

Physical Activity – Make it Part of Your Lunch!

What is physical activity?

Physical activity simply means movement of the body that uses energy. Walking, gardening, briskly pushing a baby stroller, climbing the stairs, playing soccer, or dancing the night away are all good examples of being active. For health benefits, physical activity should be moderate or vigorous and add up to at least 30 minutes a day.

Here are some tips for making physical activity part of your lunch:

- Take a walk as part of your lunchtime
- Take the stairs at work instead of the elevator
- When going out to lunch, park your car far from the entrance of the restaurant so you can get some steps into your lunchtime
- Instead of ordering dessert, have some fresh air after your meal and take a leisurely walk outside

It's all about balance

Even when you are eating healthy food, you have to balance the calories taken in through food with the calories expended as energy. Simply put, if you take in more calories than you burn, over time, you will become overweight. All it takes is a few extra calories every day to add up to a significant weight gain. Be aware of nibbling; every bite counts.

Try these tools to help lock in new habits:

- Reorganize your kitchen – Throw out tempting, unhealthy items and restock with more nutritious ones.

- Keep a food journal – Write down everything you eat for lunch each day. Doing so creates awareness of your eating habits by showing you the various food choices you've made. Have your food choices been more nutritionally balanced? Or are there certain food groups you still need to include in your lunch plan? Keeping a food journal is an excellent way for you to know.

Balanced lunches help control your blood sugar. Stable blood sugars lead to more energy throughout the day. Stable blood sugars also lead to better moods and fewer four o'clock slumps.