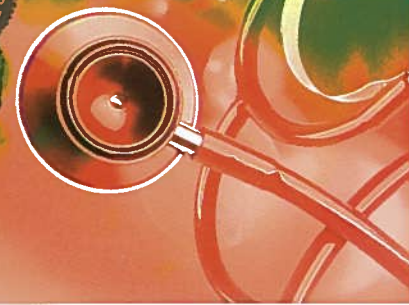


# Health News You Can Use



## Nutritional Guidelines for Maintaining General Food Health



A recent report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests that major causes of morbidity and mortality in the US are related to poor diets and sedentary lifestyles. The report goes on to link some specific diseases such as, cardiovascular disease, Type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis and hypertension to name a few to both poor diet and physical inactivity. Further, the report states that poor diet and physical inactivity can result in an energy imbalance (consumption of more calories and less expended), and are contributing factors to the increase in the number of overweight and obese individuals in this country.

### ***Making informed food choices is the first step to good Nutrition.***

One of the keys to maintaining good health is making informed food choices that provide the body with an efficient and adequate supply of important nutrients, which help support a healthy lifestyle. Understanding the nutritional value and role of each food in our diet is also essential to planning healthy meals and ensuring a balanced diet. In certain instances, fortified foods and dietary supplements may be useful sources of one or more nutrients that otherwise might be consumed in less than recommended amounts.

However, dietary supplements, while recommended in some cases, cannot replace a healthful diet.

### ***What is Nutrition?***

It is the science or study that deals with food and nourishment, especially in humans. Nutrition is vital for human survival. Proper nutrition is derived through the consumption of an array of foods, which provide essential nutrients and other components that may have beneficial effects on health. Therefore, it is very important to maintain a balanced diet on a daily basis.

### ***What constitutes a balanced diet?***

A balanced diet should comprise correct proportions of foods from the following groups: carbohydrate, protein and fat. Each of the above plays a critical role in maintaining the body's optimum health. Too much or too little of any of the above may result in dietary and nutrient deficiencies, which may lead to physical abnormalities, malnutrition and general poor health. To avoid the complications of an unbalanced diet, the

Department of Health and Human Services and the US Department of Agriculture have set forth guidelines regarding the daily consumption and portion control of the various foods within the groups mentioned, to help individuals form good dietary habits. This is critical in promoting a healthy diet and good health.

### ***What is a healthy diet?***

According to the dietary guidelines from the Department of Health and Human Services and the US Department of Agriculture, a healthy diet is one that:

- Emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products;
- Includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts;
- Is low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars.

In addition to the above, the dietary guidelines also encourage decreased caloric intake while it stresses the importance of including daily or regular amounts of moderate or vigorous physical activity such as brisk walking, jogging, biking, aerobics or yard work into one's routine. It should be noted that this is *in addition to your normal daily routine.*

### ***Why is it important to maintain a healthy weight?***

Research shows that reaching and maintaining a healthy weight is important for an individual's general health and overall well being. Further, medical research indicates that being significantly overweight increases an individual's risk of developing medical complications such as, hypertension (high blood pressure), Type 2 diabetes, stroke and other ailments.

It is strongly suggest that persons that are overweight incorporate simple lifestyle changes that may help promote a healthier weight. These include:

1. Make healthier daily food choices. It is very important to include all food groups in your diet every day. Namely, add fruits, vegetables, whole grain and low fat products, including those products that are low in sugar and sodium.
2. Start the day the right way. Eat an appropriate breakfast. Breakfast helps to increase your metabolism. Metabolism is considered the amount of energy your body uses to perform daily functions like breathing, thinking, sleeping, walking etc. . . If you have an increased metabolism you are less likely to gain weight.
3. Maintain portion control. Reduce the number of servings per meal.
4. Increase physical activity and exercise.

### ***At Kingsbrook we are here to help***

At Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center we offer a continuum of care that addresses the need of the individual who may require special diet planning, as a result of a primary health concern such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes or hypertension. Our professional team of clinical dietitians will work with you to ensure your optimum dietary needs and goals are realized.

Please feel free to call our Public Affairs office at **718.604.5062** and we'll be happy to refer you to the appropriate program or service area.

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\* Some guidelines and info adapted from USDA and DHHS