

Transcript

Getting the nutrients your body needs is essential to living an active, healthy life. You can't get all of those nutrients from a vitamin or pill, you need to get them from the foods you eat. Different foods contain different nutrients, so choose a variety of foods every day.

A good place to start is to work with a registered dietitian or your healthcare provider to create your personal goals. These goals should include how much protein, carbohydrate and fat you should eat. That's because these are nutrients that make up our meals and snacks. Don't be afraid to try new foods. A registered dietitian can give you plenty of ideas.

First, let's look at protein. Protein is a building block for your body. It helps your muscles, bones, organs, skin and blood stay healthy. Protein is found in a variety of foods like meat, poultry, fish, dried beans, and eggs. You want to make sure you eat the healthiest protein you can. So, for example, when selecting meat at the market, look for the leanest cuts available. These have the highest levels of protein and the least fat.

Another goal to eating a variety of foods is to choose carbohydrates carefully. Carbohydrates provide the body with energy, but simple or overly processed carbohydrates can leave you feeling tired if you eat too much, which most of us do.

When choosing carbohydrates, breads and cereals, rice and pastas, try to avoid refined, bleached white flour. These are high in calories and have little nutritional value. Instead, try to make at least half your grains whole. Whole grain foods include: whole grain pastas, brown rice and beans.

A great way to add carbs is to include more fruits and vegetables in your choices. Most people don't eat enough of them. The ones with the most vibrant colors are the most nutritious. Aim for the rainbow!

Fats are another major energy source for the body. They are required for your body to work correctly. You need a certain amount in your diet. However, certain types of fats are better for you than others, so choose your fats wisely. Vegetable oils, nuts, and fish are all good fats to pick. But watch how much you eat because fats contain more than twice the calories as protein and carbohydrate, so even small servings add up quickly.

Now, let's put it all together. Eat a variety of foods on every plate. This way, you'll get the benefits and nutrients from the different types of foods together in every meal. Aim for more than one color on your plate at a time. You can also use the USDA MyPlate to learn more about reducing calories, nutrition, and tips for healthy choices you can make. You can find this information online at www.ChooseMyPlate.gov.