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Health News From Cleveland County HealthCare System
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March is Nutrition Month

Eating healthy foods builds better health

By PAULA VESS
Regional Marketing Group

SHELBY – Eating the right foods is an important building block for good health.

Like our cars, our bodies need the right fuel to operate efficiently and keep us going.

As a person's weight increases to levels considered overweight or obese their risk of developing several chronic and life-threatening illnesses also increases, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The terms overweight and obese refer to ranges of weight greater than what is generally considered healthy.

"We hear so much about the rates of obesity and the need to eat healthier for weight management," said Karen Gstundtner, RD, LDN, director of the Food and Nutrition Services

Department at Cleveland Regional Medical Center, "and eating healthy is certainly important for managing your



weight. But, eating healthy is about more than just weight management. Our bodies need vitamins and nutrients to function. Whether you are overweight or not, you need to eat the right foods to stay healthy."

Americans consume too much sodium and too many calories from solid fats, added sugars, and refined grains, according to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010. A healthy eating pattern limits the amounts of these foods and focuses more on eating nutrient-dense foods like vegetables, fruits, whole grains, fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products, seafood, and lean meats.

"The new dietary guidelines recommend filling half of our plate with fruits and vegetables," said Gstundtner. "You can help yourself accomplish that by grabbing an apple or carrots for a snack instead of chips or a candy bar."

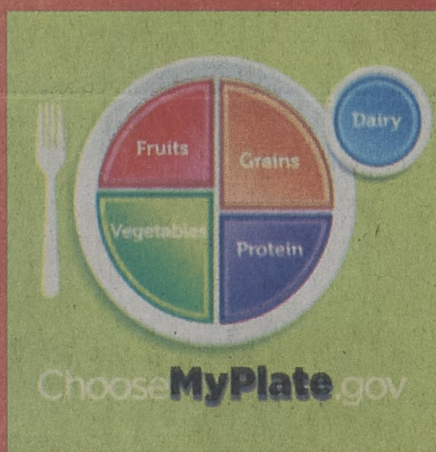
The guidelines recommend eating a total of 2 cups of fruit and 2-1/2 cups of vegetables every day.

"You also should vary the types of fruits and vegetables you eat," she continued. "Not only can eating the same things over and over become boring, but it also limits the



10 TIPS TO A GREAT PLATE:

- Find out how many calories you need each day.
- Take time to enjoy your food. Pay attention to hunger and fullness cues before, during and after meals.
- Use a smaller plate, bowl and glass.
- Eat more vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and dairy products.
- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
- Switch to fat-free or low-fat milk
- Make half your grains whole grains
- Eat less of foods high in solid fats, added sugars, and salt. Examples include: cakes, cookies, sweetened drinks, pizza, ribs, sausages, bacon and hot dogs.
- Choose lower sodium versions of foods like soup, bread and frozen meals. Read and compare nutrition labels to find out how much sodium is in a product.
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks.



Source: www.choosemyplate.gov

nutrients you get. Pick foods that are different colors, like carrots, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and broccoli, to get a variety of nutrients."

Gstundtner also suggests that "selecting healthier beverage choices is one way to make a change to ones eating

style. Limiting sweetened beverages and including more water like unsweetened coffee and tea or maybe flavored water with a splash of 100 % fruit juice, cucumber, lime or lemon."

The new dietary guidelines also recommend making at

least half of the grains we eat whole grains, and choosing different sources of protein. In place of lean meats and chicken, add seafood to your plate a couple times a week and swap meat for beans occasionally.

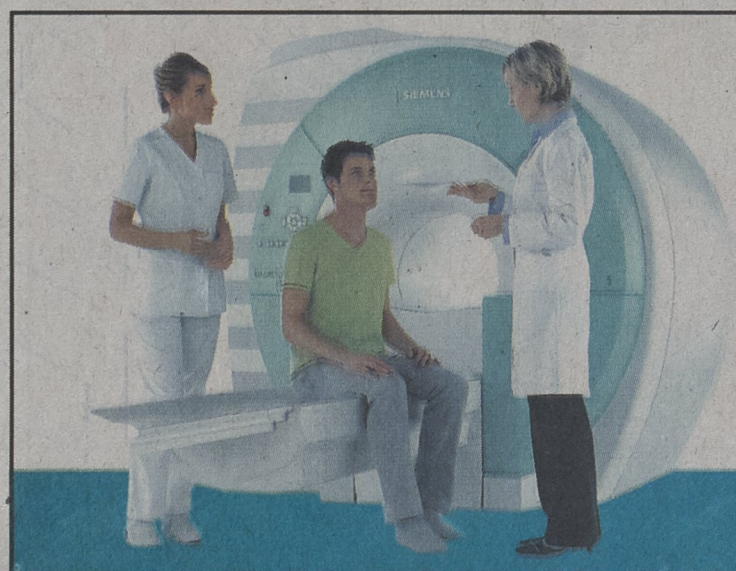
"There's a wider variety of fruits, vegetables and even some different options for grains available in our grocery stores today," said Gstundtner. "Don't be afraid to try something new once in a while. Eating healthy doesn't have to be boring. You can make it an adventure!"

Want some help to eat healthier?

Consider talking with a registered dietician.

Registered dietitians, members of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, whether they are generalists, specialists or clinical nutritionists all work toward guiding, leading and developing innovative ways to improve health through food and nutrition.

In a hospital setting, clinical dietitians are a bridge between doctor, diagnosis and patient. They collaborate with nursing to develop and implement screening tools that help identify patients who will benefit from nutrition intervention. Dietitians help people stay well, heal, and manage illness and disease.



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