



Live Well, Work Well

Health and wellness tips for your work, home and life—brought to you by the insurance specialists at Parelus Insurance Services

Substituting chips and candy bars with snack-sized portions of veggies will cut down on the calories and cholesterol in your diet. Not only are most vegetables low in calories and fat, but they are all cholesterol-free.

EAT WELL, LIVE WELL

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

Some Ideas to Get You Started

- Eat breakfast.
- 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.
- Plan as many home-cooked meals as you can, as they usually have fewer calories, more reasonable portions and cost less than typical meals eaten at restaurants.

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 that 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. Large portions contain too many calories. A good-sized snack for a typical adult may be a single-serving container of yogurt, but for a preschooler, two or three tablespoons of yogurt is enough.

Make Eating an Enjoyable Activity 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 clean-up, and sit down with them when they eat. The idea is to build healthy lifelong eating habits.

Some healthy eating tips include the following:

- 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 don't see brochures sitting out, or nutrition information listed on the menu, ask.

Healthy Food Tips When Eating Out

- Ask if you don't 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 and oil or a squeeze of lemon are both better than high-fat dressings or sauces.