

# Maintenance of health through good nutrition essay sample

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As the cliché goes, “ Health is wealth.” After taking away all material entities, it is only health that remains which is why we must take good care of it. Even if we have everything in the world, if it is our health that is endangered, these are all useless.

When we are young, we have the tendency to be careless and abusive of our health. Especially those who are quite curious and adventurous, they succumb to all types of vices including smoking, alcohol and worse, drugs. The effects of these risky habits are not immediately felt but may take time, even years, before they manifest. And more often than not, the negative effects are long-term and are detrimental to one’s health.

Health education should be emphasized among individuals especially children in order to make them aware of the importance of maintaining good health throughout our lifetime. One of the ways to preserving one’s health is through good nutrition. It is the responsibility of our parents, elders and guardians to guide and keep in check the food and fluid intake of their children. This cannot happen overnight but should be a step by step process that should be taken meticulously.

Staying healthy includes a balanced diet, staying clean, getting plenty of exercise as well as keeping your heart strong and free of drugs (“ Good Nutrition” para. 1). By balanced diet, this means eating different varieties of food coming from the various food groups since no single food contains all the necessary nutrients required by our body. Food handlers in the household should see to it that family members shall take in food containing vitamins and minerals which can keep us hale, hearty and strong. Moreover,

in order to facilitate appropriate growth and development, the food we eat should contain the appropriate amounts of calories to energize us and keep us going. However, anything eaten in huge amounts though of variety is not good too. We should see to it that the foods we take in are in moderate amounts — a little of everything so to say. To determine how much should be taken in, it is good to refer one's daily diet in the Food Pyramid.

The Food Pyramid consists of four levels in ascending order namely Level 1, Level 2, Level 3 and Level 4. Level 1 is composed of bread, cereal, rice and pasta and should be taken 6 to 11 servings each day. Level 2 is made up of vegetable and food groups. Vegetables should be given 3 to 5 servings each day while fruits should be received 2 to 4 servings per day. In Level 3, this includes milk, yogurt and cheese group, and meat, poultry, and fish group. Dairy products should be consumed 2 to 3 servings each day while meats and fish should be ingested 2 to 3 servings daily. At the topmost part of the pyramid is Level 4 which includes oils, fats and sweets which are strictly recommended to be taken in small amounts only as much as possible.

Reducing fat in your diet, for example, can lower your risk for certain cancers and certain heart diseases (“ A Healthy Diet” para. 1).

With the appearance of novel food products especially those which come in attractive packaging, young people are often tempted in eating them without really caring so much about its contents. In these cases, this is where parents and guardians come in. Educating young people is not easy but doable if one applies the right and effective approach.

When choosing what to eat, we should also consider our health above all. Side by side with exercise, we should maintain a well-balanced diet. One should monitor his/her weight by looking up the ideal weight corresponding to his/her height and gender. One should choose foods which are low in saturated fat and cholesterol but high in fiber and less in salt. Minimize intake of processed food which contains preservatives and artificial flavors or ingredients. Water should be taken in generous amounts, at least 8 glasses per day. Alcohol is not prohibited, however, it should be taken in controlled quantities.

Speaking of high fiber diet, this includes eating whole-grain cereals like oats, and breads. Vegetables are preferred to be taken uncooked as in fresh salads or maybe steamed or blanched to make them soft and squashy. Some fruits may be taken with their skin on since these are high in fiber. As to soups or salads, beans and legumes may be mixed to add more fiber. Fruits and vegetables may be eaten as snacks instead of less nutritious foods such as corn chips and sweets.

To lessen the calories in some foods we eat, one can minimize frying them. Instead, they may be cooked by broiling, roasting, baking, boiling, and steaming. In adding flavor to our food, one can use natural embellishment as herbs like parsley and basil and spices like onions and ginger instead of mayonnaise, butter or lard and other oily mixtures. When one desires milk, choose low-fat or skim milk which is low in milk fat. For those who are fond of eating eggs, minimize intake of egg yolk. In taking in poultry such as chicken, be sure to remove the skin when eaten. As to meats, the cook

should see to it that the fatty portions are removed as well and only the lean part remains.

Sugar intake must also be regulated. When it comes to drinks, water is still the best thirst quencher compared to sweetened juices and soft drinks or cola drinks. Water helps in distributing nutrients all throughout our system and in excreting waste products from our body to renew our cells. Food which are rich in sugar such as cakes, pastries, pies, cookies and the like should be avoided as much as possible and enrich intake of fruits and vegetables in lieu of these sugary desserts. We should remember that sweets have many chronic effects in our body including diseases as diabetes (hyperglycemia) and high blood pressure (hypertension) which could lead to more serious health conditions.

There are many advantages of maintaining health through good nutrition. This is important in order for us to function normally. In fact, the benefits of good nutrition can be found in physical and mental health because a healthy diet provides energy, promotes good sleep, and gives the body what it needs to stay healthy (“ Nutrition” para. 1). In deciding what to eat, one should consider if such foods are good for our heart, our bones, whether it gives us energy or boost our self-confidence. Diseases may hinder us from doing our daily tasks and as a result may affect our means of survival.

One thing we have to bear in mind about good nutrition is that “ it is a way of life.” We are what we eat. That is why we should never take good nutrition for granted because of the many excuses we can easily come up with. We should remember that we have only one body and whatever happens to it is

irreversible. And “repairs” are not really that good either. There will be always “back jobs.” This means that if we get sick, there will always be a possibility of getting sick over and over again if we don’t make the necessary precautions.

Finally, maintaining health through good nutrition should be the top priority of every family especially the homemakers. The strength of an individual and the family can be attributed to the standard of health each member has. Definitely, “health is wealth.”

#### Works Cited

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