Eat Healthy Your Way

Making healthy eating part of your total lifestyle

See how it worked for Dwayne Davis

"My doctor said I needed to eat better to help me stay healthier longer. But I wasn't sure where to start after years of eating whatever I wanted. Then she suggested I try something called **'total diet.'** It really isn't a diet at all—but a way of life. The bottom line about total diet is to **eat healthy most of the time.**

"I stopped thinking of foods as either 'all good' or 'all bad.' First I started eating more healthy foods that were loaded with vitamins, minerals, and fiber. And I ate junk food less often and in smaller amounts."

I challenged myself!

"I've done lots of tough things before. So I challenged myself to see whether I could stick to eating healthy for a month. If I could do that, then I knew I was on my way to following a good eating plan for life."

Dwayne

Dwayne's Week 1: Add more fruits and vegetables

"Adding vegetables was easier than I thought. I found I like broccoli, spinach, and cauliflower. Half of a sweet potato cooked in the microwave makes a sweet and healthy snack. I replaced my usual cookies at lunch with a piece of fresh fruit. The fruit costs less than a candy bar and is loaded with fiber and vitamins."

Ready to try more vegetables?
Go for the red and orange (sweet potatoes, carrots) and green (broccoli, spinach) kinds to get the most nutrients.

Dwayne's Week 2: Bring on the whole grains!

"Eating 100% whole-wheat bread took some getting used to. But now I really like the taste. And it has fiber that fills me up for longer than white bread. I even prefer other whole grains like brown rice over white rice."

Want to eat whole grains too?
Good choices include 100% whole-wheat pasta, breads, and tortillas. Try rolled oats and brown rice too. Read labels. Look for the words "100% whole wheat" or "whole grain" on the package.
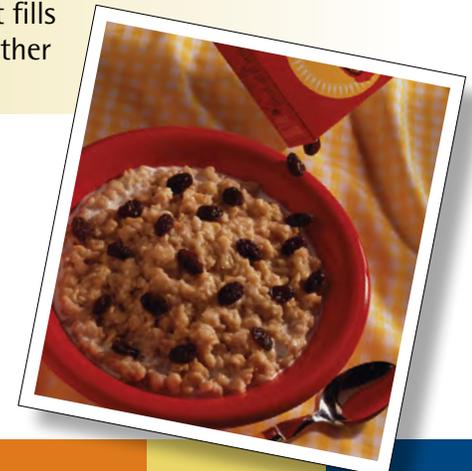
For more information, visit www.healthfinder.gov

Small changes can make a large difference

## Dwayne's Week 3: Cut back on salt (sodium) and sugar

"Once I started reading labels, I was surprised at how much sodium is in packaged foods. High blood pressure runs in my family and cutting back on salt makes a lot of sense health-wise. And sugar? I stopped drinking my daily super-sized 64-ounce soft drink. Turned out the drink had 800 calories—about half of what many people need for the whole day!"

Limit how often and how much salt you eat.

Eat less of these salty foods: pickles, soy sauce, hot dogs, lunch meats, chips, and pretzels. Look for the words "low sodium" or "no salt added" on **canned** vegetables, vegetable juices, and soups.

Eat fewer sweets.

Cut back on empty calories that offer you no nutrients. Eat fruit instead of desserts. Drink fat-free milk, water, or a small glass of 100% juice instead of sugary soft drinks.
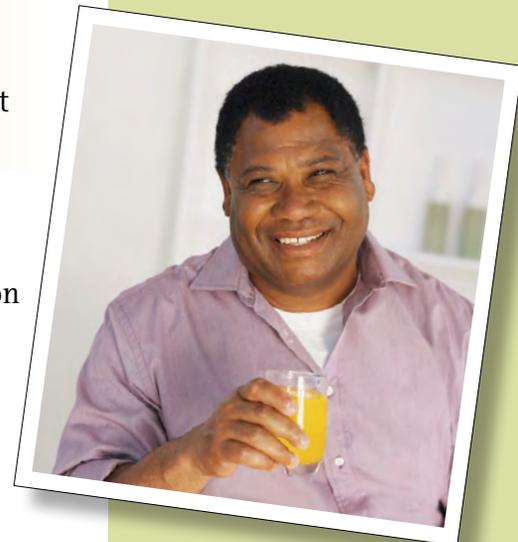
From Week 4 on: Put it all together for a successful healthy eating plan

"By making small changes over time I was beginning to follow a healthy food plan I knew I could stick to. And you know what? I felt better **and** I also lost weight."

Food experts suggest eating a variety of foods that give you what your body needs for good health. No food is forbidden—the key is to eat far more of the foods that are good for you and less of the foods that aren't.

The bottom line?
Watch how much you eat of each food. For more about portion and serving sizes, visit **www.win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/just_enough.htm**.

Include these foods in your food plan:

❏ Fruits and vegetables.
❏ Whole grains, such as brown rice, oats, whole-wheat pasta, and whole-grain breads.
❏ Foods with a lot of calcium, such as fat-free milk and milk products like low-fat yogurt and reduced-fat cheese. Spinach, collard greens, and kale are a source of calcium.
❏ Lean meats, light meat chicken and turkey, fish, eggs, and beans.
❏ Healthy fats, such as olive oil, canola oil, and nuts. Just watch your portions.

Now that you've read Dwayne's story . . .
What tips will you try as you follow a healthy total diet?