

What Is National Nutrition Month?

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Are you reaching for that fast food hamburger instead of a salad of greens and vegetables? Well, you may have been able to get away with that in February, but not in March.

A lot of changes happen in March; most importantly, the season changes from winter to spring. And with the change of season we hope you will also consider a change in your diet, because March is National Nutrition Month, a time to remember the importance of eating and staying healthy.

National Nutrition Month is a nutrition education and information campaign created by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. The campaign focuses attention on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits. Registered Dietitian Day, also celebrated in March, increases awareness of registered dietitians as the indispensable providers of food and nutrition services and recognizes RDs for their commitment to helping people enjoy healthy lives.

The mission, of course, is to promote optimal nutrition and well being for all people by advocating for its members. During the month the idea is to foster a commitment to nutrition that will become a part of your routine during the rest of the year. Eat wise and healthy every day and create a meal plan each week that will allow you to perform at your best. According to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, nutrient-rich foods are familiar, easy to find and represent the five basic food groups, helping you to achieve balance and build a healthier diet that can be simple and stress-free.

Need help getting started? First, select nutrient-rich foods and beverages and choose among the basic food groups:

- Brightly colored fruits and 100 percent fruit juice
- Vibrantly colored vegetables, including potatoes
- Whole-grain, fortified and fiber-rich grain foods
- Low-fat and fat-free milk, cheese and yogurt
- Lean meats, poultry, fish, eggs, beans and nuts.

Spending a little more time thinking about what you eat before you reach for it can help you in your diet and health pursuits. When you eat to be healthy you eat for the best reasons, to nurture your mind and body and soul.