Whisk together juices, honey, pepper, and salt in a large bowl. Add the jicama, watermelon, and mint and toss to coat.

Calories: 162, Carbohydrates: 40g, Protein: 3g, Fat: 15.4g, Saturated Fat: .5g, Cholesterol: 11 mg, Sodium: 10mg, Fiber: 9g, Sugar: 23g

Flay, B. (2015, May 8). Jicama and Watermelon Salad. Food Network. <https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/bobby-flay/jicama-and-watermelon-salad-recipe-1941006/>.



## Nutrition Quiz

### *Eat Well, Live Well*

1. Which of the following was NOT an idea to start eating well?
  - a. Eat out at healthy restaurants
  - b. Plan a healthy snack each day of the week
  - c. Replace one sugary drink per day with a glass of water
2. What is something parents can do to help children have a healthy relationship with food?
  - a. Take them grocery shopping
  - b. Offer different food options to them
  - c. Involve children in food preparation, clean up, and eating as a family

### *Diet May Help Preserve Cognitive Function*

3. What does the Mediterranean Diet consist of?
  - a. Red wine, oils, fruits, vegetables, white meat
  - b. Red Meats, low sodium, low carbohydrates, high protein
  - c. Fruits, Vegetables, whole grains, nuts, legumes, fish, olive oil and low red meats and alcohol
4. What happened to the patients who followed the Mediterranean Diet best?
  - a. They had the lowest risk of cognitive impairment
  - b. Their risk of cognitive impairment stayed the same
  - c. They had the highest risk of cognitive impairment

### *Coping with Change in the Workplace*

5. If you have experienced a big change or are experiencing stress and grief, you should contact \_\_\_\_\_ or a \_\_\_\_\_

See page 5 for quiz answers

# Healthy Habits Calendar



## August 2021 - Nutrition

August is a great month to get outside and be active. The weather is warm and perfect for a myriad of outdoor activities. You can play soccer, go on a hike, go swimming, go rock climbing, and do many other activities. The choices are endless. This calendar will help you take small steps towards healthy habits so you are more likely to stick with them.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 <b>Welcome to August:</b> This month's challenge is Meatless Mondays.	2	3 <b>Tip Tuesday:</b> Start every meal with a glass of water.	4 <b>Work Out Wednesday</b>	5	6 <b>Friendly Friday:</b> Introduce yourself to someone new at work.	7
8	9 <b>Challenge Check-in:</b> <a href="#">Click here</a> for Meatless Monday ideas.	10	11 <b>Wellness Wednesday:</b> Explore something that intrigues you.	12 <b>Thirsty Thursday:</b> Try replacing your sugary drinks with water.	13	14 <b>Social Saturday:</b> Spend time with someone you haven't seen lately.
15 <b>Self-care Sunday:</b> Set out your clothes for tomorrow.	16 <b>Challenge Check-in:</b> Have you tried a new meatless recipe?	17	18 <b>Work out Wednesday:</b> Go for a long walk outside.	19 <b>Thoughtful Thursday:</b> Bring a treat to someone who needs it.	20	21
22	23 <b>Challenge Check-in:</b> What has been your go-to meat replacement?	24 <b>Tip Tuesday:</b> Follow the Mediterranean Diet today.	25	26 <b>Thirsty Thursday:</b> Try eating <a href="#">water-rich foods</a> .	27	28 <b>Social Saturday:</b> Find an event in your community and attend it.
29 <b>Self-care Sunday:</b> Start a new book today.	30 <b>Challenge Check-in:</b> What was your favorite meatless meal?	31				



# Challenge: Meatless Mondays

## 30 Day Challenge:

Your challenge this month is to not eat meat on Mondays! Other sources of protein are typically much healthier than meat. The daily recommendation is to get 0.36 grams of protein per pound of body weight. This translates to about 56 grams per day for men and 46 grams per day for women. Meatless Monday will allow you to reach your recommended protein intake and give you an opportunity to find healthier sources of protein. Here are a few ideas:

- Nuts
- Beans
- Greens
- Lentils
- Cheese
- Cottage cheese
- Broccoli
- Whey protein supplements
- Soy
- Greek yogurt
- Quinoa
- Greens
- Milk

### Week 1

Did you eat meat today?

Monday  Yes  No

List the protein you replaced in your meals:

### Week 2

Did you eat meat today?

Monday  Yes  No

List the protein you replaced in your meals:

### Week 3

Did you eat meat today?

Monday  Yes  No

List the protein you replaced in your meals:

### Week 4

Did you eat meat today?

Monday  Yes  No

List the protein you replaced in your meals:

Answers to Quiz:

- Q1: a. Eat out at healthy restaurants | Q2: c. Involve children in food preparation, clean up, and eating as a family  
 Q3: c. Fruits, Vegetables, whole grains, nuts, legumes, fish, olive oil and low red meats and alcohol | Q4: a. They had the lowest risk of cognitive impairment  
 Q5: human resources, mental health provider