How Can Healthy Eating Improve Your Health?

Healthy eating can improve your health in many ways. It helps to:

** Prevent many health problems, such as heart disease, strokes, high blood pressure, and diabetes.
** Control existing health problems, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or diabetes.
** Maintain or manage your weight.
** Have a positive impact on those you love, such as your children, parents, and friends, by helping them choose more healthy foods.

Many people also say healthy eating helps them look and feel better.

What Is Different About This Dietary Program?

This program is based on recent advances in the science of diet and health. Because of these advances, some of the advice about diet might be different from what you’ve seen before. We think you will enjoy the newer approaches to healthy eating that are given by this program.

The Major Difference You Might Notice With This Program Is

** A focus on fat quality and not the amount of fat in your diet. Depending on your current diet, this program may suggest an increase in healthy fats, such as those in vegetable oils, nuts, and fish. Eating more high-quality fat opens up many possibilities for healthful and very tasty eating.

This Program Will Also Focus on

** Increasing vegetables, fruits, and whole grains as these are a very important part of a healthy diet.
** Substituting other foods for those that are not healthy. For example, we offer many tips on healthy beverages that are much better for you than regular soda or very sweet iced tea.

One thing that has not changed: experts STILL agree that healthy eating habits can improve your health.
A Healthy Eating Plan

What Is Healthy Eating?

Healthy eating means eating more:

- Healthy fats. Healthy fats are fats such as those found in vegetable oils, nuts, and fish.
- Fruits and vegetables.
- Whole grains such as whole wheat bread and brown rice.

And eating less:

- Unhealthy fats. Unhealthy fats are trans fats that are found in some baked goods, packaged snack foods, and fried foods at restaurants.
- Processed meats like bacon, hot dogs, and cold cuts.
- Foods with added sugar and salt-like, sugar-sweetened beverages and some prepared foods.

Getting Started on a Healthy Eating Plan for Life

In addition to learning what to eat, many people need help making a plan to get started. Here are some things to keep in mind as you start making changes to your eating habits:

- Find something that works for you. People are more likely to stick with an eating plan if it fits with their lifestyle and budget.
- Pick foods that you like to eat. In general, people are more likely to stick with an eating plan that they like.
- Make small changes first. Making small changes one at a time is easier than changing everything at once. Taking small steps makes change easier.
- Plan ahead. It takes planning to stick with a healthy eating plan. This means planning so that you have healthy food on hand when you are hungry or preparing meals, and that you know how to select healthy foods at restaurants.
- Don't give up. Everyone gets offtrack now and then; don't be too hard on yourself. The important part is that you pick up and start right where you left off as soon as possible.
How the Program Works

The program is given in four sessions with different foods covered in each session.

- Session 1: Nuts, Spreads, Dressings, and Oils
- Session 2: Vegetables, Fruit, Whole Grains, and Beans
- Session 3: Drinks, Desserts, Snacks, Eating Out, and Salt
- Session 4: Fish, Meat, Poultry, Dairy, and Eggs

The Format for Each Session Is Similar
- **A review of important information about the foods in each of the four food groupings.**
- **Selecting two goals to work on for the next session and first steps to achieve these goals...we will help you select these goals.**
- **Making plans to monitor your progress.**

Physical Activity Is Also Very Important for Your Health

Today we will focus on diet and at the next 3 sessions we will focus on diet and physical activity.