

## Healthy Eating for Life

Healthy eating is a lifestyle choice. Use the 80–20 rule: follow healthy eating recommendations 80% of the time and eat what you like without guilt the other 20% of the time. No food is 100% forbidden—have a treat on occasion; it will make a healthy eating plan more livable. This can be true for diabetics so long as you take the precaution of watching the glycemic load of a meal.

### Retraining old eating habits

- Banish unhealthy ingredients from the home and don't buy any more (better to have the occasional dessert after a balanced meal out than to have it as a temptation in the house).
- Stock pantry and refrigerator with healthy balanced choices.
- Plan ahead meal schedule for the week and have healthy choices prepared and on hand. For example, cook extra chicken breast for a quick lunch salad or stir fry the next day, or bake tofu and have it ready in the refrigerator for an afternoon snack.

### Mindful eating

- Eat slowly, chew slowly, putting fork down between bites.
- Serve small portions on small plates (12-inch plates are recommended) and do not serve seconds. Wait at least 20 minutes before eating more if you are truly hungry. Eat to satisfaction, but not fullness.
- Savor flavors, textures, aromas, and conversation—enjoy the meal experience, not just the food. Do not read, watch TV, or do any work while eating. Try to make mealtime a peaceful, nurturing experience.
- Recognize and redirect non-hunger eating to better behavior responses. First, evaluate whether the urge to eat is true hunger. Wait at least five minutes before eating to see if the urge passes.

### Final tips

- Follow the 80–20 rule. Remember that you don't have to be "perfect" in your eating habits all of the time.
- Eat a healthy, balanced, but varied diet. There is no cause for boredom when there are so many exciting, healthy recipes, and new foods to try.
- Be kind to yourself, and forgive any lapses.
- Learn to be polite, but firm, in resisting the influence of those who may try to offer or entice you with poor food choices.

