

What is National Nutrition Month?

The 2017 campaign focuses on attention on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits. “Put Your Best Fork Forward” is the theme this year, which reminds us that we hold the tools to making healthier food choices. Making small changes during National Nutrition Month and over time helps improve your health now and in the future.

Everything you eat and drink matters

Food provides the energy and nutrients you need to be healthy. Nutrients include proteins, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, minerals, and water. The keys to healthy eating are:

- Eating a variety of foods, including vegetables, fruits, and whole-grain products.
- Eating lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, and low-fat dairy products.
- Drinking lots of water.
- Limiting salt, sugar, alcohol, saturated fat, and trans fats in your diet.

How food is measured

The amount of food you eat is one of the most important parts of developing healthy eating habits. The amount of food can be measured in calories and portion size. Children and adults have different calorie and nutrition needs.

Calories:

- Measure the energy a food or beverage provides from the carbohydrate, fat, protein, and alcohol it contains.
- Paying attention to calories is important to managing your weight.
- Use the Nutrition Facts label to understand how many calories are in a food or beverage.

Portion size:

- Choosing smaller portions can help you stay within your calorie needs.
- Be aware of the amount you eat and drink during meals and snacks.
- Cut down on calories by choosing smaller portions.

Apps for your smartphone

- Calorie Counter & Food Diary – [iTunes](#) and [Google Play](#)
- [Healthy Out](#)
- MyPlate Calorie Tracker – [iTunes](#) and [Google Play](#)
- [ShopWell](#)

Tips from our docs

This month, our healthy tip is brought to you by **Kiko Torres, MD**, NMHC’s Senior Medical Director. Small snacks between meals can keep you from overeating at mealtimes and help you manage your weight. Including a protein-source with your snack or a whole-grain can help so you will not get hungry again as soon. Healthy snacks are whole-grain, low-calorie, low-sodium, low in added sugar, and whole foods, like fresh fruits and vegetables. Here are some healthy snack ideas to try:

- One medium apple or pear with 12 almonds.
- Half cup of berries with 6 ounces of plain yogurt or low-fat cottage cheese.
- One small banana with 1 tablespoon of unsalted peanut butter or almond butter.
- One quarter cup trail mix with dried fruits and nuts (with no added sugar or salt).
- One cup of grapes or cherry tomatoes with low-fat string cheese.
- One cup raw carrots, broccoli, or bell peppers with 2 tablespoons of hummus or black bean dip.
- Fruit smoothie with 1 cup fat-free milk, half a small banana, and half cup berries.

Additional resources

- [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics](#)
- [MedlinePlus](#)
- [ChooseMyPlate.gov](#)
- [Nutrition.gov](#)