

“Step Up to Nutrition and Health” is this year's theme for National Nutrition Month, a nutrition education campaign sponsored by the American Dietetic Association every March. The food and physical activity choices you make each day affect how you feel today and your health for the future. **Eating right and being physically active are the keys to a healthy lifestyle.** Try to get the most nutrition out of your calories! Choose the most nutritionally rich foods you can from each food group. Choose foods packed with vitamins, minerals, fiber, and other nutrients and with a reasonable calorie level. Adding fruit, vegetables, whole grains and legumes to your eating is key to good nutrition! Regular physical activity is important for your overall health and fitness plus it helps to control body weight, blood pressure and reduces the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, osteoporosis and diabetes. For more specific information, please see http://www.eatright.org/ada/files/Step_Up_Fact_Sheet.pdf

So how might you begin to step up to good nutrition and health? I would suggest you begin by making small changes in your meal and snack choices. By choosing nutrient dense foods, you can decrease your calorie intake, but not the amount of food you eat. This will keep you feeling satisfied.

For example, you could add:

- 2 additional servings of fruits and/or vegetables each day (by adding fruit to your breakfast and veggies to your sandwich at lunch or choosing fruits and/or vegetables for your snacks)
- 1 additional low fat dairy serving (by choosing low fat yogurt for breakfast or for a snack and adding 8 oz. 1% or skim milk to a meal)
- Add 3 whole grains in place of refined grains (choose oatmeal or whole grain cold cereals, substitute whole wheat bread for white bread, brown rice for white rice or select low fat popcorn as a snack)

Remember you are eligible for 3 sessions with a Registered Dietitian right here on campus each calendar year at no charge as part of your employee health benefits to help you improve your nutrition. Contact Sally at 4-9625 or barclay@iastate.edu to set up your appointments.

Is a time constraint what is keeping you from getting more physically active? With a little creativity and planning, even the person with the busiest schedule can make room for physical activity. Before or after work or meals is often an available time to cycle, walk, or play. Think about your weekly or daily schedule and look for or make opportunities to be more active. Every little bit helps! And those minutes and steps do add up! Consider the following suggestions from the Center for Disease Control (CDC):

- Walk, cycle, jog, skate, etc., to work, school, the store, or place of worship.
- Park the car farther away from your destination.
- Get on or off the bus several blocks away.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator.
- Play with children or pets. Everybody wins. If you find it too difficult to be active after work, try it before work.

- Take fitness breaks-walking or doing desk exercises-instead of taking smoking or coffee breaks.
- Perform gardening or home repair activities.
- Avoid labor-saving devices-turn off the self-propel option on your lawn mower or vacuum cleaner.
- Use leg power-take small trips on foot to get your body moving.
- Exercise while watching TV (for example, use hand weights, stationary bicycle/treadmill/stairclimber, or stretch).
- Dance to music.
- Keep a pair of comfortable walking or running shoes in your car and office. You'll be ready for activity wherever you go!
- Make a Saturday morning walk a group habit.
- Walk while doing errands.
- Walk on your breaks or during part of your lunch time

Look for other tips for making healthy lifestyle changes from the American Dietetic Association in "The Balancing Act: Eat Well and Move It!" at http://www.eatright.org/ada/files/Healthy_Eating_Recipes.pdf.

Why not plan to attend the March lunch-and-learn, "Step Up to Nutrition and Health", on Thursday, March 30 from noon to 1 PM in 0331 Palmer building (ground floor). Register by calling 4-9625 or replying to this e-mail.

If you are looking for healthy recipes to try, check out those on the Nutrition Clinic Website at <http://www.fshn.hs.iastate.edu/nutritionclinic/recipes.htm>

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