

Volunteer Leader Training Guide

Eating Well While Cooking Lite!

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Introduction

Healthy eating is important to a healthy lifestyle. People concerned about eating healthier are generally encouraged to eat mainly high-fiber and low-carbohydrates foods, such as whole-grain breads and cereals, vegetables and fruit, and to reduce their fat intake, especially saturated fat. Healthy eating is very important if you are concerned with managing your health. With healthy eating, it's easy to maintain good health, control blood sugar levels, maintain healthy blood pressure, maintain healthy body weight and prevent complications.

Healthy eating for people with health problems does not need to be complicated. There is no need to prepare separate meals or buy special foods; so relax and enjoy healthy eating by preparing the right kinds of foods.

Target Audience

- EHC leaders
- Adult audiences

Objectives

Participants will:

- Learn general information about eating regular meals.
- Learn general information about the variety of foods to eat.
- Learn how to choose the foods high in fiber.

Main Teaching Points

- Eat regular meals.
- Eat a variety of foods.
- Eat foods high in fiber.

Handouts

- Handout 1: Ways to Cut Fat and Salt
- Handout 2: Ways to Sweeten Without Table Sugar
- Handout 3: Fiber: Simple! Easy! Delicious!
- Handout 4: Boost Your Daily Fiber

Suggestions for Teaching

- Review the lesson introduction and study the major teaching points.
- Make copies of :
 - Handout 1: Ways to Cut Fat and Salt
 - Handout 2: Ways to Sweeten Without Table Sugar
 - Handout 3: Fiber: Simple! Easy! Delicious!
 - Activity 1: Rate Your Fiber Fitness
 - Activity 2: Recipe Demonstrations
 - Handout 4: Boost Your Daily Fiber

Eat Regular Meals

Regular meals play a vital part in controlling your health. A general guide to eating is My Pyramid. By using My Pyramid as a guide of what and how much to eat each day, you can create a strategy to eat regular meals by developing a healthy meal plan that is suitable for you.

To create a healthy meal plan, you should do the following:

- Eat a variety of foods as recommended from the My Pyramid to get a balanced intake of the nutrients your body needs – carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins and minerals.
- Make changes gradually because it takes time to accomplish lasting goals.
- Reduce the amount of fat you eat by choosing fewer high-fat foods and cooking with less fat.
- Eat more fiber.
- Eat fewer foods that are high in sugar like fruit juices, fruit-flavored drinks, sodas, tea or coffee sweetened with sugar.
- Eat smaller portions and never skip meals.
- Learn about the right serving sizes for you.
- Learn how to read food labels.
- Limit use of alcohol.

Eat a Variety of Foods

How you eat plays an important role in managing your health. There are many key areas to focus on when you have health concerns. The main concern is to choose a variety of foods so that your body gets the nutrition it needs. **Keep the following foods in mind:**

Carbohydrates: Starches, sugar and fiber are carbohydrates. Starches and sugar will raise your blood sugar. Fiber will not. To improve your health:

- Eat more high-fiber foods like whole grains breads and cereals, dried beans and peas, vegetables and fruits.
- Use fewer processed foods.

- Use fat-free foods carefully. Fat-free does not mean calorie-free.
- Limit juice to 4 ounces or less.
- Substitute higher sugar foods carefully for starches in a meal.

Protein: Too much protein may speed up kidney disease. Plant protein may be better for you than animal protein. Stretch meat, fish and poultry with cooked beans, peas, vegetables, fruits, grains, tofu and other soy products. Protein is important to have in your diet because it plays a part in the health and maintenance of the body.

Consider these tips:

- Skip or reduce the amount of breading on meats, poultry or fish because it adds fat and calories and causes the food to soak up more fat if fried.
- Skip or reduce the amount of high-fat sauces or gravies added to meat.
- Prepare beans and peas without adding fat.
- Pick a variety of proteins. Try having fish for lunch or dinner more often, especially fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids such as salmon and trout.

Fruits: Eat a variety of fruits. Choose fresh, frozen, canned or dried. Go easy on fruit juices. Fruits are an important source of fiber and vitamins.

Tips to meet the daily fruit intake:

- Keep a bowl of whole fruit on the table or counter for easy reach.
- Try pre-cut packages of fruit without added sugar for a quick and healthy snack.
- Enjoy dried fruits, which are easy to carry and store. One-fourth cup is equal to one-half cup of regular fruit due to the drying.
- Grab an apple, an orange or other whole fruit for an on-the-go snack. Buy smaller pieces of fruit.
- Check with the food pyramid at www.MyPyramid.gov to help you meet the current recommendations for fruits.

Vegetables: Many vegetables are low in calories and fat and naturally have no cholesterol. It's good to add vegetables with different colors to your diet. The different colors of vegetables add their own nutrients and vitamins.

Regular sources of veggies:

- Pick easy-to-eat vegetables, such as baby carrots, grape tomatoes or bagged lettuce.
- Steam vegetables using a small amount of water or low-fat broth.
- Add a small piece of lean ham or smoked turkey instead of fat to vegetables when cooking.
- Try low-fat or fat-free salad dressing on raw vegetables or salads.

Milk/Yogurt: Milk and yogurt give you energy, protein, fat, calcium, vitamin A and other vitamins and minerals.

Tips to have milk and yogurt:

- Drink fat-free (skim or nonfat) or low-fat (1%) milk.
- Eat low-fat or fat-free fruit yogurt sweetened with a low-calorie sweetener.
- Use low-fat plain yogurt as a substitute for sour cream.

Eat Less Fat and Cholesterol: Your fat intake depends on your calorie needs and your blood cholesterol and triglyceride levels. Try to eat no more than 300 milligrams of cholesterol per day. Avoid fried foods. Foods that are baked, broiled, grilled, boiled or steamed are healthier to eat. Eat meats that have little fat. Cut back on butter, margarine, oil, salad dressing and sour cream when cooking.

Tips to eat less fat:

- Eat very little fried food.
- Trim all meats well. Remove skin and fat from poultry.
- Season vegetables with fat-free, low-sodium broth rather than fatback, margarine, oil or butter.
- Cook in a nonstick pan or skillet.
- Switch to reduced-fat tub or liquid margarine.
- Use small amounts of salad dressings and spreads such as butter, margarine and mayonnaise. Consider using low-fat or fat-free dressings for salads.
- Check the Nutrition Facts Label to see how much fat and saturated fat are in a serving; choose foods lower in fat and saturated fat.

When you do eat fats, choose mainly:

- **Polyunsaturated fats and oils** – found in polyunsaturated margarines (check label); sunflower, safflower, soybean, corn, cottonseed, sesame oils; oily fish such as mackerel, sardine, salmon and tuna; nuts and seeds.
- **Monounsaturated fats and oils** – such as canola or olive oil.

Cut Down on Salt: Do not add salt to food when you are cooking. Do not put the salt shaker on the table. Use salt-free seasonings and spices for taste. Avoid high-salt foods like lunch meat, pickles, chips and pretzels.

Tips to eat less salt (sodium):

- Salts may be omitted or reduced in most recipes. Do not reduce salt in cured meats or pickled or brined vegetables because it acts as a preservative. It is best not to omit the salt in yeast breads because it helps control the rising action of yeast.
- Start with a gradual reduction. For example, if a recipe calls for 1 teaspoon of salt, try 1/2 teaspoon. If you reduce the amount of salt gradually, you'll soon adjust to the less salty favor.
- Choose fresh or low-sodium versions of products. For example, choose low-sodium soups and broths, soy sauce, canned vegetables and tomato products.

- Sprinkle on lemon juice, herbs and spices instead of salt or fat for flavor.
- Use garlic or onion powder instead of garlic or onion salt.
- Read the Nutrition Facts Label to help identify foods lower in sodium within each group.

Distribute Handout 1 and discuss (**Handout 1: Ways to Cut Fat and Salt**).

Eat Less Sugar: You may find that eating less sugar helps you control your blood glucose level. Follow these guidelines:

- Read the labels on jars, cans and food packages before you buy them. Avoid things like sucrose, dextrose, corn sweeteners, honey, high-fructose corn syrup, molasses or powdered sugar.
- Drink sugar-free sodas and other liquids with no sugar.
- Eat fewer foods that have extra sugar such as cookies, cakes, candy, chocolates, brownies and sugared breakfast cereals.

Tips to eat less sugar:

- To cut down on sugar, try new recipes or adjust old ones by using one-third less. To add flavor, use more vanilla or spice.
- Satisfy your longing for something sweet with fruits for snacks and desserts. Eat baked sweets and candies less frequently and/or in smaller portions.
- Read labels of commercially prepared products; many are high in sugar. Whenever possible, substitute home-prepared items made with less sugar.
- Decrease or eliminate sugar when canning or freezing fruits or buy unsweetened frozen fruit or fruit canned in its own juice or water.
- Artificial sweeteners work best in foods that do not need sugar for color, texture or moistness.
- Non-sugar sweeteners can be used in moderation, but their use is not necessary to decrease sugar in the diet. Some do not work well in cooked or baked foods, while others may leave a bitter aftertaste. They do not provide the volume or structure that sugar does. So rather than substituting, it's best to choose recipes especially tested with non-sugar sweeteners.
- For the best recipes made with less sugar or an artificial sweetener, use a good diabetic cookbook or recipes from companies that make artificial sweeteners.
- Avoid excessive snacking.

Discuss Handout 2 and discuss (**Handout 2: Ways to Sweeten Without Table Sugar**).

Eat Foods High in Fiber

Why exactly should you eat fiber? There are two types of fiber: insoluble and soluble. Insoluble fiber keeps your digestive tract working well. Whole wheat bran is an example of this type of fiber. Soluble fiber can help lower your cholesterol level and improve blood glucose level if eaten in large amounts. Oatmeal is an example of this type of fiber. The benefit of fiber is that it adds bulk to help make you feel full. Given these benefits, fiber is important to include in the daily diet. You can add fiber by eating whole grains products, fruits, vegetables and legumes. Leave the skin on fruits and vegetables, as it is high in fiber. Eat whole grain breads and crackers.

Activity 1: Rate Your Fiber Fitness. Conduct Activity 1. Have participants answer questions and discuss as a group.

Tips for fitting in fiber:

- Start your day with a high-fiber breakfast cereal. You can add a few tablespoons of unprocessed wheat bran to your favorite cereal.
- Add crushed bran cereal or unprocessed wheat bran to baked products such as meatloaf, breads, muffins and casseroles. You can also use bran products as a crunchy topping for casseroles, salads or cooked vegetables.
- Switch to whole-grain breads. These breads list whole wheat, whole-wheat flour or another whole grain as the first ingredient on the label.
- Substitute whole-grain flour for half or all of the white flour when baking bread. Whole-grain flour is heavier than white flour. In yeast breads, use a bit more yeast or let the dough rise longer. When using baking powder, increase it by 1 teaspoon for every 3 cups of whole-grain flour.
- Eat more whole grains and whole-grain products. Experiment with brown rice, barley, whole-wheat pasta.
- Take advantage of ready-to-use vegetables. Mix chopped frozen broccoli into prepared spaghetti sauce. Snack on baby carrots.
- Eat more beans, peas and lentils. Add kidney beans to canned soup or a green salad.
- Eat fruit at every meal. Apples, bananas, oranges, pears and berries are good sources of fiber.
- Make snacks count. Fresh and dried fruit, raw vegetables, low-fat popcorn and whole-grain crackers are all good choices.
- Check www.MyPyramid.gov to see the recommended amount of grains based on your gender, age and activity level.

Distribute Handouts 3 and 4 (**Handout 3: Fiber: Simple! Easy! Delicious!;**
Handout 4: Boost Your Daily Fiber).

Activity 2. Recipe Demonstrations. Choose recipes from The Right Bite Curriculum to demonstrate.

References

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