



The SNAC Challenge

Many factors determine your health status. Eating habits, level of physical activity, and general lifestyle behaviors have a great effect on your well being. An awareness of habits is essential to determine how healthy you are. How do you respond to choices that confront you daily? Take the SNAC Challenge! Answer the following questions and become more aware of your health habits.

15 Ways to a Healthier You!

1. Do you regularly eat three well-balanced meals a day?
2. Can you control the following: preoccupation with food and weight; distorted body image; undereating or overeating under stress?
3. When you go out to eat, do you select a restaurant that serves healthy options?
4. During midterms and finals, do you deal with stress by pre-planning activities, being physically active, and/or performing relaxation exercises?
5. Do you limit the amount of alcohol and caffeine you consume?
6. When you have a cold or flu, do you increase rest and fluid intake? Do you know when it is time to go see a doctor?
7. Do you choose air-popped popcorn, fresh fruit, and vegetables when you snack?
8. Do you participate in aerobic activities three or more times a week? Do you do resistance training two or more times a week?
9. Do you try to decrease your saturated and trans fat intake and increase the amount of fiber you consume?

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10. Do you avoid popular diet programs such as: low carbohydrate diets, powdered milkshake formulas, and diet pills?
11. Have you been checked by a medical professional for iron deficiency anemia?
12. Do you drink at least 10-13 cups of fluid daily?
13. Do you select foods that are high in calcium on a daily basis?
14. Do you know the difference between complex and simple carbohydrates? Do you choose mostly whole grains?
15. Does your diet include the daily recommended servings from the five food groups on MyPyramid?

These questions address a range of important health issues. How did you fare? If you answered "yes" to all of the above questions, congratulations! You have healthy habits. If you answered "no" to any of the above questions, you may consider modifying some of your activities and/or contacting a health professional to learn more about healthier habits and lifestyles.

Remember, changes that occur gradually are more apt to be maintained. Focus on one area at a time. Set realistic goals, and slowly work towards those goals. Once achieved and maintained, select another area and gradually begin to improve those habits. Do not forget to reward yourself as you accomplish your goals.

Please visit www.snac.ucla.edu for more information on each of the topics discussed.





The SNAC Challenge

EAT THREE WELL-BALANCED MEALS A DAY

One of the best ways to ensure you are receiving all the essential nutrients your body requires is to eat three well-balanced meals a day plus healthy snacks as needed. Select a variety of foods from the five food groups on the USDA's MyPyramid, and make choices that are low in saturated fat and high in fiber.

EATING DISORDERS

Anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge eating are serious eating disorders which often occur in the college population. If you have an unhealthy relationship with food or your body, confront the problem and seek out someone you can trust to listen and provide support. Help is available from friends, family, and/or health professionals in student health and psychological services.

DINING OUT

When dining out, select a restaurant that serves healthy items or is willing to make recipe modifications. If you are eating at a restaurant that serves large portions, plan to take part of your meal home or share it with a friend. Remember that moderation is the key.

STRESS REDUCTION

Pre-planning, physical activity, and relaxation techniques are excellent ways to reduce the negative effects of stress. Set realistic goals, and make a daily or weekly "to do" list to help manage your time. Practice progressive muscle relaxation exercises and abdominal breathing when you feel stressed. Aerobic activity is also a great way to release negative energy.

ALCOHOL/CAFFEINE

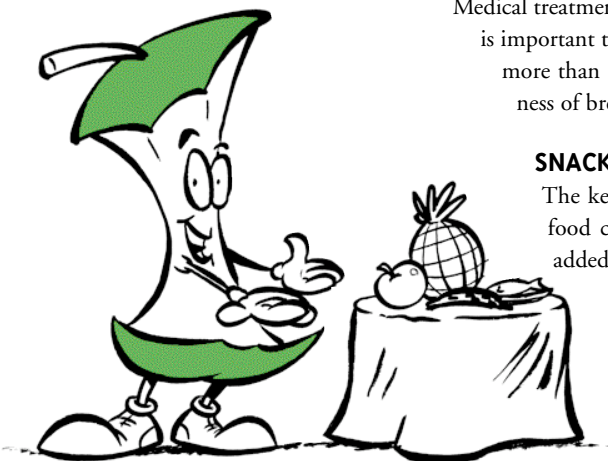
It is important to know your limits. Too much alcohol and caffeine can have adverse effects. Heavy alcohol use can cause malnutrition, liver disease, and brain damage, as well as negative psychological effects. An excessive caffeine intake can lead to increased heart rate, temporary elevation of blood pressure, insomnia, and anxiety.

COLDS/FLU

Medical treatment is rarely needed for a common cold or the flu. However, it is important to seek medical care if any of the following symptoms lasts for more than three days: prolonged fever over 102° F, chest pain or shortness of breath, persistent earache, body rash, or swollen lymph nodes.

SNACKING

The key to healthy snacking is your conscious effort to make wise food choices. Have foods on hand that are low in saturated fat, added sugar and sodium, and high in fiber.



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PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Regular aerobic activity aids in weight control, improves cardiovascular fitness, helps relieve stress, boosts energy, and improves self-image. Resistance training builds strong bones and muscles and boosts your metabolic rate.

FAT AND FIBER

It is important to decrease your consumption of fat, especially saturated and trans fat, and increase your intake of fiber by eating more vegetables, fruits, beans, and whole grains to reduce your risk of heart disease and cancer.

POPULAR DIETS

Popular diets are ineffective and can be extremely hazardous to your health. Most health professionals agree that regular physical activity and proper eating habits are essential to a successful, long-term weight management program.

IRON DEFICIENCY

Some individuals may not show overt symptoms of anemia. Others may feel tired, lack energy, or look pale. The best way to ensure your body gets enough iron is to eat iron-rich foods such as lean meat, skinless poultry, fish, beans, peas, dark green leafy vegetables, and fortified breakfast cereals. Vitamin C increases iron absorption, so be sure to include a rich source of vitamin C with your meals. Some examples of Vitamin C-rich foods include citrus fruits and juices, green and red peppers, tomatoes, potatoes and broccoli.

WATER AND FLUIDS

To maintain optimal health, it is important to drink at least 8-10 cups of water daily. This amount is needed to replenish the two quarts of water an average adult loses every day through breathing, perspiration, and body waste.

CALCIUM

You can get enough calcium by eating a well-balanced diet, which includes low-fat dairy products, leafy green vegetables, tofu, and fortified juices and breakfast cereals. Remember to also get enough vitamin D from fortified milk and sunlight to increase calcium absorption.

CARBOHYDRATES

Complex carbohydrates from whole grains, vegetables, beans, and whole fruits are energy-yielding nutrients that provide fiber, protein, and many vitamins and minerals. Simple carbohydrates from added sugars, on the other hand, are just “empty calories” because they provide energy but virtually no other nutrients.

HEALTHY EATING

One of the best ways to ensure you are receiving all the essential nutrients your body needs is to eat a variety of foods daily. Recommended daily servings from the five food groups on the 2000-calorie diet MyPyramid are: Grains (6 oz.), Vegetables (2 1/2 cups), Fruits (2 cups), Low-fat Milk (3 cups), Lean Meats and Beans (5 1/2 oz.).