

# Eat Well to Live Well



Eating a well-balanced diet is key in maintaining a healthy body. In fact, improving your diet could help you live longer and reduce the chances of developing costly chronic diseases like heart disease, stroke and diabetes.

If you're ready to start eating healthier, there are a few things you need to keep in mind:

**Talk to your doctor.** What's considered a healthy diet change for your friend might not be considered healthy for you, too. The best way to determine how to go about changing your diet is by talking with your doctor first.

**Start small.** Changing your whole diet at once may prove to be too much, too fast. In fact, experts recommend starting with small changes, such as the following:

- Eat breakfast every day. Studies have shown that eating a healthy breakfast can lead to better strength and endurance, sharper concentration and better problem-solving abilities.
- Plan as many home-cooked meals as you can. They usually have fewer calories, more reasonable portions and cost less than typical meals eaten at restaurants.
- Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables. Half of your plate at each meal should be vegetables or fruits.
- Beware of sweetened drinks. Sodas and sports drinks are high in calories, and calories in juice can also quickly add up. Swap one sugary drink a day for a glass of water.
- Choose food sensibly when eating out. Restaurants are often required to make nutrition information readily available. If you do not see brochures sitting out, or nutrition information listed on the menu, ask.

**Don't get discouraged.** Replacing unhealthy eating habits with healthier ones can be difficult. Stick with it and focus on how improving your diet will benefit your health in the long term.

Remember, eating a healthy diet can help you keep costly chronic conditions at bay and can help you lead a healthier life. If you want more healthy eating materials, don't hesitate to ask. We're here to help.