



Nutrition Nibbles

A Failure to Plan

As a society, we are overbooked and short on time. With to-do lists a mile long, something's got to give. What usually gives is our diets. We do not think about what we are going to make (or pick up) for dinner during the week. We do not pack our lunches before work or school. We often do not carve any time in our busy schedules for breakfast, let alone exercise. What is going on here?

Think about this: would you ever just wing an important work presentation without any preparation? Would you send your child to school without his homework? Would you go on vacation without packing a suitcase? Probably not! Just like the above, healthy eating is not the result of chance. A well-balanced diet takes some time, effort, and planning. *A failure to plan is surely a plan for failure!* But while the word "planning" conjures up images of pain, torture, and rigid scheduling, it can actually be fun and time-saving in the long-run. (It's true, I swear!)

Try putting these plans into practice and watch the quality of your diet improve:

- Pack your lunch the night before. No need to skip a meal or head to the drive-thru now.
- As you set the coffee pot the night before, put out your cereal bowl and spoon as a reminder to eat breakfast. Never have time for breakfast? Keep drinkable yogurt in the fridge next to the fruit, and grab a quick breakfast as you head out the door.
- Keep snacks in your desk drawer, purse, or backpack. Whole grain granola...

[More Details on page 2](#)



Favorite Food

Everyone always asks me "So, what does a dietitian eat?" Lately, I have been enjoying nonfat plain yogurt topped with berries, ground flaxseed, and a little of my favorite whole grain cereal. This cool, tasty treat is perfect on a warm day and makes an easy portable lunch. Spice it up by changing out yogurt flavors, different fruit toppings, and mixing your cereal choices. This combination is packed with calcium, fiber, and flavor!

College Corner: Fruit and Vegetable Intake Takes a Nosedive



Study It Yourself!

Trends in Adolescent Fruit and Vegetable Consumption, 1999-2004: Project EAT
by Larson, et al.

American Journal of Preventive Medicine, Volume 32, Issue 2, February 2007, Pages 147-150.

A study published recently in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* found that as teens transition from junior high to high school, and then again from high school to college, their fruit and vegetable intake drops by almost one serving each time. I find this disappointing but not shocking. When working with college students, I am hard-pressed to find a serving of high quality fruit (fruit loops and fruit snacks do not count!) let alone a full serving of vegetables in their daily diets.

Fruit and vegetables are loaded with healthy nutrients that can stave off disease. How can you keep your intake from taking a serious nosedive? Let me share a few secrets that my college-age clients have successfully used to keep their fruit and veggie consumption high without too much trouble:

Divide them up. If you wait until the end of the day to try and cram in all of your fruit and veggie servings, it will seem overwhelming and impossible. Instead, try spreading your consumption out over the course of the day. Aim for one cup of fruit at breakfast, one cup of fruit and one cup of veggies at lunch, and at least another one and a half cups of vegetables at dinner.

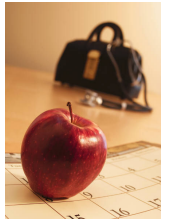
[More Details on page 2](#)

A Failure to Plan continued...

bars, trail mix, dried fruit, and instant oatmeal are shelf-stable and there when you need them.

- ☑ Stock up at the grocery store weekly. Don't shop on any empty stomach and without a grocery list. Think of your week's schedule and what meals you'll need to prepare for, pick up the supplies and you are ready to get cooking!
- ☑ Keep a water bottle with you at all times. It's an easy way to stay well-hydrated.
- ☑ Cook big and freeze! When you have some extra time, maximize it. Cook more soup, chili, sauce, or lasagna and freeze for an easy meal another night.

There is no one right way to plan. Figure out what works best for you and then commit to planning on a regular basis. Remember, *anything worth doing is worth doing well...*and usually takes some planning!



Fruit and Vegetable Intake Takes a Nosedive continued...

Sneak them in. Add fruit to your cereal in the morning. Ask for extra vegetables on your sandwich or in your burrito or wrap. Start your meal with a broth-based, veggie-packed soup. Think of places in your daily diet where you can sneak in some extra produce and then go for it!

Add one more. When you think you cannot possibly sneak any more of these nutrient powerhouses into your day, add one more! Bake with raisins and other dried fruit. Mix spinach into your favorite pasta sauce. Add a few more vegetables to your omelet. Request extra vegetables on your pizza and add some pineapple too. Use applesauce or mashed bananas in place of some of the oil in your favorite pancakes, waffles, breads, and muffins. Get creative—substitute spaghetti squash for your usual spaghetti noodles.

The bottom line: Aim for 2 cups of fruit and 2 1/2 cups of vegetables every day! For more ways to boost your intake, check out the tips and recipes at *Fruits & Veggies More Matters*: www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org

Small Steps Add Up to a Healthy Life

Are you the type of person that likes to make changes one step at a time? Do you prefer to slowly ease into a new routine rather than drastically alter your life over night? When it comes to a healthy lifestyle, making small changes can be an effective and painless way to improve both your diet and activity level. Here are some easy steps you can take to feel better. Pick one or two changes to tackle. Once mastered, choose another...and another!

- Walk around the block when you head out to get your mail
- Add 1% or nonfat milk to your cereal instead of whole milk
- Take your grocery cart back to the store when you are done shopping rather than leaving it in the parking lot
- Freeze grapes or melon for a cool dessert
- Start an office walking club
- Quench your thirst with water instead of soda or juice
- Meet your friend at a museum instead of the movies—walk, talk, and enjoy art!
- Use one less tablespoon of butter, oil, or margarine in your recipes
- March in place during the commercial breaks of your favorite TV show

For more quick tips, check out
America on the Move at:

www.americaonthemove.org



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