

# DISEASE PREVENTION

## Nutrition

### NUTRITION AND HEALTH/ NUTRITION AND DISEASE

Regardless of what brings you on this health journey, an outcome of your success will likely be improved overall health. The food you eat has an impact on so many areas of your health.

If you need statistics. The CDC reports that chronic diseases are the leading cause of death and disability. In fact, 70% of deaths annually result from chronic disease. Obesity-related conditions including heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and some types of cancer are the leading causes of preventable death.

Poor nutrition can lead or contribute to changes in so many areas of overall health; from mood to obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease, type 2 diabetes and some cancers.

These words may be sobering and difficult to hear. But it's important to know and understand this correlation. It is important because we are here to make changes and these changes can vastly improve quality of life.

Think about the barriers to healthy eating: these may include cost, time constraints, temptation, external influences. Now devote the time to work through each of these and break-through these perceived barriers. It is not worth the cost of disease; it is not worth the resulting health challenges.

So often, we search for key words that indicate disease prevention: high fiber, antioxidant-rich, heart healthy. A truly conscious eater looks beyond key words because, as we spoke about in the [label-reading webinar](#), these labels put on food are mostly marketing gimmicks versus true health indicators.

Start with these steps toward better health:

1. Include more plants. A plant-based diet is not the same as vegetarian. The foundation of this diet is 5-10 daily servings. Include variety to get the best benefit, different colors of vegetables and fruit represent different antioxidants, all of which have health benefits.
2. Decrease the amount of salt, sugar, animal fat and processed foods.
3. Do not rely on supplements for nutrition, get your nutrients from whole food sources.
4. Drink water. Water carries nutrients through your body and helps cleanse your body of waste. It helps with numerous chemical and cell reactions in our body.
5. Eat the best quality foods your budget can afford. Eat foods you prepare at home as often as possible.
6. Exercise regularly.
7. Manage stress.
8. Work on improving your sleep habits.

Be your own health advocate.