

Road to **WELLfluent**TM

Embrace better health.

Healthy Weight Week was created 26 years ago to help people understand that health really isn't about a number – on the scale or otherwise – and to encourage people to stop dieting and pursue livable and sustainable healthy lifestyles through eating well, living actively and feeling good about themselves.



HEALTHY EATING FOR A HEALTHY WEIGHT

A healthy lifestyle involves many choices. Among them, choosing a balanced diet or healthy eating plan. So how do you choose a healthy eating plan? Let's begin by defining what a healthy eating plan is.

According to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015–2020, a healthy eating plan:

- Emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products
- Includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts
- Is low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars
- Stays within your daily calorie needs

Eat Healthfully and Enjoy It!

A healthy eating plan that helps you manage your weight includes a variety of foods you may not have considered. If "healthy eating" makes you think about the foods you **can't** have, try refocusing on all the new foods you **can** eat

- **Fresh, Frozen, or Canned Fruits** - don't think just apples or bananas. All fresh, frozen, or canned fruits are great choices. Be sure to try some "exotic" fruits, too. How about a mango? Or a juicy pineapple or kiwi fruit! When your favorite fresh fruits aren't in season, try a frozen, canned, or dried variety of a fresh fruit you enjoy. One caution about canned fruits is that they may contain added sugars or syrups. Be sure and choose canned varieties of fruit packed in water or in their own juice.

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- **Fresh, Frozen, or Canned Vegetables** - try something new. You may find that you love grilled vegetables or steamed vegetables with an herb you haven't tried like rosemary. You can sauté (panfry) vegetables in a non-stick pan with a small amount of cooking spray. Or try frozen or canned vegetables for a quick side dish—just microwave and serve. When trying canned vegetables, look for vegetables without added salt, butter, or cream sauces. Commit to going to the produce department and trying a new vegetable each week.
- **Calcium-rich foods** - you may automatically think of a glass of low-fat or fat-free milk when someone says "eat more dairy products." But what about low-fat and fat-free yogurts without added sugars? These come in a wide variety of flavors and can be a great dessert substitute for those with a sweet tooth.
- **A new twist on an old favorite** - if your favorite recipe calls for frying fish or breaded chicken, try healthier variations using baking or grilling. Maybe even try a recipe that uses dry beans in place of higher-fat meats. Ask around or search the internet and magazines for recipes with fewer calories - you might be surprised to find you have a new favorite dish!

Do I Have to Give Up My Favorite Comfort Food?

No! Healthy eating is all about balance. You can enjoy your favorite foods even if they are high in calories, fat

or added sugars. The key is eating them only once in a while, and balancing them out with healthier foods and more physical activity.

Some general tips for comfort foods:

- Eat them less often. If you normally eat these foods every day, cut back to once a week or once a month. You'll be cutting your calories because you're not having the food as often.
- Eat smaller amounts. If your favorite higher-calorie food is a chocolate bar, have a smaller size or only half a bar.
- Try a lower-calorie version. Use lower-calorie ingredients or prepare food differently. For example, if your macaroni and cheese recipe uses whole milk, butter, and full-fat cheese, try remaking it with non-fat milk, less butter, light cream cheese, fresh spinach and tomatoes. Just remember to not increase your portion size. For more ideas on how to cut back on calories, see Eat More Weigh Less.
- The point is, you can figure out how to include almost any food in your healthy eating plan in a way that still helps you lose weight or maintain a healthy weight.

Source:

https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy_eating/index.html

PREVENTIVE CARE, WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED!

Did you know that you're covered at 100 percent? That means no copays, no cost sharing and no coinsurance for preventive services when you get them from within a participating network. For a complete list of covered preventive care services or questions about what screenings you are due to receive, visit AvMed.org. (In this area, you'll also find Clinical Guidelines for care.) For assistance, simply call AvMed's Member Engagement Center at the number listed on your AvMed Member ID Card.

DON'T LET EYE DISEASE STEAL YOUR SIGHT!

Most people in the early stages of eye diseases like glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy don't know they have it. Get a healthy start this year by learning about eye diseases and taking steps to reduce your risk of vision loss!

Know the Facts about Glaucoma and Diabetic Retinopathy

- Glaucoma is a group of diseases that damage the eye's optic nerve and can result in vision loss and even blindness.
- About 3 million Americans have glaucoma. It is the second leading cause of blindness worldwide.
- Open-angle glaucoma, the most common form, results in increased eye pressure. There are often no early symptoms, which is why 50% of people with glaucoma don't know they have the disease.
- There is no cure (yet) for glaucoma, but if it's caught early, you can preserve your vision and prevent vision loss. Taking action to preserve your vision health is key.
- Diabetic retinopathy occurs when diabetes affects the blood vessels in the retina (the light-sensitive tissue in the back of the eye), causing them to leak and distort vision. If not found and treated early, diabetic retinopathy can cause permanent vision loss.

Know Your Glaucoma and Diabetic Retinopathy Risk

Anyone can get glaucoma, but certain groups are at higher risk. These groups include African Americans over age 40, all people over age 60, people with a family history of glaucoma, and people who have diabetes. African Americans are 6 to 8 times more likely to get glaucoma than whites. People with diabetes are 2 times more likely to get glaucoma than people without diabetes.

The higher your blood sugars are, the greater your risk of developing diabetic retinopathy. Diabetic retinopathy may not have any symptoms in the early stages. So if you have diabetes, be sure to schedule a comprehensive dilated eye exam once a year. Diabetic retinopathy can be diagnosed and treated before you notice any vision problems.

Symptoms that could indicate that the disease has progressed to a more advanced stage include:



- Blurry vision
- Spots that "float" in your vision
- Halos around lights
- Loss of central vision
- Loss of color vision

Anyone with type 1 or type 2 diabetes, or women who had diabetes during pregnancy (gestational diabetes), can develop diabetic retinopathy. The risk increases the longer a person has diabetes and when blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels are hard to control.

Take Action to Prevent Vision Loss

There are many steps you can take to help protect your eyes and lower your risk of vision loss from glaucoma.

- If you are in a high-risk group, get a comprehensive dilated eye exam to catch glaucoma and or diabetic retinopathy early and start treatment. Prescription eye drops can stop glaucoma from progressing and controlling your blood sugars can help decrease the development and progression of diabetic retinopathy. Your eye care specialist will recommend how often to return for follow-up exams. Most plans cover screening for both conditions, once a year for people in high-risk groups.
- Even if you are not in a high-risk group, getting a comprehensive dilated eye exam by the age of 40

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can help catch glaucoma and other eye diseases early.

- Open-angle glaucoma does not have symptoms and is hereditary, so talk to your family members about their vision health to help protect your eyes—and theirs.
- Maintaining a healthy weight, controlling your blood pressure and blood sugar being physically active, and avoiding smoking will help you avoid vision loss from glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy. These healthy behaviors will also help prevent type 2 diabetes and other chronic conditions.

Manage and Treat Glaucoma

Vision loss from glaucoma usually affects peripheral vision (what you can see on the side of your head when looking ahead) first. Later, it will affect your central vision, which is needed for seeing objects clearly and for common daily tasks like reading and driving.

Glaucoma is treated with eye drops, oral medicine, or surgery (or a combination of treatments) to reduce pressure in the eye and prevent permanent vision loss. Take medicine as prescribed, and tell your eye care specialist about any side effects. You and your doctor are a team. If laser or surgical procedures are recommended to reduce the pressure in your eye, make sure to schedule regular follow-up visits to continue to monitor eye pressure.

Take steps to protect your eyes and the vision health of your loved ones by learning about glaucoma and other eye diseases. Know the facts, know the risks, and take action!

Sources:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/features/diabetic-retinopathy/>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/features/glaucoma-awareness/>

JANUARY EVENTS

Date	Time	Event	Location	Description
Saturday January 11, 2020	7:45 am	Times-Union Half & 5K	Hemming Park 135 W Monroe St, Jacksonville, FL 32202	The Inaugural Times-Union Half Marathon & 5K is coming to Jacksonville, FL on January 11, 2020 for a fun day of running and celebrating! Whether you're a seasoned runner or a beginner, you'll have a blast running through downtown Jacksonville and celebrating your finish in Hemming Park with a huge party featuring delicious craft beer, free food, and rockin' music! https://timesunionhalf.com/
Thursday – Sunday January 8-12, 2020	Various	Walt Disney World® Marathon Weekend	WDW Orlando, Florida	Enjoy a Weekend of Achievement! Come join Mickey and friends for an extraordinary race weekend—put your endurance through the paces, enjoy amazing entertainment and earn commemorative medals. https://www.rundisney.com/events/disneyworld/disneyworld-marathon-weekend/

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A Wellness Newsletter for AvMed Members

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