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hearthealthy
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Heart-Healthy Tips: Eating Well

Nutrition is a key part of an all-around heart-healthy lifestyle. Together, diet and exercise have been proven to reduce stress and improve health. Use these basic tips to set a foundation of healthy eating habits for life. These tips should be used as a guide – before starting a diet plan, always consult with your doctor first.

Tips for Eating Well:

- ▶ Consume a variety of nutrient-dense foods and beverages from among the basic food groups while choosing foods that limit the intake of saturated and trans fats, cholesterol, added sugars, salt, and alcohol.
- ▶ Meet recommended intakes while still getting the calories you need by adopting a balanced eating pattern, such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Guide or the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) Eating Plan.
- ▶ To maintain body weight in a healthy range, balance calories consumed from foods and beverages with calories expended.
- ▶ Consume a sufficient amount of fruits and vegetables while staying within energy needs. Two cups of fruit and 2½ cups of vegetables per day are recommended for a 2,000-calorie diet, with higher or lower amounts depending on an individual's caloric needs.
- ▶ Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables each day. In particular, select from all five vegetable subgroups (dark green, orange, legumes, starchy vegetables, and other vegetables) several times a week.
- ▶ Eat 3 or more ounce-equivalents of whole-grain products per day, with the rest of the recommended grains coming from enriched or whole-grain products. In general, at least half of your daily grains should come from whole grains.
- ▶ Consume 3 cups per day of fat-free or low-fat milk or equivalent milk products.
- ▶ Consume less than 10 percent of calories from saturated fatty acids and less than 300 mg/day of cholesterol, and keep trans fatty acid consumption as low as possible.
- ▶ Keep total fat intake between 20 to 35 percent of calories, with most fats coming from sources of polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fatty acids, such as fish, nuts, and vegetable oils.
- ▶ When selecting and preparing meat, poultry, dry beans, and milk or milk products, make choices that are lean, low-fat, or fat-free.

Source: Dietary Guidelines for Americans

Find more health and wellness tips and resources for first responders at www.healthy-firefighter.org.