

Planning Ahead for Healthy Eating

Healthy eating doesn't have to be a last-minute thing. During stressful and difficult times, a little bit of planning can go a long way towards sustaining healthy habits. Here are a few healthy eating solutions to three common situations where it can be tempting to resort to unhealthy habits:



When you have an early day...

- Pick fruits or vegetables that require little peeling or chopping, such as baby carrots, cherry tomatoes or grapes.
- Choose ready-packed salad greens from the produce shelf for a quick salad any time.
- Keep your fridge or freezer stocked with healthy leftovers for a quick meal.



When you're on the go...

- Stock your kitchen or desk with snacks that travel. Mix nuts and berries and keep them near you at work for a quick snack.
- At lunch, have a salad and keep the dressing to low-fat or fat-free.

When your routine gets boring...

- Spice up your vegetables. Try garlic or Italian seasoning with spinach or asparagus, dill with green beans, or curry with peas, potatoes or cauliflower.
- Try out new recipes that can be made in 30 minutes or less.



Take Action!

Here are some goals to consider. Choose a couple and see how you do.

- Identify changes inside your home to keep only healthy snacks in sight.
- Swap a go-to guilty pleasure—such as soda or chips—with an herbal tea or hummus and carrots.
- On most occasions in the coming week, replace a high-sugar drink such as soda with a healthier option (water, fruit juice with no sugar added, vegetable juice, etc.)

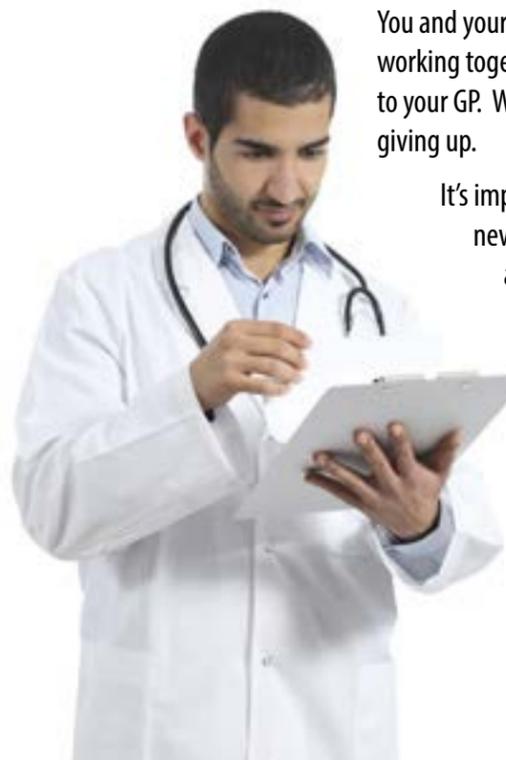
Continuing to Collaborate With Your GP

Thinking of your GP as your partner on your health journey.

You and your GP are a team with the goal of keeping your health on the right track. You're working together to make decisions on your wellness rather than leaving the decision solely to your GP. When an option you're trying doesn't work out, you try something new instead of giving up.

It's important to keep that progress going. Continue to check in with your GP regarding new symptoms, medication changes and other issues you're concerned with. You can also take time to do your homework and compare the health advice from your GP with the health advice recommended by trustworthy medical websites. If a form of treatment isn't working for you, you can also research complementary or alternative treatments for your condition.

No matter how you choose to keep your health on track, remember that you ultimately have the power to decide what works best for you.



Get Activated for a Healthier You

Staying the course through good times and bad.

Consistency can be the hardest habit to establish.

Even when you've established healthy habits for yourself, life can be challenging sometimes. Stress due to illness, relationship issues or other difficult situations can cause us to fall back on unhealthy habits that feel comforting to us.

Managing stress, making good food choices, and getting enough activity in your life is no easy task. Remember that it's ok to hit a stumbling block or two on your health journey. It's more important to stand up, dust yourself off and get back to a healthy lifestyle.



Being Aware of Your Self-Care

One of the most important aspects of staying healthy is recognizing when your body or mind needs you to slow down.

Acknowledging when this occurs and taking steps to recharge can help sustain healthy habits while preventing more serious health problems. It's also important to be mindful of situations that could disrupt any healthy routines you may have in place.

One great way to practice self-care is to be proactive and make a plan of action for stressful situations. By thinking about what you are capable of ahead of time, you can remove some of the fear of the unknown. Maintaining healthy habits, like a nutritious diet and regular exercise, means you're in a better position to get back on track if a stressful situation challenges you.



Taking Proactive Measures...

- ✓ **Identify potentially stressful situations** such as financial difficulties, holidays, the death of a loved one, or receiving a difficult health diagnosis. Think about how you would cope with each situation.
- ✓ **Eat right.** Try to fuel up with fruits, vegetables and proteins. Avoid eating or drinking things that make you feel worse physically like fried foods, candy and sodas.
- ✓ **Get moving.** Physical activity is great for your body and your mind. It relieves stress and help calm you down.
- ✓ **Make a plan.** Write up a plan for dealing with extra stress. Keep it in your wallet and refer to it when stress gets to be too much to handle.
- ✓ **Stop.** Acknowledge when you need a break. Make time for yourself to relax and reflect.