



Use Nutrition Month to get back on track

I know National Nutrition Month is coming up in March, and I want to use the occasion to jump-start my resolution to eat better this year. But I've done this kind of thing before and I'm out of new ideas. Where can I find some good ones?

This is a great plan. It's not unusual for New Year's resolutions to wane by now. But using National Nutrition Month to revive your resolve is a shrewd move: There will likely be an abundance of nutrition-related information out there for the taking, and you're bound to find new ways to get back on track.

You can take the bull by the horns and search out ideas yourself. A great place to start is the website of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (formerly the American Dietetic Association). As the sponsor of National Nutrition Month, the organization offers a dozen two-page tipsheets on a variety of topics at <http://www.eatright.org/nnm/handoutsandtipsheets/>.

Here are just a few pointers from some of the tipsheets:

- To reach a goal of eating 2 cups of fruit and 2.5 cups of vegetables each day, try adding sliced pineapple, apple, peppers, cucumber and tomato to your sandwiches. (Find more ideas in the tipsheet "20 Ways to Enjoy More Fruits and Vegetables.")

- For a kid-friendly healthy snack, peel a banana, dip it in yogurt, roll it in crushed cereal and freeze it. (More in "25 Healthy Snacks for Kids.")

- Add some variety to your salad by adding corn, peas, sugar snap peas, water chesnuts or a variety of other vegetables. (More in "Color Your Plate with Salad.")

- Trying to lose weight? Slow down: It takes about 20 minutes for your brain to get the signal that your body is getting food. Don't wait until you feel full before you stop eating. (More in "Eating Right for a Healthy Weight.")

- On days when you're planning a dinner out, plan ahead. Have a light breakfast and lunch. (More in "Healthy Eating on the Run: A Month of Tips.")

- If you're tired of the same old breakfast options, make your own morning sandwich with a toasted whole-grain English muffin with lean ham and low-fat Swiss cheese. (More in "Power Up with Breakfast.")

- Give Nutrition Facts labels a fresh eye. Look at the "% Daily Value" column. Aim high (20 percent or more) in vitamins, minerals and fiber, and aim low (5 percent or less) for total fat, saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium. (More in "Shop Smart — Get the Facts on Food Labels.")

My advice? Download all 12 tipsheets and use them for inspiration throughout the month.

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