

Fall 2022

Healthy Together

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Forget Dieting: Find Your Eating Pattern

Are you stressed about staying away from certain “bad foods”?

Instead, focus on your overall eating pattern. That is the takeaway from the American Heart Association’s latest nutrition guidelines.

According to the experts, a consistent, balanced diet — which can include an occasional splurge — lays the groundwork for a heart-healthy life. At home or when you are out, let the following strategies guide your eating patterns.

Fill Up on Health

Pack your plate with healthy choices by focusing on:

- **Fruits and veggies.** Loading up on produce should always be a top priority. Fresh, frozen, canned or dried kinds are a better choice than juices.
- **Proteins.** Seafood and lean meats are healthy picks, but legumes, beans and nuts can also be the star of the meal.

- **Whole grains.** A rich source of fiber, whole grains are a much better option than refined grains. Check the package to find products with whole grains.
- **Plant oils.** Use olive oil, canola oil and sunflower oil instead of butter and lard.

Kick Bad Habits

Pay attention to the amount of added sugar in your foods and drinks. While tasty in the moment, too much sugar can raise your risk for heart disease and diabetes over time.

In addition, go light with the salt. Use only a pinch here and there as you cook. At the store, look for low-sodium options and avoid ultra-processed items like

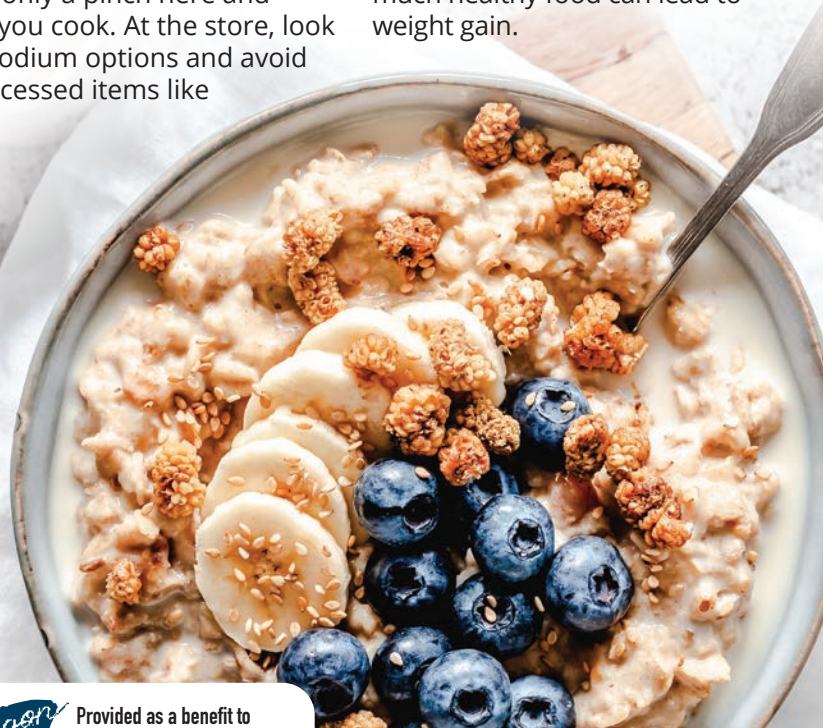
microwave dinners and frozen pizza. In the U.S., processed food is one of the leading sources of dietary sodium.

What about alcohol? The guidance is simple: Limit yourself to 1 drink per day (for women) or 2 drinks per day (for men). But if you do not drink, do not start.

Balance the Scale

The secret to a healthy weight is not actually a secret at all: Offset the calories you eat with the calories you burn. Try to fit in at least 2.5 hours of moderate exercise every week. Also, watch your portion sizes. Even too much healthy food can lead to weight gain.

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Move More, Sit Less This Autumn

Sweatshirt season is here, and that means it may be time for a new exercise routine. Colder temperatures and fewer daylight hours can be challenges. But there are ways to keep your fitness efforts on track.

Lace Up Your Walking Shoes

Fall is still a great time of year to take a hike or stroll around your neighborhood. Just check the weather first. If it is very cold, windy or wet, move your workout indoors. One option is to walk a few laps inside a mall.

When walking outdoors, dress for comfort. Wear layers of loose clothing, warm socks and weather-proof shoes. Do not forget your hat, gloves and scarf. Slick walkways are a major cause of falls, so avoid icy sidewalks.

Find Reasons to Go Out and Play

Grab your kids or grandkids and go to the park. Push the swing for a young child or invite older ones to play catch or shoot hoops with you. When there is snow in the forecast, sledding, snowshoeing and building a snowman can be good exercise.

Keep Toasty and Fit at Home

On days when staying cozy indoors seems like the best option, you can be active from the comfort of your living room. Many fitness videos are available online or via streaming services. Look for videos that suit your fitness level and are led by a certified instructor.







Develop a Circuit Workout

Circuit training is another way to get a well-rounded workout, at home or in a gym. You will mix and match 2 types of moves. Aerobic exercises

get your heart beating faster. Strength exercises build muscles.

First, make a list of exercises in each category that you can do in your available space. The chart below has some examples to get you started.

Next, pick 3 exercises from each category. Do 30 seconds of an aerobic exercise, followed by 3 minutes of a strength exercise, until you have worked your way through all 6 moves. Then repeat the whole circuit twice.

AEROBIC EXERCISES	STRENGTH EXERCISES
Jumping jacks 	Crunches
Marching in place 	Planks 
Jogging in place	Push-ups 
Climbing up and down stairs	Lunges 
Stepping on and off a sturdy bench	Squats 

+ health briefs

Fall for Fiber

Apples, sweet potatoes and pears. These fall crops are all ripe with fiber. That is good news for your taste buds and your health. Fiber helps you feel full longer (to help you keep from overeating), avoid constipation and reduce your risk for diabetes, heart disease and stroke.



A Healthier Halloween

Planning to trick-or-treat with your kids? Before going out, make sure they eat a good meal. Fuller tummies will likely mean less snacking on treats. Use smaller containers to collect candy. Keep only the favorites and let kids who are old enough help decide how to give away the rest.



Avoid Itchy Skin

For itchy skin relief, try these easy changes: Shower for 10 minutes or less using lukewarm water. Use scent-free soap and lotion. Wear clothes made of softer fabrics like cotton (coarse ones like wool trigger itching). If itchy skin is an ongoing problem, see a dermatologist.



COVID-19 Corner

COVID-19 Booster Shots and Flu Shots: Double Down on Protection

Flu season is here again, and COVID-19 is still with us. Vaccines offer protection against both diseases. But should you get your COVID-19 booster shot first or your flu shot? Can you get them together? Here are some common questions and answers on this topic.

Can I still get my flu shot this year if I get a COVID-19 booster shot?

Yes! Getting your yearly flu shot reduces your risk for flu-related illness and its potentially serious complications. Likewise, getting a COVID-19 booster may help strengthen your protection against severe COVID-19 illness and death.

The good news is that you do not have to pick between the 2 types of vaccines. You can get both. And in some cases, you may be able to receive a second COVID-19 booster.

In addition, if you are age 18 or older, the choice of which COVID-19 booster shot to get is yours. You can get the type you originally got. Or you can mix and match doses. However, currently, kids ages 5 to 17 can only get the Pfizer COVID-19 booster.

Do I need to wait for a certain amount of time between the vaccines?

There is no need to space them out. In fact, if you are due for both shots, you can get them at the same visit. Just do not delay your flu shot too long if you are not eligible for a COVID-19 booster yet. It is better to get the flu shot early in the flu season, ideally by the end of October.

If you first received the Johnson & Johnson shot, you must wait at least 2 months for the booster. If you received the Moderna or Pfizer 2-shot series, it is a 5-month wait before you can be boosted.

Will the side effects be worse if I get both shots at the same visit?

This is a new situation, but we have lots of experience giving other vaccines together. That experience has shown that the side effects are usually about the same whether the vaccines are given alone or at the same time. If you have concerns, talk with your health care provider.

Flu season was not so bad last year. Do I really need a flu shot this year?

You are right. Fewer people seemed to get the flu during the last flu

season. That may have been partly because people were wearing masks, social distancing and staying home more due to COVID-19 concerns. This year, people are mingling more, which means that flu viruses have more chance to circulate. Getting your flu shot remains very important.

I heard there may be an option coming that combines the COVID-19 booster and the flu vaccine in a single shot. When will that be available?

Moderna has announced that it is working on a combination shot, but it is still in development. For now, you still need 2 separate shots.



Note: This COVID-19 information was current at the time of publication. For the most up-to-date information, visit www.cdc.gov/coronavirus.



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Take Steps to Prevent Falls

Falling is not just a matter of bruised pride. One in 5 falls causes serious harm, such as a broken bone or head injury. Sometimes, the cost is even higher. Falls are the number one cause of injury-related deaths in older adults.

As a person ages, a few things may increase the risk of being injured by a fall. A person may have lower-body weakness, often due to a lack of physical activity. Poor vision and hearing loss may also be linked to a higher risk of falling. And if a person has osteoporosis, it is more likely they will break a bone if a fall happens.

The good news is that many falls are preventable. Here is how to avoid a nasty spill.

Fall-Proof Your Home

Most falls happen at home, so the first step is to give your house a safety update. These tips can help prevent slips, trips and tumbles:

- **Improve the lighting.** Older eyes often require brighter lights to see clearly.
- **Remove throw rugs.** Or fasten them securely to the floor with double-sided tape.
- **Keep stairs free of clutter.** Stairways should have secure handrails and good lighting.
- **Install grab bars in the bathroom.** Also put a nonskid mat in your tub or shower.

Work With Your Provider

Fewer than half of older adults who fall each year tell their health care providers. Do not make that mistake. Let your provider know if you fall or feel unsteady. They can assess your risk, discuss fall prevention and treat underlying conditions. This helps you stay more active and independent as you age.

Falling is sometimes a sign of a new health issue, such as a heart problem or foot disorder. Telling your provider about the fall could lead to earlier diagnosis and treatment.

Also talk with your provider about all the prescription and over-the-counter medicines you take and their side effects. Sometimes, a change your provider makes to your dose or the drug makes all the difference.

