



# You Are What You Eat – Really!

The old adage that we used to get our kids to eat their veggies is true for us, too. Studies have shown that those of us who eat a well-balanced diet tend to live longer, healthier lives – and are also happier!

We've heard it for years -- the better you eat, the healthier you are. The good news is that it has never been easier to eat foods that not only are good for you, but taste good too. Below are nine ways you can improve what and how you eat.



**Keep it fresh.** It is easy to fall into the habit of opening a box of “something,” and popping it in the microwave. Although it won't hurt to do this from time to time, eating processed foods on a regular basis can sabotage our health. Processed foods tend to contain more sodium, hidden sugars and other ingredients that may not be good for us. Instead, purchase fresh fruits and vegetables whenever possible and make sure to eat at least five servings a day.



**Eat for color.** When planning a meal, make your plate a color palette. Colorful food is chocked full of vitamins, minerals, fiber, antioxidants and phyto-nutrients our bodies need. Fresh is best, but flash-frozen options are good, too. So, what's your favorite color?



**Complex doesn't have to be hard.** Contrary to some popular diet trends, carbohydrates are important elements when it comes to providing our bodies with the energy it needs to function well. Complex carbohydrates, such as those found in whole grains are just what your body needs. They help you feel full, longer and maintain blood sugar levels over time.



**Cut the fat.** There are quick and easy ways to reduce the amount of fat in your daily diet. First and foremost, select lean meats while limiting red meat meals to once a week. Avoid fried foods, and incorporate low-fat dairy options into your menu. Also, try adding good fats to your food repertoire. Some examples of good fats are avocados, olive oil, almonds, salmon and flaxseed.

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**Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate.** As we get older, we may find that our sense of thirst doesn't work as well as it used to. It is important to drink at least 8 to 10 glasses of water a day. The better hydrated you are, the better your body will function.



**Go fish.** Fish is an excellent source of protein, and in some cases, contains fatty acids that our brains need to work well. Salmon, tuna, sea bass and grouper are all tasty options to try. Fish is easy to cook on the grill or to broil in the oven – just avoiding heavy creams and sauces.



**Experiment.** It is easy to fall into “food ruts,” especially when you are busy. Try new recipes and foods at least once or twice a week to keep your taste-buds interested in what you're eating. You may not like everything that you try, but chances are you'll find a lot of new foods that taste great!



**Be moody.** Believe it or not, your brain plays an important role in how much you enjoy your food. If you are depressed or not feeling well, chances are you won't enjoy your meal very much. Silly as it may sound, try lighting a few candles and putting on some soft music to accompany your meal. Suddenly, everything will taste just a little bit better.



**Don't do it alone.** Studies have found that we eat better when we eat with others. If you are single, try enjoying a weekly meal or two with friends or family. Join a Senior's Lunch Group, dinner club or similar social group in order to share the process of eating with others. It will stimulate your mind and your taste-buds.



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