

Healthy Eating: Reducing Calories, Salt and Alcohol

When choosing what you eat and drink, pay attention to how many calories, and how much salt and alcohol you are consuming.

These choices can impact your personal nutrition goals and your overall health.

All foods contain calories. The body burns them for fuel.

The more you eat, the more calories you consume; the more active you are, the more calories you burn.

If you consume more calories than you burn, they're stored as fat which can make you overweight. Being overweight puts you at increased risk for diabetes and heart disease.

If you choose calories carefully, you'll find you can actually eat much more and get more nutrients.

For example, this entire meal has fewer calories and more nutrients than this pecan bun.

Eating the variety of foods in the plated meal will fill you up more and the combination of nutrients will help keep you fuller longer than the sugar filled bun. You can eat more and get more nutrients just by making a healthier choice.

One thing that most of us eat too much of is sodium, or salt.

A healthy adult can eat up to 2300 milligrams of sodium per day.

If you have High Blood Pressure you should eat less than 1500 mg per day.

Most of us eat a lot more.

And we're not even aware of how much sodium we're eating because it's hidden in prepared and packaged foods.

Read the food label to see how much you are eating. And pay attention to the serving size!

When dining out, check the nutrition information about sodium on the restaurant's menu ahead of your visit. What you find may surprise you.

Eating more fresh foods is always a healthier lower sodium choice.

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In some people, eating too much sodium, or salt, can lead to high blood pressure, heart disease, and kidney disease.

If you choose to drink alcohol, do so in moderation.

That means men should have no more than two drinks per day, and women one drink per day.

One drink is a 12 ounce beer, 5 ounces of wine, or 1 ½ ounces of liquor.

Alcohol can be high in calories, and people who drink excessively have a high rate of health problems.

And don't forget if you mix liquor with soda or juice that these mixers increase the calorie count of the drink.

Reducing the amount of calories, salt and alcohol you eat and drink, can help you achieve your nutrition goals and improve your health.