

Are Your Eating Habits Healthy?

Healthy eating is one of those things that everyone wants to do, but no-one is quite sure how to. Food companies all want you to believe that all you have to do to be healthy is buy whatever you're selling, and people will pay high prices for 'health in a bottle' type products. The reality of healthy eating, however, is much more complicated than that. The key to healthy eating is one little word: balance. You need to balance all the different food groups in your diet (that's diet as in things you eat, not diet as in weight loss). That means carbohydrates, fats and proteins should all feature equally in each meal you eat. Start paying attention to the backs of labels, where it should be clearly marked how much of each nutrient your food contains, and steer clear of foods that are very high in any one thing unless you are planning to mix them with something else to make a meal. The average person eats too much carbohydrate (in the form of sugar and pasta) and fat (unhealthy snacks), but nowhere near enough protein. If you want to balance your diet, in most cases, the first thing you should do is cut back on the sweets and snacks and eat more meat and dairy instead – it might sound obvious, but it is surprising how people will go out of their way to balance their meals and then ruin it all with snacks. Apart from carbohydrates, proteins and fats, the other things you need to worry about are vitamins. Most vitamins are necessary in at least small quantities for your body to function properly. While it might seem tempting to just take vitamin pills, it is pointlessly expensive when you could just as easily eat fruit and vegetables and get all your vitamins that way. Also, don't skip breakfast, as most cereals have many vitamins added and can be a good way to make sure you get enough.

About the Author

An encyclopedia article on nutrition, including sections on history, health, food processing, longevity, lifestyle, policy, holistic.

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