

Personal diet and activity plan

[Health & Medicine](#), [Obesity](#)



Personal Diet and Activity Plan August 18, 2008 Personal Diet and Activity Plan During the past five weeks, we have been learning about Human Nutrition. Prior to this class, I knew very little about the subject. This is largely due to the fact that I did not care much about what I consumed. If I was hungry, I ate. It was that simple. I did not take the time to read labels or to consider the long-term effects of a bad diet. Over the five weeks of this class, I have developed a much better understanding of nutrition and what it means to live a healthy lifestyle. One of the most important things that I have learned in this class has been the importance of nutritional labels. Prior to this class, I did not pay attention to nutrition labels. I was not normally eating any obvious junk foods, but what I thought was good for me actually was not. For example, a nut and berry mix that I thought was a healthy snack was actually full of fat. Also, since I now understand the importance of vitamins and minerals, I will always look for their amounts in the foods I choose. Another important part of this class that I will take with me is the importance of vitamins and minerals and where their sources are. I realized that one of my favorite snacks, celery, is a wonderfully healthy snack. Celery is high in calcium, fiber, manganese, magnesium, pantothenic acid, phosphorus, potassium, riboflavin, vitamin A, vitamin B6, and vitamin C (Calories in Celery, 2008). I also began taking a multi-vitamin each day to supplement the lack of certain vitamins in my diet. I have been planning my meals with vitamins in mind and adding many more vegetables than I have had in the past. In order to increase my fruit intake, I have been making fruit smoothies in the morning. With one smoothie, I am giving myself an entire day's supply of fruit and I feel great. Finally, the most important topic that we

have covered during this class is the food pyramid. Prior to this class, I thought of the Food Guide Pyramid as a representation of the four basic food groups: dairy, meats, fruits and vegetables, and bread. I was on the right track, but today's Food Guide Pyramid " goes beyond earlier food guides to suggest a pattern of food choices for the entire day, rather than simply a foundation diet" (Wardlaw, 2006). The Food Guide pyramid does not only show the food groups, but gives us a daily plan for the amount of each group we should consume for a healthy diet. Visually, it represent the amount of each food group as separate sections, which bread, cereal, rice, and pasta as the largest group and fats, oils, and sweets as the smallest. By using Food Guide Pyramid, we can plan our meals with each food group and their recommended amounts in mind. The web site that we used during this class, MyPyramid. gov, has helped me identify areas of my diet that need improvement and way to handle them. For example, on one of my recorded days, I far exceeded my recommended daily intake of calories from fat. This was on a day that I thought I was eating healthy. On that day I ate pizza, which is a high-fat food. I also ate an egg salad sandwich and a tuna fish salad sandwich. I could avoid exceeding the daily recommended fat intake in a number of ways. For example, I could eat a tuna fish salad without the bread. Even though I use whole-grain bread, if I'm going to eat two sandwiches per day, I can do without so much bread. Another way that I could reduce my daily fat intake is by making egg salad without the egg yolks. Egg yolks are high in fat. I could at least remove most of the eggs yolks before making the egg salad. By substituting lower fat foods for a higher fat choice, I will be putting myself in the right direction toward getting

my total fat intake under the recommended limit. This will be one step toward correctly adjusting my daily fat consumption and would not necessarily affect the rest of my food choices for the day. In other words, I would not have a cheesecake dessert after the lasagna because I saved myself a few grams of fat. Even by substituting the lower fat lasagna, I would still have room for improvement. Another important lesson that I have learned in this class is the importance of exercise. Exercise is medicine for our minds and our bodies. Healthy weight means nothing without proper exercise. I began exercising a few months before the start of this class. My routine was basic with a 20 — 30 minutes jog three times per week. While this helped me feel better and gain confidence, I was not adding enough variety to my exercise. During this class, I began adding new exercise to my routine. Now, I understand that muscle burns fat. Therefore, I am trying to build as much muscle as possible. I have added strength training to my week with three separate workouts that focus on my entire body. I still jog, but not as much. Instead of jogging three times per week, I have substituted two jogs with two forty minute cardiovascular routines. It might not be an exaggeration to say that this class has extended my lifetime. I now have the knowledge that I needed to choose the right foods, exercise, and take better care of myself. I know what not to eat and how to make a dinner that is balanced with vitamins and minerals. This class has showed me exactly what I am doing wrong and how to change it for the better. The first change that I have made because of this class is my vegetable intake. I have made a point of adding vegetables to every meal, even if I eat out. After a class like this, it is very easy to pass on foods that offer little or no nutritional value. Nutrition

is our body's fuel. As long as I remember that, I will live a long and healthy life. References Calories in Celery, 2008. Calorie-Count. Retrieved on August 10, 2008 from [http://www. calorie-count. com/calories/item/11143. html](http://www.calorie-count.com/calories/item/11143.html)
Wardlaw, Gordon M., & Smith, Anne M. (2006). Contemporary Nutrition: Issues and Insights. New York: McGraw-Hill.