

# Learning to Eat Healthy is a Way of Life

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We've all heard the phrase, "way of life." Living in a certain culture or region presents a certain way of life; the city, for example, as opposed to the country; the East versus the West. We also develop our own personal views on how we go about our daily "way of life:" how we work and play, how we spend our free time and how we eat and exercise.

Eating junk food is a way of life the same as healthy eating. Only junk food will get you to the doctor faster and give you more sicknesses down the road. Your mother told you to eat your vegetables and it wasn't just because she had gone to the effort to cook them.

There are many ways to sustain a healthy life; for example:

1. **Eat a variety of nutrient-rich foods.** Your body needs more than 40 different nutrients for good health, which means your daily food selection should include bread and other whole-grain products; fruits; vegetables; dairy products; and meat, poultry, fish and other protein foods. (as long as you don't have food allergies to any of these options).
2. **Enjoy plenty of whole grains, fruits and vegetables.** You've heard it before and it bears repeating; You need 6-11 servings from the bread, rice, cereal and pasta group; 2-4 servings of fruit and 3-5 servings of vegetables. Ask your local nutritionist to get a variety of recipes so you can enjoy these foods.
3. **Remember portion control.** If you keep portion sizes reasonable, it's easier to eat the foods you want and stay healthy. The recommended serving of cooked meat is 3 ounces, similar in size to a deck of playing cards. A medium piece of fruit is 1 serving and a cup of pasta equals 2 servings. A pint of ice cream contains four servings. Check out the [Food Guide Pyramid](#) for information.
4. **Make changes gradually.** It's hard to change eating habits overnight and in fact, you shouldn't, because going too fast could lead you back to the bad food road you just exited. Begin modestly and you'll see that you can change your way of life easily and make food as satisfying to your palette as it was before.

Remember to eat small meals and eat often. Look up information on food allergies, because these can impact your health, as well as eating for different blood types. Respond to what your body wants more than what you need emotionally and you'll be on the way to living a better way of life.