

When Christians remember Jesus' sacrifice of his body and blood, we do so by reenacting the last meal he shared with his apostles. When Jews remember God's rescue of their ancestors from slavery, they do so by reenacting the meal eaten on the night of the Passover.

Throughout the Bible's story of salvation there are descriptions of the fish, fruits and vegetables, high-fiber foods and plant-based ingredients that were basic to Jesus' culture and which still comprise a healthy, balanced diet.

Important moments in the Gospel have to do with eating. Jesus taught both disciples and skeptics while eating with them. He stopped preaching to feed the people who came to hear him. The first time he spoke to others after his resurrection, it was on the way to supper.

Food is so common an image in scripture because it so easily demonstrates that everything in creation has a purpose. All things are available to us for our use, and we as Stewards are smart enough to choose between what is good for us and what isn't.



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Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?

1 Corinthians 6:19

Stewardship of Health

DIET & NUTRITION

Yet Americans don't eat very intelligently.

We eat more fat – especially hydrogenated fat (trans fat), saturated fat and butterfat – more refined sugars and starches, more artificial sweeteners, more salt and more packaged and processed foods than anyone else. We consume less vitamin-rich produce, less dietary fiber and less omega-3, a fatty acid vital to life.

As a result, **sixty percent of us are overweight or obese**. Largely because of too much body fat and neglect for essential nutrition, we have the world's highest incidence of **hypertension, heart and blood vessel disease, diabetes, Alzheimer's disease and seventeen kinds of cancer**.

Eight dietary rules common to diets for high cholesterol heart disease, hypertension, type 2 diabetes and cancer **could apply to all of us:**

1. **Read food labels.** Easy-to-read "Nutrition Facts" and "Ingredients" statements are given for virtually everything in the market. **Comparing labels allows better choices.**
2. **Calories still count!** A moderately active adult needs about **15 calories per pound** per day to stay at his or her current weight. Someone **less active** or who needs to lose **weight** needs **fewer calories** per pound. Most food **labels** list calories and amounts of carbohydrate, protein and fat. This simplifies **weight and exercise planning**.
3. Eat **more of what does the most** for me:
 - **fresh, natural** vegetables and fruits; and **whole grain** foods like oatmeal, brown rice and whole wheat bread and pasta;
 - **protein** foods with **good or less fat**, like skinless chicken, unsweetened yogurt, dry beans and peas, nuts and oily fish;
 - **unsaturated cooking and table fats** like olive oil, peanut oil, flax seed oil and non-hydrogenated soft margarines.

4. Eat **less of what does the least** for me:

- **white** sugar, flour, pasta, potatoes and rice, other **white and refined** starches;
- red meat, fatty poultry and dairy, palm oil and coconut oil; and other foods with **animal and other saturated fats**;
- stick margarine, solid shortening and foods with **hydrogenated or trans fats**;
- **salt**; and **packaged foods in general**.

5. **Keep my diet in balance!**

Total **carbohydrate** should be about **60 percent** of daily **calories**. Total **protein** should be **at least 10 percent**. Total **fat** should **never be more than 30 percent**.

Oakwood's Carla Boyes, MS, RD, CDE, says, "Good nutrition means not only getting the right amount of foods that provide calories but also getting required **vitamins, minerals, phytochemicals and antioxidants!** **Variety and balance** are the best way to get them."

6. Use less of what I don't need for **cooking, snacking and at the table**.

- Roast, broil, bake, stir-fry or steam foods instead of **pan frying or deep-frying**.
- Don't use **salt** in food preparation.
- Use **spreads** and **dressings** sparingly.
- **Snacks are meals**. Make wiser choices.

7. Drink **more water**.

8. Eat **less at a time**. Eat **more slowly**. **Start eating earlier** in the day and **stop at least two hours before bed**.

"Whether, then, you

**EAT OR DRINK,
OR WHATEVER YOU DO,
DO ALL TO THE GLORY OF GOD."**

1 Corinthians 10:31