

Small Changes You Can Live With

From the desk of Beth David, Dietetic Intern

New Year's goals for eating better, exercising more, and losing weight start out strong in January. By the end of the month, it is clear that old habits are hard to break.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans suggest ways to eat better. The guidelines promote making small changes to the way you eat. Over time, small changes are easier to live with and can become new habits. By swapping food and drinks that are good for us for those that are not, small changes can add up!

See if these small changes might work for you:¹

- Instead of ground beef, use ground turkey in chili, tacos, casseroles
- Instead of a fried chicken, try a grilled chicken and a side salad
- Instead of French fries, try a baked potato, brown rice, or vegetables
- Instead of high-fat cookies, try graham crackers or rice cakes
- Instead of sweetened yogurt, try plain yogurt with fruit
- Instead of iceberg lettuce, try romaine, spinach or mixed greens
- Instead of white bread, try whole wheat
- Instead of fruit juice, eat a whole fruit
- Instead of creamy soups, try broth-based soups with veggies

Physical activity can also be increased with small changes. Try exercise "snacking" every day. Moving for ten minutes three times a day is as good as exercising for 30 minutes. If a trip to the gym doesn't fit into your day, try these exercise "snacks":

- Walk during your lunch break
- Park your car far away from the door
- Take the stairs, not the elevator
- Use the steps at home many times a day
- Take your dog for an extra walk each day
- Walk around the house during TV commercials

¹ Smart Substitutions. American Heart Association web site. http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/HealthyEating/Nutrition/Smart-Substitution_UCM_302052_Article.jsp#.V-OeTKYVUCUK. Accessed on September 29, 2016.

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Thank you!

Phil Marcin

Development Director

Questions? If you have any questions on this or any nutrition-related topic, or have an idea for a future *Healthy Bite* topic, please call our registered dietitian, Lori Harvey. You can reach her by telephone at 330-376-7717 extension 140 or by email lharvey@mobilemealsinc.org.

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