

Think of water and exercise as food groups in your diet.

#### Water.

Water helps flush our systems of waste products and toxins, yet many people go through life dehydrated—causing tiredness, low energy, and headaches. It's common to mistake thirst for hunger, so staying well hydrated will also help you make healthier food choices.

#### Exercises:

Find something active that you like to do and add it to your day, just like you would add healthy greens, blueberries, or salmon. The benefits of lifelong exercise are abundant and regular exercise may even motivate you to make healthy food choices a habit.

#### Try not to think of certain foods as "off-limits."

When you ban certain foods or food groups, it is natural to want those foods more, and then feel like a failure if you give in to temptation. If you are drawn towards sweet, salty, or unhealthy foods, start by reducing portion sizes and not eating them as often. Later you may find yourself craving them less or thinking of them as only occasional indulgences.

## Debby Schiffer, Wellness Director for BURLCO & TRICO JIFs

### National Nutrition Month 'Eat Right, Your Way, Every Day'

Each March, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics encourages Americans to return to the basics of healthy eating through National Nutrition Month. This year's theme emphasizes the advantages of developing a healthful eating plan that incorporates individual food choices and preferences. This year marks the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of National Nutrition Month.

There can be a misperception that eating healthfully means giving up your favorite foods, 'Eat Right, Your Way, Every Day' National Nutrition Month theme encourages consumers to include the foods they love as part of a healthful eating plan that is tailored for their lifestyles, traditions, health needs and, of course, tastes.

The Academy strives to communicate healthy eating messages that emphasize a balance of food and beverages within energy needs, rather than any one food or meal. To this end, it is the position of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics that the total diet or overall pattern of food eaten is the most important focus of healthy eating. Most favorite foods can fit within this pattern, **if consumed in moderation** with appropriate portion size and combined with physical activity.

#### Healthy Eating Tip: Set Yourself Up For Success

To set yourself up for success, think about planning a healthy diet as a number of small, manageable steps rather than one big drastic change. If you approach the changes gradually and with commitment, you will have a healthy diet sooner than you think.



- **Simplify.** Instead of being overly concerned with counting calories or measuring portion sizes, think of your diet in terms of color, variety, and freshness. This way it should be easier to make healthy choices. Focus on finding foods you love and easy recipes that incorporate a few fresh ingredients. Gradually, your diet will become healthier and more delicious.
  - **Start slow and make changes to your eating habits over time.** Trying to make your diet healthy overnight isn't realistic or smart. Changing everything at once usually leads to cheating or giving up on your new eating plan. Make small steps, like adding a salad (full of different color vegetables) to your diet once a day or switching from butter to olive oil when cooking. As your small changes become habit, you can continue to add more healthy choices to your diet.
- ★ **Every change you make to improve your diet matters.** You don't have to be perfect and you don't have to completely eliminate foods you enjoy to have a healthy diet. The long term goal is to feel good, have more energy, and reduce the risk of cancer and disease. Don't let your missteps derail you—every healthy food choice you make counts.

#### Healthy Eating Tip: Moderation is Key

People often think of healthy eating as an all or nothing proposition, but a key foundation for any healthy diet is moderation. **But what is moderation? How much is a moderate amount?** That really depends on you and your overall eating habits. The goal of healthy eating is to develop a diet that you can maintain for life, not just a few weeks or months, or until you've hit your ideal weight. So try to think of moderation in terms of balance. Despite what certain fad diets would have you believe, we all need a balance of carbohydrates, protein, fat, fiber, vitamins, and minerals to sustain a healthy body.

For most of us, moderation or balance means eating less than we do now. More specifically, it means eating far less of the unhealthy stuff (unrefined sugar, saturated fat, for example) and more of the healthy (such as fresh fruit and vegetables). But it doesn't mean eliminating the foods you love. Eating bacon for breakfast once a week, for example, could be considered moderation if you follow it with a healthy lunch and dinner—but not if you follow it with a box of donuts and a sausage pizza. If you eat 100 calories of chocolate one afternoon, balance it out by deducting 100 calories from your evening meal. If you're still hungry, fill up with an extra serving of fresh vegetables.





## With Protein Foods, Variety is Key

### 10 Tips for Choosing Protein

Protein foods include both animal (meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs) and plant (beans, peas, soy products, nuts, and seeds) sources. We all need protein—but most Americans eat enough, and some eat more than they need. How much is enough?

#### 1 Vary your protein food choices

Eat a variety of foods from the Protein Foods Group each week. Experiment with main dishes made with beans or peas, nuts, soy, and seafood.

#### 2 Choose seafood twice a week

Eat seafood in place of meat or poultry twice a week. Select a variety of seafood—include some that are higher in oils and low in mercury, such as salmon, trout, and herring.



#### 3 Make meat and poultry lean or low fat

Choose lean or low-fat cuts of meat like round or sirloin and ground beef that is at least 90% lean. Trim or drain fat from meat and remove poultry skin.

#### 4 Have an egg

One egg a day, on average, doesn't increase risk for heart disease, so make eggs part of your weekly choices. Only the egg yolk contains cholesterol and saturated fat, so have as many egg whites as you want.

#### 5 Eat plant protein foods more often

Try beans and peas (kidney, pinto, black, or white beans; split peas; chickpeas; hummus), soy products (tofu, tempeh, veggie burgers), nuts, and seeds. They are naturally low in saturated fat and high in fiber.



#### 6 Nuts and Seeds

Choose unsalted nuts or seeds as a snack, on salads, or in main dishes to replace meat or poultry. Nuts and seeds are a concentrated source of calories, so eat small portions to keep calories in check.

#### 7 Keep it tasty and healthy

Try grilling, broiling, roasting, or baking—they don't add extra fat. Some lean meats need slow, moist cooking to be tender—try a slow cooker for them. Avoid breading meat or poultry, which adds calories.

#### 8 Make a healthy sandwich

Choose turkey, roast beef, canned tuna or salmon, or peanut butter for sandwiches. Many deli meats, such as regular bologna or salami, are high in fat and sodium—make them occasional treats only.



#### 9 Think small when it comes to meat portions

Get the flavor you crave but in a smaller portion. Make or order a smaller burger or a “petite” size steak.

#### 10 Check the sodium

Check the Nutrition Facts label to limit sodium. Salt is added to many canned foods—including beans and meats. Many processed meats—such as ham, sausage, and hot dogs—are high in sodium. Some fresh chicken, turkey, and pork are brined in a salt solution for flavor and tenderness.

**How much is enough?** Our protein needs depend on our age, size, and activity level. The standard method used by nutritionists to estimate our minimum daily protein requirement is to multiply the body weight in kilograms by .8, or weight in pounds by .37. This is the number of grams of protein that should be the daily minimum.



## Surprise! This is Processed Too!

Processed food has a bad reputation as a diet saboteur. It's blamed for our nation's obesity epidemic, high blood pressure and the prevalence of type II diabetes. But processed food is more than boxed macaroni and cheese, potato chips and drive-thru hamburgers. It may surprise you to learn that whole-wheat bread, home-made soup or a chopped apple are also processed foods.

While some processed foods should be consumed with caution, many actually have a place in a balanced diet. Here's how to sort the nutritious from the not-so-nutritious.



### What is Processed Food?

"We have to determine what *processed* really means when we're talking about processed food," says Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Spokesperson Andrea Giancoli, MPH, RD. She says, for example, that she considers white bread *refined* since most of the healthy fiber has been removed during the processing. "It's also processed, but keep in mind, that as a cook you're doing processing yourself. Have you ever heard of something called a food processor? I think we get really caught up in the word *processed* without realizing what it truly means."

Processed food falls on a spectrum from minimally to heavily processed:

- Minimally processed foods – like bagged spinach, cut vegetables and roasted nuts -- are often simply pre-prepped for convenience.
- Foods processed at their peak to lock in nutritional quality and freshness include canned beans, tomatoes, frozen fruit and vegetables, and canned tuna.
- Foods with ingredients added for flavor and texture (sweeteners, spices, oils, colors and preservatives) include jarred pasta sauce, salad dressing, yogurt and cake mixes.
- Ready-to-eat foods, like crackers, granola, and deli meat, are more heavily processed.

The most heavily processed foods often are frozen or pre-made meals like frozen pizza and microwaveable dinners.

### The Positives of Processed



Milk and juices are sometimes fortified with calcium and vitamin D, and breakfast cereal may have added fiber. Canned fruit (packed in water or its own juice) is a good option when fresh fruit is not available. Some minimally processed food like pre-cut vegetables are quality convenience foods for busy people. "Bagged vegetables and salads are helping people eat more vegetables," says Giancoli. "They're more expensive, but if your choice is between paying less and chopping it when you know you're not going to do that, and paying a little more for the bagged vegetable you know you're going to eat, the bagged vegetable is a better choice."

"You have to look at the big picture," says Giancoli. "Be a detective – read the ingredients list and review the nutrition facts panel. Food is complex and we need to get to know it."

### Look for Hidden Sugar, Fat and Sodium

Eating processed food in moderation is fine, but consumers should be on the lookout for hidden sugar, sodium and fat.

#### Sugar

We have tons of added sugars in our food supply. We think that just because a product says 'organic' or 'natural,' that means it's better and healthier for us, but that's not always the case... whether a product has added high-fructose corn syrup or natural cane sugar, we need to be wary of both.

Sugar isn't just hidden in processed sweets. It's added to bread to give it an appealing browned hue, and there's often a surprising amount added to jarred pasta sauces and cereal. The number of carbohydrates on the nutrition label also includes naturally occurring sugars which may be a significant amount in foods like yogurt and fruit. Instead, review a product's ingredients list and look for added sugars among the first two or three ingredients such as sugar, maltose, brown sugar, corn syrup, cane sugar, honey and fruit juice concentrate.

#### Fat

Added fat helps make food shelf-stable and gives it body. *Trans* fats – which raise our bad cholesterol while lowering our good – are on the decline in processed foods, but you should still read food labels. According to the FDA, a product can still claim it has zero *trans* fats if each serving has less than half a gram of the fat.

"If a product has a really small serving size and you're eating three or four servings, *trans* fats add up," says Giancoli. "Even if a product says it has zero *trans* fat, check the ingredients list. If it contains partially hydrogenated vegetable oils, then it's going to have some amount of *trans* fat in it."

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### Ways to Shave Calories

When it comes to healthy weight management, small steps add up. In fact, little changes in eating and activity level have a more positive impact on health than drastic ones. This is because you are more likely to stick with smaller changes over time. Extreme diets and intensive exercise regimens may work well at first, but they rarely last over the long term.

Healthy weight is all about balancing food intake with physical activity. Most of us could improve our energy balance by shaving just 100 calories a day off our usual intake. It's not difficult:

- Lighten up your favorite coffee drink with fat-free milk and sugar-free syrup.
- Trim all fat from beef, pork and chicken. Remove the skin from poultry.
- Dish up slow-churned, reduced-calorie ice cream in place of regular.
- Enjoy raw vegetables with salsa or fat-free ranch dip instead of chips.

### Small Changes Add Up

Here are more great ideas that will cut calories from your daily intake, possibly without your even noticing:

- **Downsize Your Dishes.** Use smaller plates and bowls to help you eat less. We tend to fill up the dish we're using and then eat it all. Our brains also think we are getting more when the same amount of food is placed in a smaller dish.
- **Savor Your Meals.** Eating slowly helps you consume only what your body needs to feel satisfied. Eating too quickly, in less than 20 to 30 minutes, leads to overeating and feeling uncomfortably full afterwards.
- **Leave Some Food on Your Plate.** This is especially important if you grew up in the "clean plate club." By leaving even a few bites, you can focus more on your internal signals of satisfaction and less on eating food just because it is there.
- **Don't Eat Out of a Bag or Box.** When you eat out of a package, you are likely to keep eating until it's all gone – no matter how many servings the package actually contains. Pour one serving into a small bowl.
- **Choose Your Glass Wisely.** Here's another place where our eyes play tricks on us. When glasses are short and wide, we tend to fill them with more fluid and to drink more. Use a slender glass for any beverage except water.
- **Rethink Your Drinks.** High-calorie beverages like soft drinks, juice drinks, energy drinks, specialty coffees and alcohol add calories just like solid foods. Whenever possible, replace these drinks with plenty of water.

## Surprise! This is Processed Too!

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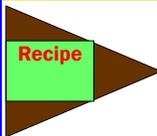


### Sodium

Most canned vegetables, soups and sauces have added sodium, which enhances taste and texture, and acts as a preservative. We need some sodium, but we often consume much more than the Dietary Guidelines for Americans' recommended 2,300 milligrams a day (1,500 milligrams a day for those over 51 years of age, or African Americans, diabetics and those with hypertension or chronic kidney disease). High sodium intake is linked to hypertension, or high blood pressure.

Surprisingly, a heavy hand with table salt may not be to blame for our overconsumption of sodium. "Three quarters of our sodium intake comes from processed foods," says Giancoli. "Only 20 or 25 percent of it comes from salting our food. The salt shaker is not the major problem."

Canned vegetables, soups and beans can be packed with nutrients, so don't cross them off your shopping list entirely. Instead, look for **reduced or low sodium on labels.** "Buy products light in sodium, and then sprinkle a little bit of salt on top if you need it," suggests Giancoli. "You're still going to get a lot less sodium than if you bought the regular product." Also, always rinse canned beans and vegetables – this simple step reduces sodium content by about 40 percent.



## Tilapia with Black Beans and Corn

### Ingredients

- 1 can (15 oz each) Rosarita® Premium Whole Black Beans, drained, rinsed
- 1 can (10 oz each) Ro\*Tel® Original Diced Tomatoes & Green Chilies, drained
- 1 cup frozen whole kernel corn
- 1/3 cup sliced green onions
- 2 tablespoons Pure Wesson® Vegetable Oil
- 1 tablespoon cider vinegar
- PAM® Original No-Stick Cooking Spray
- 4 tilapia fillets, thawed if frozen (4 fillets = 1 lb)
- 1/4 teaspoon salt



### Directions

1. Stir together first 6 ingredients to make black bean-corn mixture; set aside.
2. Spray 10-inch nonstick skillet with cooking spray; heat over medium-high heat. Sprinkle fillets with salt, place in skillet and cook 3 minutes. Turn fillets over; cook 2 to 3 minutes more or until fish flakes easily with fork (145°F).
3. Place fillets on plates and top each with about 3/4 cup black bean-corn mixture.

Servings Size: 4 servings

Calories	275	% Daily Value*
Total fat	10 g	15%
Saturated fat	2 g	9%
Cholesterol	45 mg	15%
Sodium	592 mg	25%
Carbohydrate	21 g	7%
Dietary fiber	6 g	22%
Sugars	3 g	0%
Protein	26 g	51%
Vitamin A		7%
Vitamin C		9%
Calcium		5%
Iron		11%

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