



Keeping your health and well-being in the know

# MyHealthTALK

November 2010

## Fall into Healthy Habits

The food choices you make have a substantial impact on your health now and in the future. When you select healthy foods to eat, you can improve your overall health and well-being. However, when you choose unhealthy foods, you may gain weight or increase your risk of chronic diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes and cancer. As a result, it is important that you are well educated about good nutrition. Your body requires proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals, and water to sustain itself. These nutrients provide you with energy and help you regulate bodily functions.

**Your health is your most valuable asset®**

**Here are some action steps that will help you fall into healthy eating habits:**

1. Replace the batteries in your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. Also check the age of the alarms and replace any older alarms. The CPSC suggests that consumers replace smoke alarms every ten years and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms every five years.
2. Prepare a disaster supply kit for your home and then check the contents at the semi-annual time change (testing/replacing batteries for flashlights).
3. Check for hidden dangers in your home. Have your furnace and chimney inspected for any possible issues such as cracks, leaks or blockages.
4. Empty your medicine cabinet of expired and left over medicines.
5. Review product recalls to make sure you do not have any unsafe products in your home.
6. Make a “car-emergency kit” and put it in your vehicle. Do an Internet search for “car emergency kit” for ideas as to what to include in your kit. You should always carry an emergency kit in your car but add cold weather gear for the winter.

**Keep moving as the weather gets colder:**

- Get the whole family involved in leaf raking on a weekend afternoon.
- Go for a bicycle ride.
- Join your local YMCA and enjoy all of the indoor activities they offer for all ages.
- Take a brisk walk.
- Join a local running club.

**“Variety is the spice of life!”**



# Shopping Solutions for Healthy Eating

Good nutrition starts with smart choices in the grocery store. Cooking up healthy meals is a challenge if you don't have the right ingredients in your kitchen.

Grocery shopping can be a daunting task, simply because there are so many choices. But with a little guidance, healthy choices can be easy to find in any supermarket.

The process starts even before you head to the grocery store. Before you set out for the market, plan your meals for the week, and create a list to shop from. It takes a few minutes, but saves time in running back to the store for missing ingredients.

## Follow these simple solutions to savvy shopping without spending hours in the grocery store:

- Shop with a full stomach. Walking through the grocery store with your stomach growling can make you vulnerable to buying unnecessary items. If you can't arrange to shop shortly after a meal, be sure to eat an apple and drink a large glass of water before heading into the store.
- Shop the perimeter of the grocery store, where fresh foods like fruits, vegetables, dairy, meat, and fish are usually located. Avoid the center aisles where junk foods lurk. Choose fresh fruits and vegetables that are firm, ripe and unblemished. Avoid potatoes that have a green tint to their skins. Buy only the amount of produce you need for a few days so your fruits and vegetables do not spoil in your refrigerator.
- Avoid foods that contain more than five ingredients, artificial ingredients, or ingredients you can't pronounce.
- When you shop for meat, poultry, fish and protein sources, choose wisely. Seafood and fish contain the healthy oils we need called omega-3 fatty acids. Fish should have a fresh smell and firm flesh. Read the labels of packaged red meats, some may be "enhanced" with injected water, flavorings, and preservatives that you don't need. Poultry is often a good choice, but remember that grocery store birds usually have a lot of fat. Choose skinless chicken and lean turkey. Legumes, nuts and seeds are also great ways to get protein into a healthy diet.
- If your grocery store has a bakery, chose 100 percent whole grain breads, not white breads made with refined flours. Leave the high fat, high calorie pastries alone.
- Avoid high fat and high sugar snacks. Choose whole grain crackers or baked snacks.

