WIC Wellness Works

Dear WIC Employee:

Welcome to *Getting Started with Healthy Eating*, which focuses on healthy food and goal setting. These materials will help you examine the pros and cons of healthy eating and ways to overcome their barriers.

1. *READ* *Getting Started with Healthy Eating.* Review the "pros and cons" list. Find ways to overcome your barriers.

2. *SET* a healthy-eating goal for this month. Look at the Idea List in this packet and try something new.

3. *BE* physically activity.

Your clinic coordinator and the University of Texas Wellness Team are here to support you. Please tell them what you need to be successful.

Sincerely,

University of Texas Wellness Team

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Getting Started with Healthy Eating

Welcome to the Healthy Eating section of **WIC Wellness Works**. Along the way we hope you discover easy ways to add more fruits and vegetables into your life.

Why Is Healthy Eating Important?

Good nutrition and physical activity play a big role in keeping you healthy and protecting you from disease and illnesses. Reading these pages can be a healthy investment in yourself and your family.

The right food choices can help prevent:

- heart disease
- certain cancers
- diabetes
- stroke
- osteoporosis

Healthy eating can also:

- reduce obesity
- lower high blood pressure
- lower high blood cholesterol

When you make any change, knowing where you are and where you're going is important.

Wellness...a journey

Where Am I Right Now?

Have you ever noticed that what works for some people may not work for you? People move through five stages of readiness when they change their behavior. What helps in one stage may not work in another.

These stages represent a spiral path to adopting healthy eating habits into your life. Each stage requires new behaviors and it takes time to move from one stage to the next.

Stages of Change

- **Stage 1** Not thinking about eating healthier
- **Stage 2** Thinking about eating healthier
- **Stage 3** Preparing to eat better
- **Stage 4** Actively trying to eat healthier
- **Stage 5** Already eating healthier and wanting to maintain those changes

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- ✓ Each stage requires a different level of effort and commitment.
- ✓ You move through each stage when you are ready to change.
- ✓ You may not always move forward in a straight line.
- ✓ There will be times when you go back to an earlier stage.
- ✓ Then when you are ready, you will move forward.
- ✓ This is all part of the process of adopting new behaviors.

How Do I Get Started?

As with any change you've made in the past, you'll be more successful in eating healthier foods when you have more reasons to change than to remain the same. Let's spend time identifying the pros and cons to healthier eating.

Why Do You Want to Adopt Healthy Eating Habits? What's stopping you?

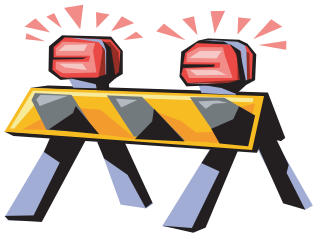
Top 3 reasons for adopting healthy eating behaviors	Top 3 reasons that make it difficult to adopt healthy eating behaviors
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

Read the list below and *circle*, *in order*, the top three most important pros and cons.

Pros —Wanting to Do This	Cons —What's Stopping You
◆ Lose weight or maintain my weight	◆ I believe that making healthier food choices involves a lot of time and meal planning
◆ Feel more energetic or less sluggish throughout the day	◆ I eat out a lot and don't know how to choose healthy options
◆ Improve my health	◆ I think eating healthier would cost more money
◆ Live longer	◆ I tried health eating before and I didn't like it
◆ Look my best	◆ I don't really know what a healthy food is versus an unhealthy one
◆ Set a good example for my children	◆ I might get embarrassed or upset if I don't succeed
◆ Lower my risk of heart disease and some cancers	◆ I think I have to give up some foods I love
◆ Know that I am taking care of myself and my family	◆ I think that *low-fat* means 'low taste'
◆ Have more energy to get things done	◆ I don't like the taste of fruits and vegetables
◆ Better concentration	◆ I feel unmotivated
◆ Improved sleep	◆ I don't know easy ways to include more fruits and vegetables in my meals and snacks
◆ Lower total cholesterol	
◆ Possible decreased occurrence of illness	
◆ Better self-image	
◆ Improved digestion	

After identifying your top barriers to eating healthier (review the 3 cons you circled), it is time to think about how to overcome those barriers.

Barrier Busters



With a family member, friend or coworker, brainstorm different ideas for overcoming your top barriers to adopting healthy eating. Silly ideas are welcome. Write down how you can overcome your top barrier.

Name the barriers	*Ideas to overcome*
1.	
2.	
3.	

Who Can Help Me?

List three people below who can support you — friends, family or coworkers. Think about what they can do to support you (ordering healthy foods while eating out with you, keeping 'junk food' out the house, listen to you talk about your eating habits, and tell you that you have done a good job!)

Who can help?	*What can they do?*
1.	
2.	
3.	

How do I set and measure goals?

While the benefits of healthy eating are abundant, it's unrealistic to expect a miraculous change overnight. Keep this in mind when you set your goals. And remember, whatever your goal may be, make sure it's SMART.

S Specific — know what you have to do daily to reach your goal
M Measurable — defined amount of activity you want to accomplish
A Achievable — it's your goal, so you have to be able to achieve it
R Relevant — your goal should be applicable to healthy living
T Time-based — have a specific start and end date

EXAMPLE:

Long-term goal

- *Within one year, I will be eating at 5-9 fruits and vegetables a day.*
- *Within one year, I will have lowered my total cholesterol to a healthy range of less than 180.*

Short-term goal

- *By next week, I will have kept a food diary and checked my food choices particularly the number of fruits and vegetables I ate.*
- *By week two, I will have visited a farmer's market or produce stand to purchase some fruits and vegetables.*
- *By week three, I will have added one fruit to breakfast and one vegetable to my lunch three times a week.*
- *By the end of the month, I will have looked over a book from the library or bookstore on healthy eating choices.*

It is also important to continue to build on your goals. For example, if you start using low-fat margarine instead of butter for your first monthly goal, keep this goal for many months to follow and then build on it. So, by month two, you are not only using low-fat margarine, you're also eating fruit instead of potato chips for a snack. Starting small and increasing your goals at a pace that feels right for you will be easier to make changes in your eating habits.

Your success depends on **setting goals that are truly important to you** — and possessing a strong desire to achieve them.

What are YOUR Long-term Goals?

First set your long-term goals and then use the next page to select the short-term steps you can take that will help you achieve them.

Think about what you would like to achieve at the end of six or 12 months in regards to healthy eating. Write those goals below. Make a wish list of what you would like to accomplish by healthy eating.

Long-term goals:

1.

2.

The following page will give you some ideas for steps in between what you can do now and reaching that long-term goal. Look for ones you think you can try. (Don't forget to use the S-M-A-R-T technique.)

Ideas for Healthy Eating Goal

Here are some simple ways to help you eat more healthfully. It is all about you and what works best for your lifestyle. Talk with your coworkers, family, or friends about your ideas and answers to the following questions:

- **What type of healthy food do I enjoy?**
- **What am I currently eating?**
- **What changes can I make?**
- **How will I measure success?**

Short-Term Goal-Setting Worksheet

Circle 3 things you want to try this month.

Beginning Level

Keep a food diary and check my food choices
Try a recipe from my low-fat cookbook
Think before I eat to make healthy choices
Refrain from shopping when I am hungry
Cook a healthy meal at home
Start taking a multi-vitamin
List of the benefits I feel when I make healthy choices
Plan for healthy snacks: pretzels, raw vegetables, air-popped popcorn
Get a low fat cookbook
Skip dessert today
Read labels
Have a garden salad today (with light dressing)
Bring a healthy lunch to work 3x/week
Check my "hunger" level before getting a second helping
Switch from whole milk to 2% or switch from 2% to 1%

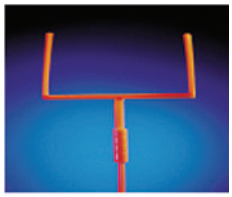
Medium Level

Start the day with a healthy breakfast
Not skip meals and let myself get too hungry
Remove the skin from poultry before cooking
Eat a piece of fruit today for my snack
Replace soda with water
Stop eating when I am full
Use light or no-fat mayonnaise instead of the regular mayonnaise
Use skim milk as my coffee creamer
Choose fish instead of red meat once a week
Choose a low-fat version when I want my favorite food
Share a meal with someone while dining out
Drink the caffeine-free versions of my favorite soda
Use olive or canola oil to cook
Read labels

High Level

Drink eight glasses of water today each day
Eat portion sizes; not super sizes
Prepare a list in advance and stick to it when I grocery shop
Buy/choose low-fat dairy products only
Stick to meat portions the size of a deck of cards
Eat two servings of vegetables at every meal
Drink 100% juice instead of caffeinated drinks
Buy/choose whole grain bread only
Drive by, not thru, the fast-food restaurant

Short Term Healthy Eating Goals



What I will do this month: (look at Healthy Eating Goal Ideas)
(ex.: I will eat 2 fruits and 2 vegetable a day)
1.
2.
3.

When I will do it: (time of day, which days)
(ex.: I will increase my fruit and vegetable intake on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday)
1.
2.
3.

How long I will do it: (minutes, lunch break, etc. …)
(ex.: I will eat two fruits at breakfast, one for lunch and 2 vegetables at dinnertime)
1.
2.
3.

Who will support me (coworker, spouse, etc. …)
(ex.: My coworkers and I will bring fruit to work to share)
1.
2.
3.

Reward for reaching my goal this month (special time with a friend, special book from library, bubble bath, etc. …)
(ex.: Treat myself to a special movie night at a friend's house)
1.
2.
3.