A Healthy Lifestyle

Session 1
Introduction
How Can Healthy Eating Improve Your Health?

Healthy eating can improve your health in many ways. It helps to:

- Prevent many health problems, such as heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, and diabetes.
- Control health problems, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or diabetes.
- Manage weight.
- Have a positive impact on those you love, such as your children, parents, and friends, by helping them choose more healthy foods.

Many people also say healthy eating helps them look and feel better.

What Is Different about This Healthy Eating Program?

This study is based on current research about what is healthy to eat. The advice given by this program might be different from what you have heard before about healthy eating. We think you will enjoy the newer approaches to healthy eating that are given by this program.

The Major Difference with This Program Is:

- A focus on fat quality and not the amount of fat in your diet. Depending on what you eat now, this program may suggest an increase in healthy fats, such as those in vegetable oils, nuts, and fish. Eating more high-quality fat opens up many possibilities for healthful and tasty eating.

This Program Will also Focus on:

- Increasing vegetables, fruits, and whole grains since these are all important to a healthy eating pattern.
- Substituting other foods or beverages for those that are not healthy. For example, we offer many tips on healthy beverages that are much better for you than regular soda or very sweet iced tea.
Getting Started on a Healthy Eating Plan for Life

In addition to learning what to eat, many people need help making a plan to get started. Here are some things to keep in mind as you start making changes to your eating habits:

- **Find something that works for you.** People are more likely to stick with an eating plan if it fits with their lifestyle and budget.
- **Pick foods that you like to eat.** In general, people are more likely to stick with an eating plan that they like.
- **Make small changes first.** Making small changes one at a time is easier than changing everything at once. Taking small steps makes change easier.
- **Plan ahead.** It takes planning to stick with a healthy eating plan. This means planning so that you have healthy food on hand when you are hungry or preparing meals. Plan what healthy choices you will make when you go out to eat at restaurants.
- **Don’t give up.** Everyone gets off track now and then; don’t be too hard on yourself. The important part is that you pick up and start right where you left off as soon as possible.

Physical Activity Is Also Very Important for Your Health

Like healthy eating, being physically active can also reduce the risk for many chronic health problems and help manage health problems like high blood pressure and diabetes. Most experts recommend 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity, like a brisk walk, on most days of the week.
How the Healthy Eating Program Works

The program is given in four sessions with different foods covered in each session.

- **Session 1: Nuts, Spreads, Dressings, and Oils**
- **Session 2: Vegetables, Fruit, Whole Grains, and Beans**
- **Session 3: Drinks, Desserts, Snacks, Eating Out, and Salt**
- **Session 4: Fish, Meat, Poultry, Dairy, and Eggs**

Starting with Session 2, we also provide information on being physically active.

The Format for Each Session Is Similar

- Each session covers different types of foods and begins with questions for you to answer about these types of foods. In Sessions 2-4, there are also questions about your physical activity.
- Then, **background information** is provided about the foods covered in the session and physical activity (Sessions 2-4).
- Next is the **tip** section, where you select goals to work on to improve your health.
- Last is the **goal sheet**, with first steps toward achieving your goals and a table for checking your progress.
Nuts, Oils, Dressings, and Spreads

Session 1
- Assessment
- Background Information
- Tips
- Goals
Assessment of Current Eating Habits

Nuts, Oils, Dressings, and Spreads

- Are you allergic to tree nuts (like almonds, pecans, walnuts, or cashews)?
  - Yes ___  No ___
- Are you allergic to peanuts?
  - Yes ___  No ___
- Are you allergic to both?
  - Yes ___  No ___

In an average **WEEK**,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Desirable</th>
<th>Could be improved</th>
<th>Needs to be improved</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>How many servings of <strong>peanut butter, other nut butters, or nuts</strong> (like peanuts, almonds, pecans, walnuts or cashews) do you usually eat?</td>
<td>□ 3+</td>
<td>□ 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>What type of <strong>butter</strong> or margarine do you usually use?</td>
<td>□ trans fat-free margarine (most tub margarines are trans fat-free)</td>
<td>□ butter</td>
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In an average **WEEK**, how many times do you...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Desirable</th>
<th>Could be improved</th>
<th>Needs to be improved</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Eat foods fried, sautéed, or baked at home using vegetable oil (olive, soybean, canola, or corn oil or tub/liquid margarine)?</td>
<td>□ 3+</td>
<td>□ 1-2</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Use regular (full-fat) salad dressing (<strong>Do NOT</strong> include no-fat, fat-free, and low-fat dressings)?</td>
<td>□ 3+</td>
<td>□ 1-2</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Use regular mayonnaise (<strong>Do NOT</strong> include no-fat, fat-free, and low-fat mayonnaise) on sandwiches or in tuna, chicken, or egg salad or use regular (full-fat) tartar sauce?</td>
<td>□ 3+</td>
<td>□ 1-2</td>
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Eating Fats

There are three types of fat we'll focus on in this program:

**Polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats:** These are healthy fats and are found in vegetable oils, nuts, some dressings and spreads, and fish.

**Trans fats:** These are unhealthy fats and are found in most stick margarine and shortening, some baked goods, some packaged snack foods, and fried foods from some restaurants.

**Saturated fats:** These are found in beef, pork, dairy products, and are high in some vegetable oils.

What Do We Mean by Healthy Fat?

Healthy fats mostly come from plants or fish.

Healthy fats can be found in the following oils and foods:

- **Nuts** (like peanuts, pecans, walnuts, and almonds) and nut butters.
- Vegetable oils, like canola, soybean, olive, peanut, and corn oils. Extra virgin olive oil may have additional health benefits compared to other oils.
- Salad dressings, mayonnaise, and other spreads made with the healthy vegetable oils listed above.
- Fish, such as tuna, herring, salmon, and lake trout.
- Trans fat-free margarine spread (generally in soft or tub form).

How Much Healthy Fat Do I Need Each Day?

Two to six servings each day is a good goal. Serving sizes for common foods that contain healthy fat are:

- **Nuts:** a small handful (one ounce or 30 grams) or two tablespoons of nut butter
- **Regular mayonnaise** (full-fat): one tablespoon
- **Fish:** three ounces (about a deck of cards)
- **Avocado:** one quarter
- **Regular salad dressing** (full-fat): one to two tablespoons
There Are Many Ways to Fit Heart Healthy Fats Into Your Eating Plan

Eat Nuts and Nut Butters Often
Nuts are a great source of healthy fats. Many studies have shown that people who eat nuts are less likely to get heart disease. Eat nuts or nut butters three or more times a week.

Use Healthy Oils
Healthy oils include: canola, soybean, olive, peanut, and corn oil. Also, many stores sell “vegetable oil,” which is a combination of different oils.

To eat more healthy oils:
- Use healthy oils often when you are cooking, sautéing, and frying.
- Cut down on the cost of expensive oils, like olive oil, by using it for dipping bread and in salad dressings. Use less expensive oils for cooking, sautéing, and frying.

Use Healthy Salad Dressings
Many people think low- or no-fat salad dressings are good for your health. In fact, regular (full-fat) salad dressings contain healthy oils and are better for your health. Also, low-fat and no-fat dressings may contain more salt and sugar than regular dressings. So, eat salad often and enjoy full-fat salad dressings.
Use Healthy Spreads

Healthy spreads (such as those you put on your bread or use in sandwiches) are a good source of heart healthy fats.

To choose healthy spreads:

- Use trans fat-free margarines. These are made from vegetable oils and are a good choice for spreads and for cooking. Most are in tub form.
- Use regular (full-fat) mayonnaise (not the reduced-fat or no-fat kind) for sandwiches. Mayonnaise is made with healthy vegetable oils (usually soybean or canola oil).
- Use regular (full-fat) tartar sauce, which is also made with healthy vegetable oils.

What Are Unhealthy Fats?

Unhealthy fats (trans fats) are made when liquid vegetable oils are turned into solid fats for margarine or shortening. Some deep-fat frying oils are also high in trans fats. Eating trans fats increase the risk of heart disease.

Trans fats can be found in the following foods:

- Stick margarine
- Most shortening
- Some store-bought baked goods and packaged snack foods
- Some fried foods and biscuits from restaurants, though many restaurants are working to lower the trans fats in their foods

Because trans fats increase the risk of heart disease, it is important to eat as little trans fat as possible.
What about Saturated Fats?
In the past, experts thought saturated fat increased the risk for heart disease. However, recent studies suggest saturated fats do not increase heart disease risk. Even though these fats do not increase the risk for heart disease, they don’t decrease it either. The foods that lower your risk of heart disease include healthy fats, and other foods like vegetables and fruits, and whole grains.

Foods high in saturated fats include:
- Dairy products (except skim and very low-fat dairy products) including cheese, butter and cream
- Lard
- “Tropical vegetable oil,” including palm and coconut oil
- Red meat, including beef, pork and lamb.

NOTE: Unlike some of the other foods high in saturated fats, eating red meat increases the risk of heart disease a modest amount, and eating processed meats (bacon, sausage, hot dogs, bologna, and deli meats like roast beef, turkey, and ham) increases the risk of heart disease more than regular meat. Also, people who eat large amounts of red meat are at higher risk of getting colon cancer. This is why we recommend 0-1 serving of red meat each day.

How Often Should I Eat Foods with High Amounts of Saturated Fats?
It is fine to eat foods with some saturated fat (though red meats should be limited) as long as you also eat the healthy foods suggested by this program. In other words, there needs to be “room in your eating plan” to eat healthy fats, fruits and vegetables, and whole grains each day.

Won’t Eating More Fat Cause Me to Gain Weight?
Many people think eating foods high in fats causes weight gain. We now know eating patterns that are higher in fat do not cause weight gain. And because foods with healthy fats reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke, it is important to eat these foods often.
Goals to work on to improve the fat quality in your diet.

1. Unless you are allergic to nuts, choose nuts and nut butters often. Try to eat three or more servings each week.
   - Enjoy a variety of nuts (pecans, peanuts, walnuts, almonds, cashews) and nut butters, like peanut butter.
   - A serving is a handful of nuts (one quarter cup or about or about 30 grams or one ounce) or two tablespoons of nut butter (about the size of a ping-pong ball).
   - Try a peanut butter sandwich on whole grain bread, or peanut butter on celery or an apple. These can make a tasty and filling lunch or snack!
   - Unsalted or lightly salted nuts or all natural nut butters are good choices, but regular nuts and nut butters are also good choices.

Check another goal to work on to improve your fat quality. If you are allergic to nuts, select 2 goals.

2. Choose trans fat-free margarine.
   - For spreads, trans fat-free margarine is preferred because it contains healthy vegetable oil, but using butter sometimes is okay.
   - When you use margarine, look for tub or squeeze margarines that say “trans fat-free.”
   - Don’t use regular stick margarines, which are usually high in trans fats.
3. **Use healthy oils for frying, sautéing, and baking.**
   - Use these oils for sautéing, frying, cooking, and baking: olive, canola, corn, peanut, and soybean oil. Also, some stores sell “vegetable oil,” which is a mix of these oils and is also a good choice.
   - When frying, sautéing, or baking, use the right oil for the job. Olive oil or canola oil are best for everyday sautéing or frying at low to medium high temperatures. For high heat (to stir fry or deep fry), use peanut, soybean, or corn oil (see page 107: Best Oils for Cooking and Frying).
   - For everyday cooking, use oils that don’t cost too much. Save extra virgin olive oil for salad dressing and dipping. Use other vegetable oils for frying, sautéing, and baking.

4. **Choose healthy salad dressings. Aim for three or more servings per week.**
   - For store-bought, use regular (full-fat) rather than low-fat or fat-free dressings. Regular salad dressings contain the healthy types of vegetable oil. Fat-free dressings are often higher in sodium and sugar. Consider making your own salad dressing (see Cookbook, pages 98-100). It’s fast, easy, and tastes great.

5. **Regular (full-fat) mayonnaise and tartar sauce have fats that are good for your heart. Aim for three or more servings per week.**
   - Use regular store-bought mayonnaise or tartar sauce. They are usually made with soybean or canola oil, both good oils for your heart.
   - A serving is about one tablespoon.
My Goals and First Steps
Nuts, Oils, Dressings, and Spreads

To make changes, it is important to make goals and keep track of your progress. List the goals you selected to work on today. Then enter your “First Steps” for reaching these goals. First Steps should be specific and things you can easily do.

To plan First Steps, think about:

- When you will start working towards this goal.
- What you need to get started.
- If you can actually reach the goal.
My Goals and First Steps

Date: ________

Place this sheet where you will see it often (refrigerator or bathroom mirror). You may monitor goals by the week (left side of table) or by the day (right side of table).

Goal 1: ________________________________

- If allergic to tree nuts and peanuts, select 2 goals from the assessments questions that “need to be improved” or “could be improved.”
- If allergic to peanuts, but not tree nuts, goal is to eat 3 or more servings of tree nuts or tree nut butters each week.
- If allergic to tree nuts, but not peanuts, goal is to eat 3 or more servings of peanuts or peanut butter each week.
- Otherwise, goal is to eat 3 or more servings of nuts or nut butters (including peanuts) each week.

First Steps: ____________________________________________________________

Goal 2: ________________________________

First Steps: ____________________________________________________________

GOAL 1: Did you meet your goal? (Check ☑ for Yes, or ☒ for No)

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Weekly Goal</th>
<th>Daily Goal</th>
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GOAL 2: Did you meet your goal? (Check ☑ for Yes, or ☒ for No)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Weekly Goal</th>
<th>Daily Goal</th>
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