

# Healthy Eating and Weight



## What's Our Food Made of?

The energy your body needs comes from the foods you eat. That energy is measured in calories. All foods have calories but some have much more than others. The basic building blocks of all foods include:

- **Carbohydrates (carbs)** are your body's favorite fuel source. Foods like bread, rice, potatoes and fruits are rich in carbs.
- **Proteins** help your body grow and build muscle. Meat and fish, nuts, beans and dairy (like milk and cheese) have plenty of protein.
- **Fats** can be turned into energy by your body. Foods with good fats include meat and fish, dairy, nuts and seeds.

## The Basics of Healthy Eating

Try following these five tips for a healthier diet.<sup>1</sup>

1. **Don't overeat.** Eating too many calories can cause weight gain, so read nutrition labels for recommended serving sizes.
2. **Fill up with fruits and veggies.** They're rich in vitamins and minerals, low in calories and can help you feel fuller.
3. **Try whole grains.** Whole-wheat breads and pasta are rich in fiber, which can help improve your cholesterol.<sup>2</sup>
4. **Avoid added sugar.** Processed and packaged foods often have added sugar, so eat fresh foods instead.
5. **Skip the sugary drinks.** Water satisfies your thirst and keeps you hydrated without extra sugar and calories.

**Add more  
fruits and  
veggies to  
your plate.**

## Maintaining a Healthy Weight

There is no right answer for how much you should weigh. Doctors use the body mass index (BMI) to determine a person's body fat. BMI helps you get an idea if you are at a healthy weight.<sup>3</sup>

Calculate your BMI at [www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/lose\\_wt/BMI/bmicalc.htm](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/lose_wt/BMI/bmicalc.htm).

### BMI Categories

Underweight = Less than 18.5

Normal weight = 18.5–24.9

Overweight = 25–29.9

Obesity = 30 or greater<sup>4</sup>

## Help is Available

- **HPPlans.com/OnlineClasses.** Our “Nutrition” and “Breakfast Basics” online courses have more tips and information about healthy eating.
- **ChooseMyPlate.gov.** Learn more about fruits and veggies and other healthy foods, plus download free recipes that are healthy and delicious!

**1-888-477-9800 (TTY/PA RELAY 711).** Our Member Relations team can connect you with nutrition counselors.

### Sources:

1. United States Department of Agriculture, “10 Tips for Combining Good Nutrition and Physical Activity,” accessed April 2, 2019, <https://choosemyplate-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/tentips/DGTipsheet25HealthyEatingActiveLifestyle.pdf>.
2. American Heart Association (AHA), “Whole Grains, Refined Grains, and Dietary Fiber,” last modified September 20, 2016, <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/nutrition-basics/whole-grains-refined-grains-and-dietary-fiber>.
3. AHA, “Body Mass Index (BMI) in Adults,” last modified August 1, 2014, <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/losing-weight/bmi-in-adults>.
4. National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, “Calculate Your Body Mass Index,” accessed April 2, 2019, [https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/lose\\_wt/BMI/bmicalc.htm](https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/lose_wt/BMI/bmicalc.htm).

**Member Relations is available to help you 24 hours a day, seven days a week at 1-888-477-9800 (TTY/PA RELAY 711).**

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