

## 50 GREAT HEALTHY EATING TIPS AND TRICKS from [www.healthy-eating-made-easy.com](http://www.healthy-eating-made-easy.com)

Read, remember, and – most important – FOLLOW these tips, and watch your diet get healthier, day by day.

### 3 BREAKFAST HINTS

1. **Always eat breakfast** to keep your energy levels up during the morning, and wipe out the 10am snack-attack.
2. Switch to **no-added sugar cereals**, and make them more flavoursome with fruit – sliced bananas, a few grapes, chopped dried apricot.
3. Putting a **protein shot** into your breakfast is a great idea, and helps stave off hunger for longer. A couple of spoons of yoghurt on your cereal, some no salt/no sugar baked beans on wholemeal toast, a boiled egg – simple, and good.

### 4 HINTS FOR HEALTHY DRINKS

4. You've heard it before, but are you doing it? **Drink 1.5 – 2 litres (2.5 US pints) of water**, each and every day.
5. There's no need to buy costly mineral waters. The stuff out of the tap becomes much more palatable when chilled, so **keep a big jug or bottle in the fridge**. Add ice and lemon for a very civilised and refreshing drink.
6. Alcohol in moderation can certainly be part of a healthy diet, but it's easy to get into the habit of the early-evening swig. **Make a new habit** – before you reach for the wine, have a glass of chilled water. If water doesn't fit the bill, try chilled tomato or vegetable juice, with ice and lemon.
7. **Cut down on caffeine**, which gives an addictive buzz. Switch gradually to low- or no-caffeine alternatives, such as coffee substitutes made from chicory or barley, or herbal, fruit or redbush teas. Hot water on its own, or with a slice of lemon is an excellent hot drink.

### 5 FOOD SHOPPING HINTS

8. **Shop local, shop little, shop often**. Buy food at its freshest, choosing unpackaged fruit and veg for preference. If packaged, check use-by dates to find what's freshest in the store, and use the produce immediately.
9. Find out when there's a **farmers' market** nearby, and mark it on the calendar. Stock up on organic meats and poultry which can be frozen. Sample different organic produce.
10. **Choose humanely produced meat and poultry** every single time. Don't support the miserable farming practices that so many animals endure – and do your health a favour at the same time.
11. Organic foods can work out expensive, so look for balance. **Use your organic budget** on the foods you eat most often – apples, potatoes, green veg, peppers, meat, poultry. And add one organic store cupboard item to your shopping trolley or cart every time you shop, so you build up a stock of organic condiments etc.
12. Cut down, down, down, on the processed foods you purchase, and **choose more, more, more of the fresh and simple foods** you can quickly cook from scratch.

### 7 HEALTHY COOKING HINTS

13. **Trash your deep fryer**. And let your frying pan gather dust in the cupboard. Fried food gobbles up fat, so save those crispy, finger-licking items for an occasional treat.
14. On the rare occasions when you do shallow-fry, use spray fat, dry-fry in a non-stick pan, or use a **healthy oil like olive, sunflower or corn**.
15. Cooking on the hob? **Poach**, stew, stir-fry or steam.
16. Cooking in the oven? **Bake**, or roast, covered, after you remove excess fat from meat.
17. Another alternative? **Grill (broil)**, placing food on a rack so the fat drains off. Or use a griddle pan, which also allows fat to escape.
18. **Go easy on barbecued foods**. Those blackened bits aren't good for you.
19. Cook up big batches of healthy dishes when you're in the mood, or if there's a glut of seasonal produce. **Freeze in portion sizes**.

### 6 HINTS ON CUTTING DOWN FAT

20. We're back to reading labels – **shun the saturated fats**: coconut, palm oil (very widely used), and animal fats such as butter and cream.
21. Keep a sharp eye out for **trans fats, and hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated vegetable oil**. Present in a huge variety of manufactured foods, these are fats which have been chemically altered for processing, and which lay down a sediment in the arteries which can lead to heart disease and strokes.
22. Get used to **trimming visible fat** from meat and poultry. Always go for lean cuts. If you can't bear to lose the chicken skin, at least cut away the fat deposits underneath, often hidden in folds of skin at one end of a chicken piece.
23. **Eat less fat-filled meat products** like sausages, frankfurters and salamis.
24. **Cut down on cakes, biscuits and pastries**. Manufactured ones contain unhealthy fats. Make your own with healthier alternatives – but limit yourself to one piece of cake or pie in a day, and don't eat them every day.
25. **Switch to skimmed milk**. If you don't like it on cereals, keep some semi-skimmed in the fridge as well.

### 3 HINTS ON SUGAR AND CHOCOLATE

26. **Reduce sugar and sweetened foods in your diet**. When you fancy a sweet something, have fresh or dried fruit, or a wholewheat scone.
27. **Even savoury junk foods contain sugar** – crisps, cheesy biscuits, soups. Check those labels, and better still cut these out of your diet altogether.
28. **Yes, you can eat chocolate** – but make it dark, make it organic, make it high in cocoa solids. And make it special – rather than gulping down a cheap choc bar that is full of fats and sugars, which precious little chocolate, savour a few squares of the real thing and think of it as a treat.

### 2 HINTS ON SALT

29. **Processed foods are stacked full of salt**, another good reason for eradicating them from your diet.
30. Add less or no salt when cooking – in time you will get used to the flavour and not miss the saltiness. **Don't put salt on the table** either. Use herbs and spices to add savour to bland foods.

### 5 HEALTHY EATING TIPS

31. Make healthy eating **changes gradually**. You may be altering deep-seated habits, and that takes time. Tackle one area at a time, removing unhealthy items and substituting those that are better for you in stages.
32. The **occasional unhealthy food** isn't going to do any harm. Eating should be pleasurable, after all. Look out for healthier versions – such as organic cream, instead of factory-farmed cream – and enjoy in moderation.
33. **Listen to your stomach**, and learn to recognise the signs that you've eaten enough. It can take up to half an hour for the signals from the gut to reach the brain and give you that 'I'm full' feeling – but you know, long before that, that you've really had enough. That's the moment to stop, even if you leave some food on your plate.
34. **Eat mindfully**. Enjoy the taste and texture of your food, and think about what you're putting into your body.
35. Shovelling food down as you watch tv, reduces it to fuel and raises the likelihood that you'll over-indulge. **Sit down to eat**, with other people whenever possible, and share the pleasures of a meal together.

### 3 HINTS ON PORTIONS AND SERVINGS

36. **Get tough on portion sizes**. A serving of cooked meat should be about the size of a deck of cards, no bigger.
37. Inspect plates as you serve. **Think in quarters** – one quarter of the plate should contain protein like meat or fish, another quarter starch like potatoes or rice. The other half? You've guessed it – vegetables. Serve 2-3 different varieties, and serve lots.

38. Not sure where you're going wrong in your diet? **Keep a simple food diary** for a week, noting the drinks, snacks and meals you have. Then tot up the amount of sweet stuff, processed foods, fried/fast/junk foods, and compare to the amount of fruit and vegetables, lean meat, fish, poultry and wholegrain foods you've consumed. You know which should come out on top, and now you can see where to make adjustments.

#### 5 TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR DIET

39. **Switch from white foods, to brown.** We're talking bread/pasta/rice/cous cous and other grains here. Always go for the wholegrain variety. If it takes getting used to, do it gradually, or start by making a mix – half white pasta/half wholemeal.
40. Remember to **use pulses frequently.** Lentils, chick peas, all types of bean – these are power-packed protein foods, full of fibre, and a really great addition to your diet. Add them to soups, salads, casseroles and pasta sauces. If you're troubled with flatulence after eating pulses, try pureeing them coarsely before use. The indigestible skins are often at the root of the problem.
41. Put **fish**, especially oily fish like salmon, tuna and mackerel, on the menu at least 3 times a week. Have at least one fish-based sandwich for lunch every week.
42. Make **fruit** your first line of defence when you fancy a snack. Three or four fruit snacks a day can only do you good – a simple banana, satsuma or apple, a handful of dried fruits (plus some unsalted nuts or seeds if you like), a slice of watermelon, a little helping of cubed melon or mango, a kiwi to eat with a teaspoon.
43. Go for **colourful eating.** Nutritionists agree that brightly coloured fruit and veg are especially rich in vitamins and antioxidants. The trick is get a good range, so include something red, orange, yellow, dark green and blue/black every day.

#### 4 TIPS ON EATING AWAY FROM HOME

44. Beware **the siren-call of the salad bar.** Hands off those croutons and crispy bacon bits. Head for the veggies and lean or low-fat protein sources. Hunt out some pulses or beans. And when you get to the dressing, limit mayo and go for one small ladle or sachet of vinaigrette.
45. Going to a party where everyone brings a dish? **Take along a healthy option** – home-made hummus with crackers and vegetable sticks, a bean casserole, a big salad made pretty herbs and slices of fruit, a fresh fruit salad.
46. **An hour before you leave** for a festive feast, have a sustaining healthy snack, or even a small meal. That groaning buffet will seem much less tempting if you're stomach's already happy.
47. Enjoy the occasion, **don't focus on the food** – that's not why you're there. Talk to people, circulate, take a small plate and when you've served yourself, move away from the buffet table.

#### 3 TIPS FOR FEEDING KIDS

48. When you're cooking, and the family are hanging around looking hopeful, chop up a **quick pile of veggie sticks** as a healthy appetiser. Even kids who are picky about veg will often nibble at a stack of carrot and celery sticks, if you just place it quietly where they can reach...
49. Lunch box time – **spread that bread thinly**, use mustard rather than mayo, and remember to stuff a good handful of shredded salad leaves, red pepper or beanshoots in there as well.
50. **Put fresh fruit in the freezer or ice box**, so when kids demand an ice cream you can hand them a deep-frozen banana, or a dish of frosted orange segments.

For more ideas and inspirations to help you eat healthily, visit <http://www.healthy-eating-made-easy.com>