

# 50 Tips to Healthy Living

## *Getting Started*

1. Plan. Plan. Plan. Write down your goals for what you want: improved health, weight loss, improved physical strength.
2. Make your goals doable and measurable. For example: “I will lose one pound each week, or maximum of eight pounds in one month.” “I will increase my exercise by five minutes each day until I reach at least 30 minutes daily.”
3. Plan a general outline of what you will eat everyday. Don't leave the house without a bottle of water and one to two pieces of fruit or vegetables.
4. Using a healthy cookbook, write down menu and recipe ideas that you want to try. See the recommended cookbook list and recipes on the Nutrition and Cooking Resources page or on the Faith Regional website at [www.frhs.org/a/services\\_nutr\\_recipearchive.htm](http://www.frhs.org/a/services_nutr_recipearchive.htm).
5. Organize your collection of lower fat, low calorie recipes. Put them in a 3-ring binder with plastic sheet protectors.

## *Grocery Shopping*

6. Jot down your grocery list before getting to the store to help prevent impulse buying.
7. Try not to walk past the bakery section if you know that is a weakness for you. Likewise, don't bring foods into your home that you know will harass you. Just say “No.”
8. When going to the grocery store, be prepared to “do battle” with your appetite if you go with an empty stomach. Have a nutritious snack before you go to the store or go after you have eaten a meal.
9. When shopping for groceries, shop the store's “outer limits” or perimeter for most of your groceries. This is where you will most likely find the healthier types of foods: fruits, vegetables, whole grains, dairy, lean meats, etc.
10. Learn to read labels. Check the serving size/portion size that is listed under “NUTRITION FACTS” on the side of the package. The number of calories, fat and carbohydrates, sodium, etc. is listed for that portion size, not the whole package.



## *Meals and Planning Meals*

11. When planning meals for you and your family, include a serving of fruit and whole grains at breakfast; a fruit, vegetable, and whole grain at both lunch and dinner. Choose and encourage larger servings of vegetables for you and your family members.

12. Keep healthy, easy-to-fix foods in your kitchen that are low fat and low calorie. (Check out or purchase a low fat, healthy cookbook.) Keep ice water next to you as you are cooking to help keep you from excessive taste testing.
13. Make an effort to sit down whenever eating, even if it is a snack. Set an attractive table. A pretty placemat helps. Remove clutter. This helps to increase the enjoyment of your meal and to help prevent mindless eating or better known as eating amnesia . . . “Where did the rest of that sandwich go?”
14. Cut down on high calorie salad dressings/toppings. Ask for your salad dressing on the side, or put salad dressing in a small container. Dip your fork into the salad dressing first, then your salad.
15. Enjoy a dessert once in a while by sharing your portion with a friend. Savor every bite, and plan to increase your exercise if you have indulged yourself a bit too much that day.

## *Increase Water and Fiber*

16. Strive to increase your fiber intake to 20-35 grams each day. Fiber helps control blood sugar levels, helps lower cholesterol levels and helps you to feel fuller longer.
17. Increase fiber slowly day by day. You can start by choosing 100% whole-wheat cereals, bread and other whole grains. Look for fiber content under “carbohydrates” on the NUTRITION FACTS on the side of the package.
18. Increase your daily fluid intake to 6-8 glasses of water or calorie, caffeine-free beverages. Drinking water helps keep you hydrated, gives you healthier looking skin and helps with weight control! Dehydration can slow your metabolism by 3%, which means fewer calories are burned each day.

## *Identify Eating Triggers and Emotions*

19. Identify whether or not you are an emotional eater. We sometimes eat when we’re happy/sad/mad/bored. The key is pinpointing when those times might be and planning ahead to meet the challenge!
20. Keep positive affirmations about health and wellness in front of you. Usually, what we tell ourselves is what we will get:
  - “I eat what is healthy and nourishing for my body.”
  - “I love to exercise.”
  - “I feel energized and fit after my exercise/activity.”
  - “I make wise food choices when I am with my friends.”
  - “I am in control of what I eat.”
  - “Food does not control me. I control it.”

Even though you may not yet believe these affirming statements, you will as you keep sending positive messages to your brain!

21. Write down everything you eat and drink. Keep track of your food intake in a small notebook and keep it with you. Most people underestimate their daily food intake by 40%. If you eat more calories than what your body needs, the body stores them as fat.
22. Take note of the portion sizes and the time of day. What were your emotions when you ate a particular food?

23. Identify any eating patterns you have that need to be changed. Do I eat too fast? Am I doing something else while eating? Do I eat when I'm not hungry?
24. Don't let a "slip up" ruin your weight loss goals. It's not what we eat sometimes, but it's what we tell ourselves after we eat it. Keep going.
25. Try to limit sugar. It sets you up to crave more. Have a small glass of low fat milk or low fat chocolate milk to curb your craving for sweets.

## *Eating Habits and Behavior*

26. Avoid eating while watching TV or reading. Keep focused on eating so you can savor every bite. You will be less likely to overindulge or engage in mindless eating.
27. Slow down your eating by setting your fork/spoon down between bites. This really works! If you eat too fast, you are more likely to consume more calories than you need.
28. When a craving strikes, try waiting it out by telling yourself, "I can have (that particular food) in 10 minutes if I'm still hungry." Often times, the craving will pass.
29. Keeping well hydrated can help minimize food cravings. Sometimes we think we are hungry when actually our body has its signals mixed up and we just need to drink a glass of water!



## *Keeping Motivated*

30. To sneak in extra calorie-burners, park your car farther from the front of the store; use the stairs instead of the elevator. Exercise or stretch while watching TV or while your dinner is in the oven.
31. Subscribe to or read reputable health and fitness magazines. This helps to keep you informed and motivated.
32. Avoid buying foods that you might be tempted to eat. Don't be on the see-food diet: "When I see food, I eat it." Eat when you are hungry, stop when you are full. Sounds simple, right?
33. Small changes lead to big changes. Don't lose heart. Keep your mind focused on your goal. Choose one habit this week to work on. After conquering that one, add another healthy habit.

## *Every Bite Counts!*

34. Keep healthy snacks around. Good choices are air-popped popcorn, raw vegetables and whole-wheat toast with one teaspoon peanut butter. Eating snacks like these are more satisfying than something sweet and will keep you satisfied until your next meal.
35. You can lose pounds by simply cutting out "mindless eating" of snacks. Little bites add up to big calories. Keep focused on your goals.

36. Try one new healthy recipe each week. Start a list of all your favorite recipes or organize them in a photo album.
37. Weigh yourself only once a week at the same time of day. Your weight fluctuates day to day.
38. Avoid late night meals. You aren't as likely to burn off the extra calories. Studies have shown that people who eat a good breakfast lose weight more easily than nighttime eaters.
39. Any calories we eat above and beyond our energy needs for the day will most likely be stored as fat. This is true regardless of the type of food you overeat.
40. Remind yourself: "I can eat any food I want but I might not be able to have it as much as I want, or as often as I want."
41. Keep water with you throughout your day. Many people will tell you that having water or calorie-free, caffeine-free beverages can help cut out needless snacking. Try to drink six to eight cups of non-calorie, caffeine free liquid daily (48-64 ounces). Also try adding lemon juice to ice water with a packet of sweetener for a refreshing drink.

## *Planning Ahead*

42. It is important to eat three small meals, one to two snacks each day, practicing proper portion control. Some studies have shown that eating more frequently can help raise your metabolic rate and actually help reduce cravings.
43. Don't skip meals. This slows down your metabolism. Also, intense hunger may lessen your will power. Eat smaller, more frequent meals, allowing a low calorie, high fiber snack, such as fruit with one oz. string cheese or whole-wheat toast with a teaspoon of peanut butter.
44. Plan ahead so you don't have to eat meals in the car. Eating on the run can turn into "mindless eating." If you do eat in the car, bring some healthy foods with you.

## *Keep on Keeping On!*

45. Try not to lose weight too quickly, one to two lbs. per week is reasonable. Remember, we are after lifestyle changes, not losing weight quickly. Our new habits need time to become established in our daily routines. Be patient with yourself.
46. Congratulate yourself whenever you have made successful changes and actually "feel" and see the difference. Treat yourself to a "non-food" item: a massage, a manicure or tickets to a movie or sporting event.
47. Strive to get seven to eight hours of sleep each night. Sleep deprivation has been linked to weight gain and some diseases. Avoid caffeinated drinks to get the best sleep possible.
48. Try eating your food/meals from a smaller plate. It makes your smaller portions look larger. Also, put your fork down between bites and chew your food thoroughly.
49. Before going out to eat, make decisions ahead of time what your selections will be: grilled fish or petite cut steak? Salad or French fries? Better choices mean calories saved.
50. Make changes slowly. If you drink whole milk, switch to 2% milk for a while. Then mix 1% and 2% together. From there, it will be easier to start using 1% and then try the nonfat milk.