

# GOOD NUTRITION



While I was excitedly busy creating a nutrition webpage with tips, recipes, meal plans and more, I got asked the most basic question – What does good nutrition mean and why is it important to me? Brilliant, I thought! What a great question! The answer holds the foundation for understanding optimal health and how it ties in to a better YOU!

- Good nutrition means eating a variety of foods that give you the nutrients you need to maintain your health, feel good, and have energy. These nutrients include protein, carbohydrates, fat, water, vitamins, and minerals.
- Good nutrition means avoiding processed foods, as much as possible, that may have a long list of unfamiliar ingredients and contain excessive amounts of sodium.
- Good nutrition means limiting and being aware of added sugar. Research shows that there is a link between sugar, addiction and the risk for cardiovascular disease.
- Good nutrition means considering balance, variety and moderation in everything that you eat.

Good nutrition is the foundation for great health! It isn't about giving up your favorite foods, but rather making smart choices from a wide variety of healthy fresh whole foods. The better your choices, the better you'll feel physically and emotionally. From the moment you chomp

down food, your teeth, tongue, stomach and intestines go to work to convert that food into nutrients that can be absorbed by the body. Foods like apples, broccoli, spinach, wild salmon and sweet potatoes are rich in nutrients. While foods like potato chips and doughnuts and soda are nutrient poor, giving you mostly saturated fat and/or added sugar. Whether rich or poor, these nutrients either travel through your bloodstream to supply energy to your body's cells or they are stored as fat. Your body needs plenty of rich nutrients to grow and repair tissue and regulate your body's chemical processes.

What you eat not only affects how you feel physically, but it can also bring about physiological and chemical changes in your **brain** structure, which can lead to altered behavior. An unhealthy diet can lead to depression or mood changes and loss of mental clarity. I have experienced this personally. When I feel on edge or depressed, I can usually trace it back to something I've eaten that is not healthy. Conversely, when I feel happy and on top of the world, those are the times when I am in control and feeding my body good nutrition.

There was a time in my life when I paid no attention to good nutrition. My perfect dinner may have been sitting in front of the TV with a bag of chips and a bowl of guacamole with a glass of chardonnay. I didn't know or didn't care. I know now why I felt the way I did. Anyone can change their habits if they really want to.

Good nutrition is about learning what to eat to support your body and mind. And, it's about making healthy choices based on information so you can accomplish amazing things. If you want to feel great, live a long and productive life and be a stronger total being, be interested in your body and what you put in it. It's the only one you've got!

Amy