

## Eating Habits for Life

### **#1 Eat together, and limit screen time.**

This is the best “quality” time with family and friends. It gives us set times to be together and connect. Keep up standards for where food can be eaten in the home. Eat at a table rather than on the bed or couch. Avoid “multi-tasking” with food. Don’t let TV or use of other screens or social media disturb the custom of eating together.

### **#2 Eat breakfast.**

Breakfast skippers often have a dip in energy earlier in the day and a rollercoaster of hunger in the afternoon to evening hours. Make sure you get the fuel you need every day.

### **#3 Limit drinks with sugar.**

Sugar sweetened drinks such as soda, juice, fruit drinks and flavored coffee add extra calories, do not satisfy hunger and have very little nutrients. Make water or low-fat milk the main drink with meals. Drink water between meals. Try adding an orange or cucumber slice or a sprig of fresh mint to your water for flavor. Not having sugar sweetened drinks in your house will help lower how much you drink.

### **#4 Choose satisfying foods to manage your hunger.**

Many processed foods or “eat-out-of-the-bag” items do not help manage hunger. Try eating foods that are closer to the farm than the factory. Choose fruit instead of fruit snacks, milk instead of fruit drinks, and peanut butter toast instead of chips. Sugary cereal and a glass of juice will not sustain energy for long. Instead, try peanut butter on whole grain bread or a banana and a glass of low fat milk.

### **#5 Eat balanced meals at set times.**

A satisfying meal has carbohydrates (carbs), protein and some fat. Pre-washed vegetables; portioned frozen meats, poultry and fish; brown rice or whole-wheat pasta can add nutrient-dense food to your meal. For example, serve low fat milk, a salad and fresh fruit with pizza for dinner and you have a balanced meal!

### **#6 Snacking is ok, mindless munching is not.**

Many people eat sweet and salty snacks whether or not they are hungry. This is called “mindless eating.” Help cut back “mindless eating” by having fewer of these items in the house. Provide balance by offering a processed food with a meal. For example, eating a handful of chips with a sandwich, fruit and milk is balanced eating. Coming home, starved, and eating 5 handfuls of chips is unbalanced.

### **#7 Be a role model.**

Once you have your own healthy, balanced eating style, be a role model for your children, family and friends. Teach others about healthy eating, balanced meal choices and how to manage a healthy lifestyle.

[Choosemyplate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov)

### **Who to Call**

If you are a UW Health patient and have more questions, please contact UW Health at the phone number listed below. You can also visit our website at [www.uwhealth.org/nutrition](https://www.uwhealth.org/nutrition)

Nutrition clinics for UW Hospital and Clinics (UWHC) and American Family Children’s Hospital (AFCH) can be reached at: **(608) 890-5500**

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person’s health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 2/2023 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#276