Making Healthy Food Choices

Everything we eat and drink matters to our body. Almost everything we eat or drink contains calories. Calories are a measure of energy. Our bodies need a certain amount of calories to work the right way. The amount of calories we need depends on our age, gender, and physical activity level. Eating or drinking too many calories leads to weight gain.

It is important to use your calories wisely and to fill your body with the right kinds of calories it needs. By making healthy food choices, like filling half your plate with fruits and vegetables and the other half with grains and proteins and a side of milk, you can create healthy eating patterns.

It is important for us to limit added sugar, sodium and fat in our diets. Sometimes this may seem difficult to do. If we prepare foods at home there are substitutions we can make to help prepare healthier meals for our families.

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For more information on stretching your food dollars, contact your local SDSU Extension office or the State office at 605-688-4440.

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Recipes from: http://www.whatscooking.fns.usda.gov

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Healthy Choices

One way to make healthy food choices is to switch out junk food, which has little nutritional value, with a combination of snacks that are rich in vitamins, fibers, and other nutrients. Look for snacks such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, and dairy foods instead of chips, candy, or pop.

Ways to cut back on fat:
- Replace half of the butter, shortening or oil with applesauce when baking
- Use cooking spray or nonstick pans to keep food from sticking
- Choose low-fat or fat-free cream cheese, sour cream, mayonnaise and salad dressings
- Use extra-lean or lean ground beef, chicken or turkey breast
- Try using mashed potato flakes or pureed carrots or potatoes to thicken dishes instead of creamed soups.

Ideas for Cutting Back on Sodium
- Use seasonings that are “herb only”- make your own blends at home or purchase at the store
- Look for low-sodium or reduced sodium soups, dressings, sauces, canned meats, and vegetables
- Instead of soy sauce, try using sweet and sour sauce, hot mustard or low-sodium soy sauce.

Tips for Cutting Back on Sugar
- When purchasing canned fruit buy fruit packed in 100% juice or water
- Try using applesauce or other pureed fruit in place of syrup
- Add cut up fruit to water in place of sweet soft drinks
Summer Fruit Salad

Yields: 4 servings

**Ingredients:**
1 cup strawberries (diced, fresh or frozen)  
1 cup watermelon (cubed)  
1 cup pineapple chunks, fresh or canned packed in natural juice (do not drain)

**Instructions:**
Stir fruit together in a medium sized bowl. Cover and chill. Serve as soon as possible.

Nutritional Information per serving:
Total Calories 45; Total Fat 0 g; Protein 1 g; Carbohydrates 11 g; Dietary Fiber 2 g; Saturated Fat 0 g; Sodium 1 mg

Cheese-A-Roni Bake

Yield: 4 servings

**Ingredients:**
1 jar spaghetti sauce, meatless, low-sodium (24-ounce jar)  
1/3 cup water  
6 ounces cottage cheese, fat-free  
1 egg, slightly beaten  
1/2 teaspoon oregano  
1 cup macaroni, dry  
4 ounces mozzarella cheese (part skim, shredded)

**Instructions:**
Preheat oven to 350°F. In a bowl combine sauce and water. In another bowl combine cottage cheese, egg and oregano. Grease 1 quart casserole. Spoon in 1/3 sauce. Top with 1 cup macaroni, 1/2 cottage cheese, 1/2 mozzarella cheese and 1/3 of the spaghetti sauce. Repeat layers. Cover with aluminum foil. Bake for 45 minutes. Uncover and bake 15 minutes longer.

Nutritional Information per serving:
Total Calories 333; Total Fat 10 g; Protein 20 g; Carbohydrates 40 g; Dietary Fiber 4 g; Saturated Fat 4 g; Sodium 411 mg
Breakfast Burrito

Yield: 4 servings

Ingredients:
1 1/3 cups black beans (cooked, mashed with 1 teaspoon canola oil, or use canned vegetarian refried beans)
4 tortillas, corn
2 tablespoons red onion (chopped)
1/2 cup tomatoes (chopped)
1/2 cup salsa, low-sodium
4 tablespoons yogurt, non-fat plain
2 tablespoons cilantro (chopped)

Instructions:
Mix beans with onion and tomatoes. Microwave tortillas between the two sheets of slightly damp white paper towels on high for 15 seconds. Divide bean mixture between the tortillas. Fold each tortilla to enclose filling. Place on microwave-safe dish and spoon salsa over each burrito. Microwave on high for 15 seconds. Serve topped with yogurt and cilantro.

Nutritional Information per serving:
Total Calories 146; Total Fat 1 g; Protein 7 g; Carbohydrates 28 g; Dietary Fiber 7 g; Saturated Fat 1 g; Sodium 270 mg

Salmon Patties

Yield: 9 servings

Ingredients:
2 eggs (large, lightly beaten)
1 can salmon (drained, about 15 ounces)
1 cup whole wheat cereal or crackers (crushed)
1/2 cup 1% fat milk
1/8 teaspoon black pepper
1 tablespoon vegetable oil

Instructions:
In a medium bowl, use a fork to crumble salmon into very small pieces. With fingers, crush cereal or crackers into crumbs. Add cereal or cracker crumbs, eggs, milk, and pepper to salmon. Mix thoroughly and shape into 9 patties. Heat vegetable oil in a skillet. Over medium heat, carefully brown salmon patties on both sides until thoroughly cooked, about 4 minutes per side.

Nutritional Information per serving:
Total Calories 130; Total Fat 7 g; Protein 13 g; Carbohydrates 4 g; Dietary Fiber 0 g; Saturated Fat 2 g; Sodium 300 mg