

THINKING THROUGH MY DIET
Exercise #1: Making Food Choices

We decide what to eat, when to eat, and even whether to eat for a variety of reasons. Examine the factors that influence your food choices by keeping a food diary for 24 hours. Record the times and places of meals and snacks, the types and amounts of foods eaten, and a description of your thoughts and feelings when eating. Now examine your food record and consider your choices.

1. Which, if any, of your food choices were influenced by emotions (happiness, boredom, or disappointment, for example)?
2. Was social pressure a factor in any food decisions?
3. Which, if any, of your food choices were influenced by marketing strategies or food advertisements?
4. How large a role do availability, convenience, and economy play in your food choices?
5. Do your age, ethnicity, or health concerns influence your food choices?
6. How many times did you eat because you were truly hungry? How often did you think of health and nutrition when making food choices? Were those food choices different from others made during the day?

Compare the choices you made in your 24-hour food diary to the food guide pyramid.

Food Groups	Suggested Servings	Servings Consumed
Bread, cereal, rice, and pasta	6 to 11 servings	
Vegetable	3 to 5 servings	
Fruit	2 to 4 servings	
Milk, yogurt, and cheese	2 to 3 servings	
Meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, eggs, and nuts	2 to 3 servings	
Fats, oils, and sweets	Use sparingly	

7. Do you eat at least the minimum number of servings from each of the five food groups daily?
8. Do you try to vary your choices within each food group from day to day?
9. What dietary changes could you make to improve your chances of enjoying good health?

THINKING THROUGH MY DIET
Exercise #2: Digestion and Absorption

Digestion transforms the foods we eat into nutrients and absorption moves nutrients from the GI tract into the blood. Optimal digestion and absorption depends on the good health of the digestive tract, which is affected by such lifestyle factors as sleep, physical activity, state of mind, and the meals you eat. Identify which of these foods and food habits promote or impede healthy digestion and absorption.

Foods and Food Habits	Promote	Impede
Take small bites of food.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chew thoroughly before swallowing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exercise immediately after eating to prevent weight gain.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eat a low-fiber diet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drink plenty of fluids.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eat a few large meals instead of several smaller ones.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eat quickly and then lie down to rest.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Create a meal using citrus fruits and meat.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tackle family problems at the dinner table.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1. Do you experience GI distress regularly?

2. What changes can you make in your eating habits to promote GI health?

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Exercise #4: Lipids

Fats give foods their flavor, texture, and palatability. Unfortunately, these same characteristics entice people to eat too much from time to time. Do you know how to select low-fat foods that will help you meet dietary fat recommendations? Look at these examples of foods and consider how often you select the item that is lower in fat.

Which of these pairs are you most likely to select--

- | | | |
|------------------------------|----|-----------------------|
| Peanuts | or | pretzels? |
| Hot dog | or | turkey sandwich? |
| Whole milk | or | low-fat milk? |
| Fried chicken | or | baked chicken? |
| Tuna packed in oil | or | tuna packed in water? |
| Spaghetti with alfredo sauce | or | with marinara sauce? |
| Croissants | or | bagels? |
| Sausage pizza | or | mushroom pizza? |

The second item in each pair is lower in fat and making such fat-free or low-fat food choices regularly can help you meet dietary fat recommendations. In addition, eating plenty of whole-grain products, fresh vegetables, legumes, and fruits daily will help to keep your fat intake under control.

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Exercise #6: Metabolism and Energy Balance

Metabolism explains how the cells in the body use nutrients to meet its needs. Cells may start with small, simple compounds and use them as building blocks to form larger, more complex structures (anabolism). These anabolic reactions involve doing work and so require energy. Alternatively, cells may break down large compounds into smaller ones (catabolism). Catabolic reactions usually release energy. Determine whether the following reactions are anabolic or catabolic.

	Anabolic	Catabolic
A cracker becomes glucose.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glucose becomes glycogen.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You consume more energy than your body expends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fasting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A piece of ham becomes amino acids.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Amino acids become your muscles.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A cookie becomes fatty acids.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fatty acids become body fat.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fatty acids provide energy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

THINKING THROUGH MY DIET
Exercise #7: Overweight, Underweight, and Weight Control

Does your BMI fall between 18.5 and 24.9? If so, you may want to maintain your weight. If not, you may need to gain or lose weight to improve your fitness and health. Determine whether these food and activity choices are typical of your lifestyle.

Food and activity choices	Frequency per week
Promote weight gain:	
Drink plenty of juice.	
Eat energy-dense foods.	
Eat large portions.	
Eat peanut butter crackers between meals.	
Eat three or more large meals a day.	
Promote weight loss:	
Drink plenty of water.	
Eat nutrient-dense foods.	
Eat slowly.	
Eat small portions.	
Limit snacks to healthful choices.	
Limit television watching.	
Participate in physical activity.	
Select low-fat foods.	
Share a restaurant meal or take home leftovers.	

- On the average, do your lifestyle choices promote weight gain, weight loss, or weight maintenance?

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Exercise #8: Vitamins

A diet that offers a variety of foods from each group, prepared with reasonable care, serves up ample vitamins. The cereal and bread group delivers thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, and folate. The fruit and vegetable groups excel in folate, vitamin C, vitamin A, and vitamin K. The meat group serves thiamin, niacin, vitamin B₆, and vitamin B₁₂. The milk group stands out for riboflavin, vitamin B₁₂, vitamin A, and vitamin D. Even the miscellaneous group with its vegetable oils provides vitamin E. Determine whether these food choices are typical of your diet.

Food choices	Frequency per week
Citrus fruits	
Dark green, leafy vegetables	
Deep yellow or orange fruits or vegetables	
Legumes	
Milk and milk products	
Vegetable oils	
Whole or enriched grain products	

1. Do you eat dark green, leafy or deep yellow vegetables daily?
2. Do you drink vitamin A- and D-fortified milk regularly?
3. Do you use vegetable oils when you cook?
4. Do you choose whole or enriched grains, citrus fruits, and legumes often?

THINKING THROUGH MY DIET
Exercise #9: Water and Minerals

The two minerals most likely to fall short in the diet are iron and calcium. Interestingly, both are found in protein-rich foods, but not in the same foods. Meats, fish, and poultry are rich in iron but poor in calcium. Conversely, milk and milk products are rich in calcium but poor in iron. Including meat or meat alternates for iron and milk and milk products for calcium can help defend against iron deficiency and osteoporosis, respectively. Determine whether these food choices are typical of your diet.

Food choices	Frequency per week
Calcium-fortified foods (such as corn tortillas, tofu, cereals, or juices)	
Dark green vegetables (such as broccoli)	
Iron-fortified foods (such as breads or cereals)	
Legumes (such as pinto beans)	
Meats, fish, poultry, or eggs	
Milk or milk products	
Nuts (such as almonds) or seeds (such as sesame seeds)	
Small fish (such as sardines) or fish canned with bones (such as canned salmon)	
Whole or enriched grain products	

1. Do you eat a variety of foods, including some meats, seafood, poultry, or legumes, daily?

2. Do you drink at least 3 glasses of milk—or get the equivalent in calcium—every day?

THINKING THROUGH MY DIET
Exercise #10: Fitness and Nutrition

Fitness depends on a certain minimum amount of physical activity. Ideally, the quantity and quality of the physical activity you select will improve your cardiorespiratory endurance, body composition, strength, and flexibility. Examine your activity choices by keeping an activity diary for one week. For each physical activity, be sure to record the type of activity, the level of intensity, and the duration. In addition, record the times and places of beverage consumption and the types and amounts of beverages consumed. Now compare the choices you made in your one-week activity diary to the guidelines for physical fitness.

1. How often were you engaged in aerobic activity to improve cardiorespiratory endurance? Was the intensity of aerobic activity between 55 and 90 percent of your maximum heart rate? Did the duration for each session last at least 20 minutes?

2. How often did you participate in resistance activities to develop strength? Was the intensity enough to enhance muscle strength and improve body composition? Did you perform 8 to 10 different exercises, repeating each one 8 to 12 times?

3. How often did you stretch to improve your flexibility? Was the intensity enough to develop and maintain a full range of motion? Did you hold each stretch 10 to 30 seconds and repeat each stretch at least four times?

4. Do you drink plenty of fluids daily, especially water, before, during, and after physical activity?

5. What changes could you make to improve your fitness?