

Good Nutrition Basics

“Let food be your medicine and medicine be your food.”

- Hippocrates

Words like “refined”, “saturated” and “solid” are great to hear if they’re describing jewelry, paint colors or the foundation of a house. The same isn’t true if you’re trying to follow a healthy eating plan. Refined sugar and flour in breads add empty calories and no fiber; and large amounts of saturated fat are not heart-friendly, especially solid fats like butter and lard. The result: too many calories and not enough nutrients.

A healthy eating plan should include a variety of foods from the basic food groups that provide the most nutrients from the calories we consume. The basic food groups are these:

- Grains
- Vegetables
- Fruits
- Fats
- Milk
- Meats and beans

Following a healthy eating plan helps your body guard itself against serious conditions including heart disease, stroke, diabetes, high blood pressure, osteoporosis and certain cancers. Combine this good habit with 30-60 minutes of physical activity most days of the week and you can also help keep your weight at a normal level.

This is excellent news for all of us. It means that, one meal at a time, we have the power to potentially control the course of disease based on the lifestyle choices we make. Understanding good nutrition basics can help us make better food selections now. Consistently making better food selections over time can become a habit. And a habit of nutritious eating and exercising can add up to a lot of time spent enjoying a better quality of life.

Learn more about what’s in your food and why eating a variety of essential nutrients is vital to your good health and wellness. Check out the Fitness and Nutrition articles and tools by visiting anthem.com.

Sources:

- United States Department of Health and Human Services and the United States Department of Agriculture - www.mypyramid.gov, http://www.5aday.gov/homepage/index_content.html
- United States Department of Agriculture - <http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/>
- www.healthierus.gov
- www.nutrition.gov
- Ways to Enhance Children’s Activities and Nutrition (We Can!) - <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/index.htm>
- Nutritive Value of Foods (you will need Adobe Acrobat to open this file) - http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp/Data/HG72/hg72_2002.pdf

This information is intended for educational purposes only, and should not be interpreted as medical advice. Please consult your physician for advice about changes that may affect your health

