



Nutrition for God's Temple

"Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well." 3 John 1:2 (NIV)

March is National Nutrition Month. Whatever your age or wellness status, a healthful diet, balanced with the appropriate exercise, can improve the quality of your life. Knowing good nutrition basics can assist with this process and make for a lifetime of healthy eating. As we examine how to be good stewards of the earthly temples the Lord has gifted to us, let us **make a commitment to healthy nutrition.**

Knowing what to eat and how much is the key to good eating habits. There are a key principles of nutrition we should keep in mind when choosing how to best nourish our bodies. These would include:

- Eat real food - as close to its' most natural state as possible. You know, food the way God our creator made it, not the foods man produces.
- Eat mainly plants, not food made in plants.
- Let balance, variety and moderation guide your choices in all aspects of health and life.

The **three main macronutrients in food** are carbohydrates, fat, and protein. Each is important in keeping the body in balance.

Carbohydrates provide the body with energy and should account for approximately 50% of your daily dietary intake. Sources of carbohydrates include bread, cereal, pasta, grains, rice, beans, starchy vegetables, milk, yogurt, fruit, sweets and sugary foods. At least half of your carbohydrates should be from whole grain products. To qualify as "whole grain" the word "whole" should be the first ingredients listed on the nutrition label list of ingredients. Remember "wheat flour" is code word for "white flour". Replacing refined carbohydrates with their whole grain counterparts has also been linked to a lower risk of insulin-resistance and a decreased risk for developing metabolic syndrome. Whole grains offer a rich source of anti-oxidants and other plant-based nutrients. In order to maximize the health benefits of this important food group think outside the "wheat box". Include whole intact grains such as wild/brown rice, steel-cut oats, bulgur, barley, quinoa, wheat berries, couscous, kamut, millet and popcorn (air-popped or stove-popped with canola oil) to add variety.

Fiber is carbohydrates that cannot be digested. The American Heart Association recommends 25-30 grams per day of fiber. There are two different categories of fiber with unique health benefits. Soluble fiber can assist with decreasing cholesterol. Soluble fiber includes oats, oat bran, brown rice, citrus, barley, legumes, rye, psyllium and fruits (apples, berries). Insoluble fiber is important for bowel function Good sources of insoluble fiber include skin and peels of fruits and vegetables, wheat bran, bran flakes, miller's bran, whole-wheat products, and seeds and nuts. Whatever the source, an overall increase in fiber intake reduces the risk of heart disease, diabetes, diverticular disease and constipation and is an important part of a healthy diet.

Fat. A certain amount of fat in our diet is essential for health. The Mediterranean diet for example, is not low fat, yet studies have shown that people who traditionally follow it have a significantly overall death rate than those attempting to follow a low fat diet. This research seems to indicate that there are fats that heal and fats that harm. Good fats to focus on that are typically missing in the traditional American diet are monounsaturated and omega-3 fats. Good sources of these healthy fats are olive/canola oil, wild fish, omega-3 cage free eggs, nuts (especially walnuts) and ground flax seed or oil. Bad fats to eliminate or limit include trans-fats and saturated fats. These fats increase the risk for heart disease and other conditions. Saturated fats increase cholesterol levels and should be consumed in moderation. It is recommended that saturated fat intake be kept under 12 grams per day. Eliminate Trans fat that is produced when liquid oil is chemically altered by a process called "hydrogenation."

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Blood Pressure Screening Sun., March 21 at 9 AM
Office Hours: Tuesdays 12 noon - 3 pm



(Parish Nurse/Health & Healing continued)

If the list of ingredients on the nutrition label includes the words, "partially hydrogenated" put the product back on the grocery shelf and back away! These "fake fats" are particularly dangerous to human health. The Institute of Medicine has concluded that **there is no safe level of Trans fat in the diet and that any amount of Trans fat increased the risk of heart disease.**

Trans-fatty acids raise the ratio of bad cholesterol (LDL) to good cholesterol (HDL) significantly more than saturated fat does. The major sources of Trans fats in the American diet include margarines made with partially hydrogenated oils (even healthy oils such as canola/olive), bakery items (muffins, croissants, donuts, cakes, flour tortillas, cookies and brownies), snack foods (crackers, granola bars, microwave popcorn and chips) and dining out (especially fast food). In order to eliminate partially hydrogenated/trans fats we need to **severely limit our intake of processed foods** in packages, bakery items, fried, snack and fast foods. Research is now revealing that processed foods increase the level of inflammation in the body. Inflammation is now believed to be the underlying cause of many diseases.

Protein helps to build and repair body tissue. It is important in the diet following surgery or illness. Approximately 20% of total daily calories should come from protein. Sources of protein include chicken, beef, pork, eggs, cheese, beans, and natural peanut butter.

Cholesterol should be limited to less 300 mg a day. Cholesterol is found in animal products and foods made from animal products. To control dietary cholesterol limit eating red meat and choose lean cuts of meat, removing visible fat before cooking. Increase your intake of fish to at least twice per week (we are not talking about the traditional Friday fish fry variety). Also increase your intake of plant based sources of protein such as nuts, seeds, legumes and whole intact grains. You can also use egg substitute or egg whites.

What to Eat Each Day

- 5-8 servings whole grains 1 serving= 1 slice of bread, 1 cup cold cereal, ½ cup hot cereal, rice, or pasta. Large bagel or tortilla = 4 servings - read your labels.
- 2.5-3 cups vegetables minimum 1 serving = 1 cup raw/cooked vegetables or 2 cups raw leafy vegetables.
- 1.5-2 cups fruit 1 cup =1 cup of juice or fruit or ½ cup dried fruit.
- 3 cups nonfat or low fat milk 1 cup = 1 cup milk or yogurt, 1.5 oz. cheese, 1/3 cup shredded cheese.
- 5-6 oz. Protein 1 oz. = 1 oz. meat (a deck of cards is the size of approximately 3 oz. of meat), ¼ cup dried beans, 1 egg, 1 tablespoon peanut butter (natural), ½ cup nuts or seeds.
- 5-7 teaspoons healthy fats 1 tsp = 1 tsp. oil, mayo, or salad dressing (made with canola or olive oil), 2 T. peanut butter (natural) = 4 tsp. oil, 1 oz. of nuts = 3 tsp. oil, ½ avocado = 3 tsp. oil.

Sources: Pfeiffer, Margaret, "Smart 4 your Heart", King Publishing, 2009. Pollan, Michael, "In Defense of Food", Penguin Books, 2008.
For more information go to www.mypyramid.gov, or www.americanheart.org