

**Eating Smart & Moving More
Celebrating Healthy Families**

Eating Smart

Moving Away From Diets: Feeding Your Body Well

Feeding your body well means learning to eat based on your body's inner cues. It means learning to enjoy all foods in reasonable amounts. It also means balancing food with physical activity. Feeding your body well is all about the power of eating for health and well-being rather than eating for therapy or recreation.

Recognize that diets are not the answer.

Diet fads come and go without offering a permanent solution. When you hear about the latest diet, always ask yourself: Will I be able to eat this way for the rest of my life? Recent research suggests that people who diet usually regain the pounds they lose (or more). They often return to their old eating patterns.

Listen to your hunger cues.

Humans have a natural ability to regulate food intake. We have inner signals to tell us when we are hungry and full. These days, we just don't listen very well. We tend to eat all the food that is around all the time. Getting over-hungry is also a problem. When you're really hungry, it's easy to overeat and hard to make healthy choices.

Slow down and savor your food.

Treat every meal and snack like a gourmet feast in a fancy restaurant. The more time and attention that you give to food, the more satisfying eating is – and the less you usually eat. Make eating a pleasurable, guilt-free experience. Take the time to check out how you really feel after eating different foods and meals.

Stop eating when you are satisfied.

Today's enormous portions (combined with a lifetime membership in the Clean Plate Club) can make it hard to eat reasonable amounts. The key here is listening carefully to what your body tells you. This can help you tell the difference between not quite enough, comfortably satisfied and overly stuffed.

Forgive and congratulate yourself.

Healthy eating doesn't have to be perfect. Everyone gets off track or overeats occasionally. Just refocus on the importance of eating well for your body. Listen carefully to your inner signals of hunger and satisfaction. It takes time to establish a new eating style, so congratulate yourself on any changes you make!



National Nutrition Month® - March 2008

Adapted by the NC NET Program from Eat Right Montana materials