

# HealthBreak

MARCH 2012

## National Nutrition Month



### **NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH**

Eating well is the best gift you can give your body. March is National Nutrition Month®, so it's a great time to learn about the benefits of healthy eating and how to begin making healthy changes to your diet. National Nutrition Month is a campaign created by the American Dietetic Association that focuses on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits.

### **THE BASICS**

A nutritious eating plan gives your body the vitamins, minerals and nutrients it needs to stay healthy, fight illness and perform daily tasks. It emphasizes fruits, vegetables, low-fat or fat-free dairy and whole grains. It also includes lean meats, fish, poultry, eggs, nuts and beans. A healthy eating plan should be low in saturated fats, trans fats, added sugar, and salt.

### **GET THE MOST OUT OF WHAT YOU EAT**

Choosing foods that are not only lower in calories, but are also loaded with vitamins, minerals, fiber and other nutrients is a great way to get the most out of the calories you eat. Watch your portion sizes. Even low-calorie foods can work against you when portion sizes are bigger than you need.

Mix up what you eat and try to avoid eating the exact same things day after day. Variety in your diet is helpful for a couple reasons. First, it helps prevent boredom. You may get tired of eating the same foods over and over, but choosing different types of foods can also help make mealtime more enjoyable. Variety adds flavor, color, and texture to keep meals interesting from day to day.

Secondly, eating a variety of foods and beverages within and among the basic food groups is key to getting all the nutrients you need for good health. Fruits and vegetables don't have to always be fresh; try canned and frozen options. Vary your protein choices by mixing in more fish, beans and peas. Eat at least three servings of whole grains every day. Try whole grain pastas, breads, crackers, cereals or rice. The healthy options are almost endless.

# SuccessStories



I was diagnosed with diabetes last year which was a little scary. I was even more shocked after getting the results of my first HbA1c . . . it was 17 (a normal HbA1c is six percent or less)! I was stressed and had a lot of questions. My Health Coach was so helpful! She answered my questions, gave me practical advice and also sent me helpful materials that I could read on my own time.

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— MICHELLE

diabetes. I started counting carbs; in fact, this is something that I do religiously now. It works! My latest HbA1c is now below 7, and my doctor recently took me off of insulin. I feel great, and I can’t thank you enough!

## COACH HIGHLIGHT

Health coaching is a career that I actually stumbled upon, and I’m so glad I did. I have always had an interest in how the human body works, especially as it relates to exercise physiology. Teaching is another passion of mine, and when you mix those two together, a uniquely relevant combination forms. I have been fortunate to apply those desires as a Health Coach. I feel that my experience as a Coach has become less about fulfilling my own desires and more about helping other people fulfill theirs. I think about my hopes for my family, friends and loved ones to have lives of the highest quality. I feel so lucky that I have the opportunity to help others accomplish just that.

— CHRIS

