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5 Ways to Add Steps While Shopping

1. If driving, park the farthest away from the front door of the grocery store.
2. If taking public transportation, get off a few stops early and walk the rest of the way to the grocery store.
3. Once inside, grab a cart and push it around the perimeter of the store before you begin shopping.
4. When done, walk to the farthest check out counter.
5. Once you unload, return the shopping cart to the store.



The Facts on Fiber

Fiber is probably best known for its ability to aid in digestion. But other benefits come from eating a diet rich in fiber as well. Getting the right amount of fiber may help prevent constipation, lower blood cholesterol levels, control blood sugar levels, aid in weight loss and even help lower the risk of certain diseases.

However, many Americans simply do not get enough fiber in their diets. To increase your fiber intake, consider including some of these foods in your diet:

- Sweet potatoes
- Broccoli and carrots
- Whole grain products, such as breads, hot cereals, or side dishes made with whole grains
- Beans and lentils
- Fruit
- Nuts and seeds

There are lots of tasty ways to eat more fiber – let your taste buds help guide you to the fiber-rich food choices that work best for you.

Quick Fixes for Making Your Family's Meals Healthier

Increasing Whole Grains

- Substitute whole-wheat flour for bleached white flour when you bake
- Switch to whole-wheat pasta and pizza
- Top casseroles with wheat germ or whole wheat bread crumbs
- Serve bran-based cereals or those made from shredded wheat
- Serve imaginative whole-grain side dishes (bulgar, kasha, etc.) instead of egg noodles
- Substitute brown rice for white rice
- Serve whole wheat sandwich bread or English muffins instead of rolls
- Offer crackers and corn chips containing whole grains
- Incorporate whole grains into your pancake batter

Reducing Salt

- Substitute lemon juice or herbs for salt when cooking pasta or grains
- Rinse and drain canned tuna or other fish packed in salted water
- Avoid cooking with soy or Worcestershire sauce
- Avoid using prepared biscuit or cake mixes
- Substitute spices, lemon juice, or herbed vinegar for salt
- Substitute a pepper/spice blend for salt on the table
- Substitute garlic or onion powder for garlic or onion salt
- Avoid using products that contain monosodium glutamate
- Use unsalted or low-salt vegetable broths and products
- Eliminate or decrease the salt in non-yeast baking recipes

Reducing Sugar

- Choose canned fruits packed in water instead of heavy syrup
- Use only fresh-frozen fruit without added sugar if fresh is unavailable
- Make your own granola cereal instead of purchasing store brands
- Cut the sugar called for in most recipes by one-third to one-half
- Sweeten waffles and quick breads with cinnamon, cardamom, and vanilla or almond extracts
- Add pureed banana to baked goods and reduce the sugar
- Avoid commercial pudding mix – instead make your own
- Mix plain yogurt with fruit juice concentrates or freshly pureed fruits, instead of using pre-flavored yogurt

Reducing Fat

- Cook with less fat by using non-stick skillet
- Blot all fried meats on paper towels
- Use tuna packed in water instead of oil
- Add a spoon of water or broth as needed instead of more fat when sautéing onions and vegetables
- Substitute low-fat yogurt for mayonnaise
- Substitute ground turkey for ground beef
- Trim all visible fat from beef, pork, and poultry
- Roast meat on a rack and discard fat drippings
- Brown ground meat without using extra fat by starting out on medium heat before raising the temperature too high
- Spoon off excess fat from browning meats as cooking progresses

Avoid Common Fitness Pitfalls

Too Much, Too Soon

Many new exercisers try to lose weight or tone up too quickly by exercising too frequently or trying exercise programs that are too difficult for their fitness level. Be sure to start with an exercise plan that takes your current fitness regimen (or lack of) into account.

Pie in the Sky Goals

Despite what many advertisers would like you to believe, it's unrealistic to think you can lose 30 pounds in 30 days. It's good to set goals but be sure they aren't too aggressive and realize that it's OK to periodically re-define them.

Ignoring Expert Advice

It's always advisable to consult your physician before starting an exercise program. Working with a fitness professional is also a good idea so you can learn proper technique, the latest fitness information, and how to avoid injuries.

Over-Exercising

If you start to feel overwhelmed, neglect important daily activities in order to workout, or repeatedly get injured, then it might be due to exercising too frequently. Realize the importance of balance and that more is not always better. Consider reducing the frequency of your workouts or the intensity of some of them and periodically resting for a few days or a week.

Improper Breathing

Sure, breathing is an involuntary bodily function; something that most individuals tend to ignore. But breathing correctly during your fitness sessions is very important. Incorrect breathing can lead to lack of oxygen and even faintness. When working out, ensure that you don't breathe too shallowly and try to breathe through the nose and out the mouth.

Selecting the Wrong Size

Choosing the proper weight size when strength training is trickier than it sounds. Lifting weights that are too heavy for you can lead to improper form and ultimately injuries. Use weights that are too light and the exercise session can be ineffective. If possible, consult a fitness trainer to determine the correct amount of weight for your size, strength, and goals. A trainer can also help you develop a plan for safely progressing forward on weight size.

Not Staying Hydrated

Drinking enough water on a daily basis is important. When you exercise, you need to consume even more water. You should drink 16 ounces for every half hour of exercise you complete. Plus you should try to consume 1-2 cups of water about 30 minutes before you begin working out.

Eating Too Little

No, that's not a typo. Not eating enough can be as detrimental as eating too much. When the body is not fed consistently, it goes into a starvation mode. Five to six smaller meals evenly spaced throughout the day helps keep the metabolism running smoothly. Just be sure to control portion size.

Hanging Out Instead of Working Out

Just showing up at the gym is not going to help you get more fit. Socializing while leaning on weight machines won't build muscles. It's important to enjoy your exercise time but make sure that the focus remains on physical activity.

Fixating on the Scale

If you think the scale doesn't lie, consider this: many professional athletes would be considered obese based on their weight alone. Look at the bigger and more relevant picture. Monitor your body fat percentage, if possible. Otherwise track measurements. Also don't underestimate the importance of improved physical and mental well-being.

Cooking: Less Fat, More Flavor

- Add **bouillon granules** to water as a substitute for broth. They are lower in fat and sodium than most canned broth or broth cubes.
- **Canned goods:** look for fruits packed in their own unsweetened juices. Use water-packed tuna.
- Use **low fat cottage cheese** in place of ricotta. It is also a good substitute for sour cream on a baked potato.
- Make a substitute for sour cream by blending **low fat cottage cheese** with a little **skim milk or yogurt** in a food processor until smooth.
- Use **cornstarch** instead of cream, butter, or flour to thicken a sauce. Use half as much cornstarch as you would flour.
- All of the fat from an egg is in the egg yolk. When possible, substitute two **egg whites** for each whole egg in a recipe.
- **Evaporated milk** will often work in place of whipping cream.
- Use **vegetable cooking spray** instead of butter or oil to sauté or fry. Use it to coat baking sheets, casseroles, or muffin tins.
- When cooking **meats** in a skillet, tip the pan to allow the fat to drain to one side. Spoon out the liquid fat as it collects.

Restaurant Remedies: Don't Diet Out, Dine Out

Eating out at restaurants can challenge your good intentions to eat healthfully. But if you follow these helpful tips, you will be on your way to a blissful dining experience.

- Restaurant portions can be pretty big! Don't feel obligated to eat everything on your plate just because you paid for it or because you might be embarrassed. Stop eating when you feel full.
- Eat slowly. It takes about 20 minutes for your stomach to send a "full" signal to your brain.
- Select restaurants that prepare foods and allow substitutions.
- Call a restaurant in advance to see if they have choices that meet your dietary objectives.
- Try creative ordering: Instead of ordering an entire meal, a low fat side order, soup and a salad, may be a better choice. Put together combinations that will satisfy your appetite without compromising your diet.
- If possible, order a la carte. It will enable you to control the amount of food that is served to you.
- Ask for a "doggy bag" before you eat and set aside the amount that you don't want to eat to take home for later.

Key Tricks for Low Fat Eating

- Remove the skin of chicken before eating
- Have salads served with dressing on the side
- Use skim milk in coffee instead of cream
- Remove high fat foods such as eggs and olives from salads
- Eat bread with no butter
- Ask if foods can be prepared without butter or cream sauces
- Take care not to override the advantages of a salad bar with the disadvantages of the salad dressing
- Lean toward selections of fish and chicken instead of red meat

Prepping Your Produce...Storing the Spring's Best

Many people like to store fruit in the refrigerator for a cold treat on a hot day. But for ripening, fruits like melons, mangoes, and fruits with pits (such as nectarines, peaches and plums) need to stand at room temperature. Their vitamins and phytochemicals tend to increase as they ripen.

Most vegetables and fruits last longer if you wash and/or peel them just before using them, including berries. The moisture that water leaves can lead to rot more quickly. Berries need to be refrigerated as soon as you bring them home.

What to Look For

Some delectable choices of the season are:

- Fresh green peas, which actually taste good raw, as a snack, or tossed into a salad. You can always tell how fresh peas are by breaking a pod open and tasting one of the peas inside – if it is sweet and not chalky, it's ripe. Or, press down gently on the pod and gently push the peas inside against each other; if they squeak, they're fresh.
- For maximum flavor, refrigerate your greens and use them within 1 week, or the *use by* date if it's stamped on the package. Note that *prewashed* baby spinach is most often sold in cellophane packages. This pre-washed, bagged produce can be used without further washing unless the bag is open, then it should be washed before using.
- Fresh herbs and watercress can be stored like cut flowers – place a bunch with the stem ends in a container of fresh water. Put a plastic bag loosely over the top and refrigerate for up to 4 days.
- The same goes for asparagus. Place the stalks in the coldest part of the refrigerator, standing upright in a shallow cup of water. Asparagus should be used within a couple of days at most after purchase.
- Other springtime treats, like rhubarb, artichokes, and fresh chives - a relative of garlic and onions - can brighten up your recipes with cancer-fighting substances, too.

Tips

- Use fresh produce within 3-4 days of purchase for optimal nutrition.
- Make sure your refrigerator is set to 40 degrees F or below.
- Blot damp produce with paper towels.
- Wash produce just before use.
- Wrap and refrigerate cut produce.

