



# Healthy Habits

Tips and resources for living well



## Changing Your Health Plan? Make Sure You're Covered!



If you are changing your health plan this year during Open Enrollment, consider asking yourself the following questions, before choosing your new insurance:

- **Did your plan from last year cover your healthcare needs** throughout the year?
- **Have there been any major changes in your health** since the last year (for example, a diagnosis of diabetes or other condition that will require frequent doctor visits or medications)?
- **Did you meet your deductible**, or were you left not covered for needed services at any point during the year?
- **How often did you see your doctor**, and what were your costs?
- **Are there any other services you need to use regularly**, like chiropractic?

Taking time to evaluate your medical needs ahead of time can help you be confident about selecting the best health insurance option for you and your family during this year's Open Enrollment.

## Adding More Fruits and Vegetables

Fruits and vegetables are low in fat, high in fiber and loaded with vitamins. Eating a wide variety, from strawberries to squash, can play a key role in warding off chronic diseases and building your natural resistance to illness. Here are some easy ways to add more fruits and vegetables to your daily diet:

- **Make smoothies.** Smoothies can greatly increase the number of fruits and vegetables you consume per day, as you can get multiple servings in one smoothie. **Plus, the combinations are endless!**
- **Order a side salad instead of fries.** See if you can get as many healthy toppings on it as you can-like broccoli, cucumbers or tomatoes.
- **Snack smarter.** Keep a supply of fruits and vegetables available for when a snack-attack sets in. Bring a bag of baby carrots or apples with you on your commute, or keep some dried fruits and nuts at your desk. This will help prevent trips to the vending machine or the drive-thru.
- **Toss veggies into soups and stews and sauces.** Get creative-toss chopped spinach in spaghetti sauce, or diced zucchini in your chili recipe.





# Overcoming Substance Abuse What Experts Recommend

53 percent of Americans have a spouse or close relative who is struggling with addiction. If you're dealing with an addicted family member, it can cause tremendous frustration and resentment. Often, conflict can arise among family members who differ on how to deal with the person struggling with their addiction. Licensed Professional Counselors are experienced in helping individuals and families struggling with addiction. Here is what they recommend:

- **Don't ignore the problem;** express your feelings in a healthy manner. This can be the beginning to healthier coping.
- **Try to understand** what the addicted family member may be experiencing. This can lead to the right steps toward overcoming the problem.
- **Learn about treatment options.** These can include therapy, intervention specialists and rehab clinics.

## Childhood Obesity Awareness Month



Learn how to balance food and activity for your children.

### What is Energy Balance?

Energy is another word for "calories." Your energy balance is the balance of calories consumed through eating and drinking compared to calories burned through physical activity. What you eat and drink is **ENERGY IN**. What you burn through physical activity is **ENERGY OUT**.

You burn a certain number of calories just by breathing air and digesting food. You also burn a certain number of calories (**ENERGY OUT**) through your daily routine. For example, children burn calories just being students—walking to their lockers, carrying books, etc.—and adults burn calories walking to the bus stop, going shopping, etc. A chart of estimated calorie requirements for children and adults is available at the link below; this chart can help you maintain a healthy calorie balance.

An important part of maintaining energy balance is the amount of **ENERGY OUT** (physical activity) that you do. People who are more **physically active** burn **more** calories than those who are not as physically active.

**The same amount of ENERGY IN (calories consumed) and ENERGY OUT / (calories burned) over time = weight stays the same**  
**More IN than OUT over time = weight gain / More OUT than IN over time = weight loss**

Your **ENERGY IN** and **OUT** don't have to balance every day. It's having a balance **over time** that will help you stay at a healthy weight for the long term. Children need to balance their energy, too, but they're also growing and that should be considered as well. Energy balance in children happens when the amount of **ENERGY IN** and **ENERGY OUT** supports natural growth without promoting excess weight gain.

### Energy Balance in Real Life

Think of it as balancing your "lifestyle budget." For example, if you know you and your family will be going to a party and may eat more high-calorie foods than normal, then you may wish to eat fewer calories for a few days before so that it balances out. Or, you can increase your physical activity level for the few days before or after the party, so that you can burn off the extra energy.

The same applies to your kids. If they'll be going to a birthday party and eating cake and ice cream—or other foods high in fat and added sugar—help them balance their calories the day before and/or after by providing ways for them to be more physically active.

Eating just **150 calories more a day** than you burn can lead to an **extra 5 pounds over 6 months**. That's a **gain of 10 pounds a year**. If you don't want this weight gain to happen, or you want to lose the extra weight, you can either reduce your **ENERGY IN** or increase your **ENERGY OUT**. Doing both is the best way to achieve and maintain a healthy body weight.

Here are some ways to **cut** 150 calories (**ENERGY IN**):

- Drink water instead of a 12-ounce regular soda
- Eat an egg-white omelet (with three eggs), instead of whole eggs
- Use tuna canned in water (6-ounce can), instead of oil

Here are some ways to **burn** 150 calories (**ENERGY OUT**), **in just 30 minutes** (for a 150 pound person):

- Walk two miles
- Do yard work (gardening, raking leaves, etc.)
- Go for a bike ride