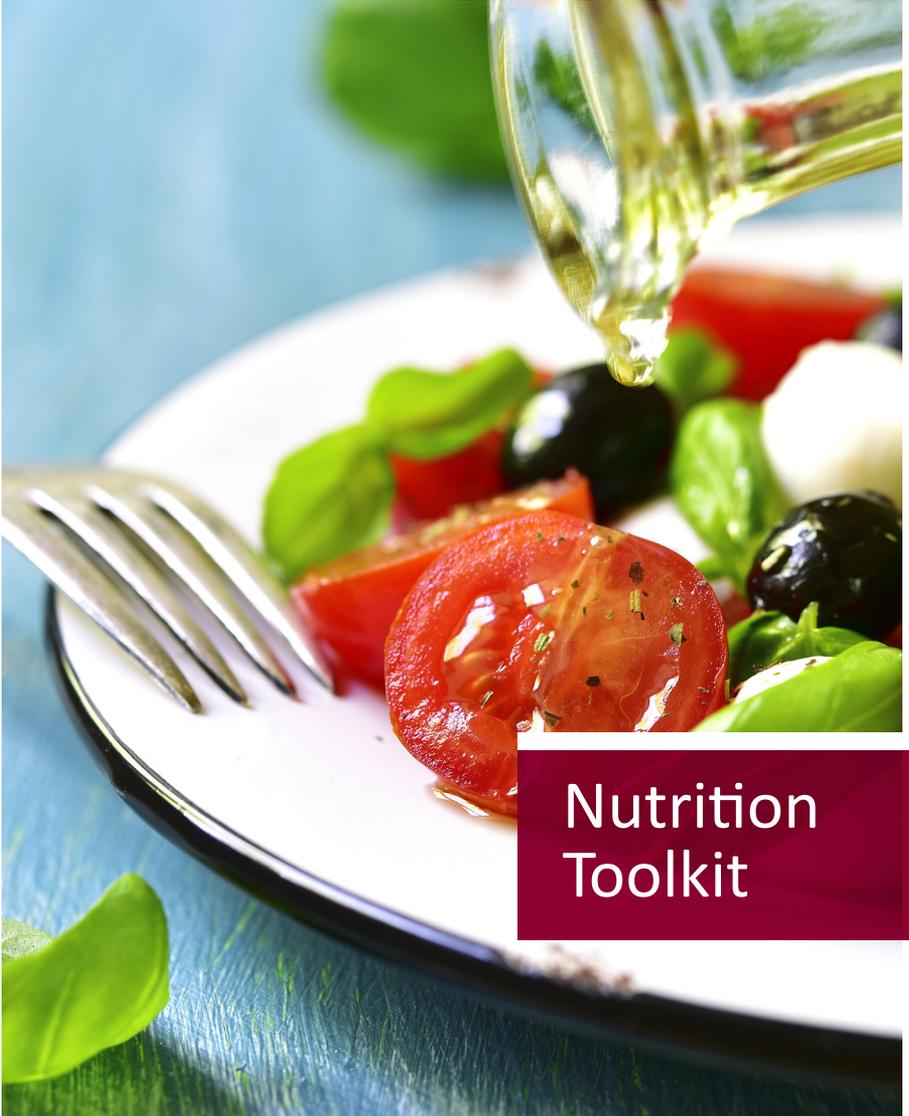




# Wespath

BENEFITS | INVESTMENTS

a general agency of The United Methodist Church



Nutrition  
Toolkit

# Nutrition Toolkit



There is no way around it, our lives revolve around food. We eat to survive. We also eat to celebrate by going out to dinner or preparing a special meal for a birthday, anniversary or other special day. But what we eat and why we eat depends on the individual. Some may focus on eating a particular way to improve cholesterol, blood sugar or help with weight loss, others eat for pure enjoyment and are self-professed foodies.

If nutrition and eating habits are so important, then there must be one optimal way to eat healthy. Right? **Wrong!**

There is more than one way to eat healthy. An individual's eating style is based on a number of factors including:

- food preference
- culture
- weekly schedule
- budget
- traditions
- ability to prepare and cook food

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide you reputable resources for healthy eating in addition to providing useful tips to change your eating habits.



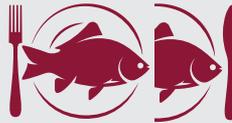
# Moderation and Consistency

## Moderation

How many calories per serving?



How many servings are you going to eat?



What else do you plan to eat?



We often hear “you can eat anything in **moderation.**” On the surface this may be true, but it’s really based on the three considerations above.

Balance these three things and you can eat something like ice cream in moderation on any given day.

## Consistency



**Consistency** is another theme that helps people reach their goals. Focus on changing habits, including what you eat, how you eat, and maybe why you eat.

**If you are able to stay on track 6 days out of 7 or 28 days out of 30, you are more likely to reach a nutrition goal.**

If you do slip, just promise yourself that you will get back on track at the next meal.

Keep your progress in perspective too. Say you set out to lose 10 pounds in the next five weeks. What if you aren’t successful? What if you lose five pounds, instead of 10 pounds? Losing five pounds is great and shouldn’t be considered anything less than a success.

# Diet and Nutrition Resources

## Diets

Each year the *U.S. News and World Report* pulls together a panel of experts to review and rank popular diets. The 40 most popular diets are ranked into various categories, for example:

- *Best Overall Diet*
- *Best Weight-Loss Diet*
- *Best Diabetes Diet*

This user-friendly site offers a description of the diet, recipes, dos and don'ts, as well as expert reviews.

<https://health.usnews.com/best-diet>

In 2019, the panel ranked the Mediterranean Diet as the best diet overall. The DASH Diet was ranked second best.



**1** The **Mediterranean Diet** is based off the traditional eating habits and eating patterns from the numerous countries surrounding the Mediterranean Sea. This diet earned high marks for being healthy, easy to follow and nutritionally sound. This diet also focuses on activity and social connections—which we love!



**2** The **Dash Diet**, originally created to address hypertension, received high marks in nutritional completeness, safety and ability to prevent and manage diabetes. DASH recommends beginning slowly and working towards incorporating as many recommendations as possible into meals.

**Always consult with your doctor before starting any new diet.**

# Diet and Nutrition Resources (continued)

## Diet Tips

Whether you are looking for a complete overhaul of your diet or you want to begin with improving one meal a day, here are some tips that can help:

- 1** | **Read labels and watch serving sizes.** It is amazing how doing both can change eating habits.
- 2** | **Get comfortable with portion sizes by measuring your food.** Use measuring cups and a scale to gain an understanding of serving sizes.
- 3** | **Eat a rainbow of colors each day.** Different flavors, textures and nutrients make meals interesting to eat and beautiful to prepare.
- 4** | **Make small changes over time to help improve your eating habits.**
- 5** | **Stay positive and focused.** Slips actually provide useful information to help overcome similar situations in the future.
- 6** | **Be physically active.**



PHYSICAL

# Diet and Nutrition Resources (continued)

## Nutrition

There are many great sources of nutrition information. However, one should consider the source of information before acting on it. A celebrity endorsement alone does not make the diet safe or right for you.



**The United States Department of Agriculture** revamped the food pyramid into ChooseMyPlate with the focus on helping individuals find their own healthy eating style. For more tips, go to: [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov)



**The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** website provides information about finding balance with eating, meal planning and physical activity. [www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy\\_eating/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy_eating/index.html)



**American Heart Association** offers information from healthy eating to improving cooking skills. [www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating](http://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating)



**Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics**

**Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics** is a great source of well-being information for kids, older adults, and parents. <https://www.eatright.org>



And of course, check out the Wespath Physical Activity and the Resiliency Toolkits for additional support.

<https://www.wespath.org/assets/1/7/5146.pdf>

<https://www.wespath.org/assets/1/7/5222.pdf>

# Diet and Nutrition Resources (continued)

1. The most important part of healthy eating is to make sure it is **safe**.
2. The second most important is the diet needs to be **sustainable** for you.

Also remember to eat one day at a time or even one meal at a time. Get back on track when you slip. Stay positive and stay active to remain on course.

## More Nutrition Tips

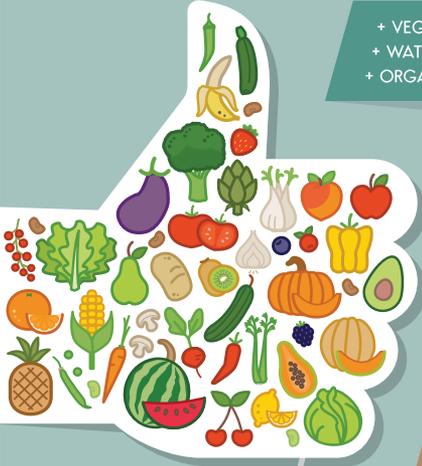
- Reach for a glass of water or a piece of fruit before you reach for the chips or crackers.
- It is okay to bring or provide healthy items at potlucks or parties. You will likely find another friend or two in the group. Social support in a tremendous benefit to staying on track.
- Keep a journal of what you eat and when you exercise to help reflect on your progress.



# Nutrition Toolkit

## HEALTHY EATING

- + VEGETABLES
- + WATER
- + ORGANIC FOOD



LONGER LIFESPAN



BETTER DIGESTION



FIT BODY



CANCER RISK



HEART DISEASE



OBESITY



- + SUGARS
- + FATS
- + PROCESSED FOOD

## UNHEALTHY EATING