



Eat Smart

Your health is important.

Because the Youens and Duchicela Clinic believes this, the following is brought to you in an effort to provide wellness information that you can use to help manage and maintain your health.

This week, the focus is on healthy eating.

We all want our bodies to function at their best, and we all know that what we place in our bodies is important. But, with the hustle and bustle of summer and all the yummy summer sweets and grilled temptations that fill the air, it can be difficult to practice this.

To aid in healthy summer eating habits, learn to read food labels and aim for high fiber, low sodium, and caloric reductions.

LEARN TO READ FOOD LABELS.

Understanding nutritional facts on food labels is the first step in eating healthy. Some keys to help are to start at the top of the label by determining the number of servings per container; a singular 32-oz. bottle of Gatorade, for example, actually contains four servings of liquid. Ask yourself, "How many servings am I consuming?" Next, check the number of calories on the label, noting, again, that the number of calories is per serving, not per container.

On a food label, 5% of a substance is low; 20% or more is high. Check to make sure you are limiting your fat, cholesterol, and sodium intake (aim for below 5%), but ensure that you are getting enough of the "good stuff," according to the label (aim for above 20%): fiber, protein, vitamins, and minerals.

AIM FOR HIGH FIBER.

Fiber is a natural cleanser for the body, even helping to reduce the risk of certain diseases like diabetes and diverticulosis. Beans, dried fruits, berries, green vegetables, nuts, whole wheat, and barley products are all high in fiber. Consume products with more than 2 grams of fiber per portion for a total of 25 grams daily.



AIM FOR LOW SODIUM.

Consume less than 2300 mg (apx. one teaspoon) of salt daily. Especially during the summer, excess sodium can cause water retention, weight gain, and sluggishness. Excess salt will also affect blood pressure by increasing it.

CONSIDER CALORIC REDUCTIONS.

To lose weight, calories coming in must be less than calories going out. Most adults need a daily reduction of 500 calories from food and drink to see a weekly reduction of one pound of weight. 500 calories is roughly the equivalent of a Snickers bar and a can of Coke—or 45 minutes of aerobic exercise. If a reduction of 500 calories is not possible, start with a smaller amount.

A safe rule is to lose 1–2 pounds per week. Still, adults may want to consider a summer reduction of 50–100 calories daily, just to prevent the gradual weight gain that can occur with age and decreased activity levels during times when it may be too hot to be outside. This reduction is manageable for most: an Oreo cookie is 60 calories. A kolache is approximately 180 calories. These can easily be cut from a diet in order to reduce caloric intake.

Of course, different body types (teenagers, the elderly, those pregnant) call for intake variations. It is best to discuss your specific requirement levels with your family doctor to ensure your body is getting what it needs.

The information provided here is not to be used as a substitute for medical attention. Remember that, should you have specific medical questions or desire more information, contact your doctor.