



Nutrition Nibbles

Follow These Four

Recently I have busy working on various nutrition-related presentations. Never has it been more obvious to me that a healthy body, free of illness, is largely the result of 4 key tactics:

- Maintain a healthy weight
- Move your body regularly
- Get enough rest
- Focus on a more plant-based diet

Let's look at each strategy and its impact on the body in a little more detail. First up, **maintain a healthy weight**. Weighing too much or too little puts unnecessary stress on the body. Being overweight increases a person's risk for type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, metabolic syndrome, some cancers, sleep apnea, osteoarthritis, gallbladder disease, fatty liver disease, even a complicated pregnancy. I have yet to meet a person who has been diagnosed with one of these conditions say "Gee, I wish I had weighed more." No, these people often lament that they wished they had done something about their weight sooner. Being underweight has its share of complications too. Weighing too little has been linked to poor immunity, anemia, osteoporosis, and problems with fertility.

Straying outside of a healthy weight

range with a Body Mass Index (BMI) less than 18.5 or greater than 25 can lead to a host of unhappiness and unhealthiness. To calculate your BMI, click [here](#). Maintaining a healthy weight through diet comes down to two principles: **portion** and **proportion**. Portion refers to portion control. Did you know that your hand makes a mighty measuring tool? Check out this graphic:

Hand Symbol	Equivalent	Foods	Calories
	Fist 1 cup	Rice, pasta Fruit Veggies	200 75 40
	Palm 3 ounces	Meat Fish Poultry	160 160 160
	Handful 1 ounce	Nuts Raisins	170 85
	2 Handfuls 1 ounce	Chips Popcorn Pretzels	150 120 100
	Thumb 1 ounce	Peanut butter Hard cheese	170 100
	Thumb tip 1 teaspoon	Cooking oil Mayonnaise, butter Sugar	40 35 15

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College Corner: Nutrition for the Techie

Today's students are plugged in, wired up, and in the cloud. Why can't their diets be too? Here are a few of my latest, favorite nutrition-related techie resources.

Cooking Light's 12 Healthy Habits: Want to slowly make over your eating and lifestyle habits during 2013? Check out this magazine's 12 step program by clicking [here](#).

Juice: This free app is a lighthearted way to track your energy levels. Juice allows you to draw connections between your stress levels, diet, and exercise patterns and how they impact your energy. Click [here](#) to read a review of the Juice app.

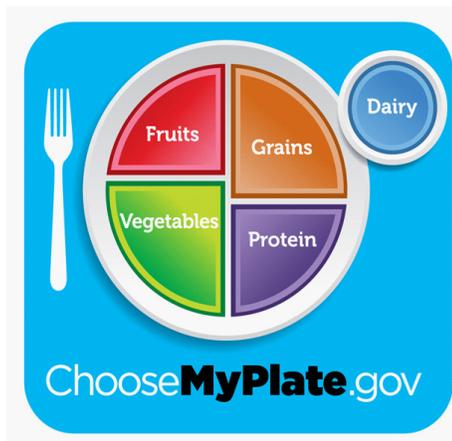
Nutrition Unplugged: Here's a blog that will give you the skinny on everything nutrition-related. Written by a dietitian, you can be confident this blog is credible. Check out <http://nutritionunplugged.com/>

Straight Talk About Eating Smart Podcast: Dietitian, Dr. Susan Mitchell puts together a fascinating and witty podcast on popular nutrition topics. Listen [here](#).

Questions or Comments? Email me at marymahoneyrd@gmail.com

Follow These Four continued...

Giving yourself a portion “reality check” can lead to weight loss or gain depending on your body’s situation. Try using a smaller (or bigger) plate to shrink (or increase) portions as needed. However, portion control by itself is not enough to create a healthy diet. Proportion must also be taken into consideration. Rather than trying to overcomplicate your diet, start by simply dividing up your plate:



Fill half your plate with produce, a quarter with starch (preferably whole grains or a starchy vegetable, like a baked sweet potato), and a quarter with lean protein. Sip on water or a low fat calcium-rich beverage. Follow this plate model at every meal for perfect proportioning.

Second, **exercise on a regular basis**. For some people, “exercise” is a dirty word that conjures up images of torture. Change your mindset and start envisioning exercise for enjoyment. Moving your body in a purposeful way for 30 minutes or more, at least 5 days per week can help with weight control, boost your mood, keep your mind sharp, control your blood sugars, regulate your blood pressure, raise your good cholesterol (HDL) and lower your risk of heart disease, manage a host of body ailments, naturally boost your energy levels, improve your sleeping patterns, and

spark up your sex life. Wow, all those benefits just for getting up off your butt! Want help getting started? Click [here](#).

Third, **get plenty of sleep**. Did you know that driving drowsy is just as dangerous as driving drunk? Sleepiness is the cause of 100,000 car accidents each year! Lack of sleep and poor sleep quality have also been linked to increased risk of: heart disease, stroke, insulin resistance, breast cancer, urinary problems, colon polyps, high blood pressure, depression, and low sex drive. Not enough sleep can lead to weight gain, aging of the skin, forgetfulness, and poor judgment. Contrary to popular belief, you never really adjust and adapt to sleep deprivation. Work on getting 7 to 9 hours of good quality sleep each and every night for optimal health benefits.

Lastly, **eat a more plant-based diet**. Going meatless more often reduces your risk of many cancers, heart disease and helps moderate your calorie and fat intake too. Did you know that vegetarians tend to weigh less? It’s true! If you’re not ready to veg out 100% of the time, why not try on a flexitarian diet to start? Each week, build two or three meatless meals around plant-based proteins like beans, lentils, or tofu. Round out your entree with whole grains and various colorful vegetables. Finish your noshing off with a piece of fruit. Your new fiber-rich, antioxidant-packed diet can help lower your cholesterol, control your blood pressure, manage your waistline, and clean up your digestive tract.

If a long, healthy life is what you are after, fit these fabulous four practices into your daily routine.

My Favorite Food

Many of my clients wonder (and some even have the courage to ask!) what I eat at home. I usually reply, “Food!” But for those of you who want specifics, here you go... Ch, ch, ch, chia! Isn’t that some plant you grow into the shape of a pet? Well, yes...and no!

Chia is an edible seed, long-used to sustain ancient civilizations. The tiny black-colored seeds are rich in omega-3 fatty acids (more so than flaxseed), antioxidants, and fiber. An added bonus is that the seeds do not have to be ground (unlike flaxseed) in order to obtain the nutritional benefits.

Intimidated by the idea of adding your old-time furry friend to your diet? Simply sprinkle some chia seeds onto your morning cereal or yogurt parfait. Mix some chia seeds into your oatmeal. Use chia as a salad topper. Grind chia into a flour and add to your baked goods. Throw them into a smoothie. Create a chia gel by mixing 1/3 cup chia seeds into 2 cups water. Shake it up in a sealed container and store in the fridge. Add a squeeze of lemon or lime to the gel for a tangy drink or add the plain mix to smoothies, juices, and sauces.

Get adventurous enjoying the health benefits of the tiny, mighty chia seed!

