



for your company
for your employees
for your future
March 14, 2011

WELLNESS WEEKLY

Healthy Eating: Myth Busters

Myth #1 – Desserts are forbidden

Reality: Correction: Desserts are allowed! Try healthful choices like fruit salads, low-fat yogurt with fruit, sorbets, frozen fruit juice bars, angel food cake, and frozen yogurt.

Myth #2 – You have to lose a lot of weight to make a difference

Reality: Not true. Moderate weight loss can be very beneficial to your overall health. Studies show that *losing 5-10% of your weight and keeping it off can help reduce blood pressure* and cut your risk of heart disease and some cancers.

Myth #3 – If you work out, you can eat whatever you want

Reality: Eating plans can certainly differ based on how active you are and how intense your work out is. Professional athletes and construction workers pack a tremendous amount of physical activity into a day; but that doesn't mean they get to super-size any food they want. It means that their calorie requirements might be a little higher than for people who get only low-to-moderate levels of physical activity each day. To stay lean and healthy, it's best to choose the most nutrient-rich foods from the basic food groups every day, eat them in the right portions, and stay active.

Myth #4 – Skipping meals makes you lose weight fast

Reality: Actually, the opposite can be true. While you might lower the number of calories you eat in a day, your body works less efficiently without food. Your energy gets zapped, your metabolism slows down and you miss important nutrients that your body needs to fight disease and stay well. Plus, you'll probably be hungrier by the next meal time, and you may be more inclined to overeat or make high-calorie/low-nutrient choices. Overeating and a slower metabolism can contribute to weight gain.

Try to eat regular meals that include 5-9 servings of fruits and vegetables each day as well as a variety of nutritious choices from all the basic food groups. Eating high-fiber/low-fat meals and exercising 30-60 minutes most days of the week are very healthful ways to lose weight.

Myth #5 – You should never eat fast food

Reality: You might be happy to know that healthier options are available today at most fast food restaurants. Burger joints are now offering more "grilled" or "roasted" items, fruit and vegetable side-orders, salads, whole-grain buns and low-fat yogurt desserts among other healthful choices. If you like fast food with a cultural flair, try soft corn tortilla tacos with chicken, diced tomatoes, salsa and cooked pinto beans, but opt to hold on the extra cheese and sour cream. Or perhaps choose chicken lo mein with steamed vegetables. Try choosing fruit juice, peanuts or frozen yogurt at the convenient stores. Always remember to balance your eating plan by not relying on quick food service options too often.

