



Fitness and Nutrition: Taking Steps towards Better Health

Without enough physical activity, you could gain an average of 1-2 lbs. or more each year. Exercising or changing your eating habits might not be easy, but making small changes in your daily activities can lead to significant health improvements.

Step 1: move more

Learn your baseline. Wear a pedometer or step counter for 3 consecutive days, one of the days being a Saturday or Sunday. Record the total steps for each day. After you have found your baseline, set your personal step goal. Begin by adding 2,000 steps (or 1 mile) each day. If you're using a pedometer or step counter, the chart below will help you determine your current level of physical activity. When it comes to steps, the more, the better. If you experience pain or discomfort, proceed slowly.

Steps per day

- **Very Inactive** 2,500 steps or less/day
- **Inactive** 2,501-5,000 steps/day
- **Moderately active** 5,001-7,500 steps/day
- **Active** 7,501-10,000 steps/day
- **Very active** Greater than 10,000

Using your pedometer

The pedometer will measure every step you take. It is worn on your waistband or belt, directly above your knee, horizontal to the ground. Test the pedometer for accuracy by setting the step counter to zero and walking 50 steps. Check the display; if the reading is between 45-55 steps, the pedometer is functioning properly. If it is outside this range, reposition the pedometer and recheck.

Step facts

- 1 mile = 2,000-2,500 steps
- ARC to Illini Union = 1,800 steps
- Illini Union to Beckman Institute - 850 steps
- McKinley Health Center to ARC = 1,800 steps

How to increase your steps

- Choose the farthest entrance to your building
- Skip the shortcuts, use sidewalks and crosswalks
- Walk to a restroom on another floor
- Walk during breaks or after meals
- Park farther away
- Get off the bus early and walk further
- Take the stairs

Step 2: eat less

Just as you are making small increases in your physical activity to successfully manage your weight, it is important to make small decreases in the total amount of calories you eat each day. The plan for eating less is as simple as the plan for moving more. Start by making healthy choices at home, work, or even when you are out at restaurants. Also downsizing your portion to save 100 calories can make a difference in achieving weight loss.

Tips for eating fewer calories

- Replace fruit juice or soda with water; sugar-free juice, hot chocolate, apple cider, and diet soda.
- Use non-stick spray rather than butter to grill a sandwich, cook pancakes, or grease a pan.
- Use a smaller sized bowl for your morning cereal as well as a smaller plate for dinner.
- Order lunch sized portions of meat, poultry or fish when eating at a restaurant (even when out for dinner).
- Split a meal with your spouse or friend next time you go out to eat.

- Eat ½ of a sandwich at lunch and save the other ½ for dinner with a salad.
- Order a side salad with low fat or fat-free dressing as an appetizer at restaurants.
- Substitute ½ cup fresh berries or other fruit on your sundae instead of chocolate syrup or caramel sauce.
- Choose ½ cup red sauce rather than ½ cup white sauce on pasta.

Key recommendations from the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2005. Use the information below to help guide your food choices. U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

2005 Dietary guidelines for Americans

Adequate Nutrients within Calorie Needs

- Consume a variety of nutrient-dense foods and beverages within and among the basic food groups.
- Choose foods that limit saturated and trans fats, cholesterol, added sugars, salt and alcohol.

Food Groups to Encourage

- Consume a variety of fruits and vegetables daily. Aim for 2 cups of fruits and 2½ cups of vegetables per day.
- Consume three or more ounce-equivalents of whole-grain products daily.
- Consume three cups daily of fat-free or low-fat milk or equivalent milk products, such as yogurt.

Fats

- Keep most fats coming from sources of polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fatty acids, such as fish, nuts, and vegetable oils.
- Limit intake of fats and oils high in saturated and/or trans fatty acids, and cholesterol.

Carbohydrates

- In general, at least half the grains should come from whole grains.
- Choose fiber-rich fruits, vegetables, and whole grains often.
- Choose and prepare foods and beverages with little added sugars.

Talk to a Registered Dietician for more advice on making healthy food choices. Call Sportwell at 244-0261 or McKinley Health Center at 333-2714.

For additional information contact SportWell Center at 244-0261.

You may also want to visit the MyPyramid Web site.

References

U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
America on the Move, A Quick Start Guide to a Happier, Healthier Life. Friends of the Center for Human Nutrition. 2003.

If you are a registered University of Illinois student and you have questions or concerns, or need to make an appointment, please call: **Dial-A-Nurse at 333-2700**

If you are concerned about any difference in your treatment plan and the information in this handout, you are advised to contact your health care provider.

Visit the McKinley Health Center Web site at: <http://www.mckinley.uiuc.edu>

Nutrition Log Form

It is recommended that you record your food intake for three consecutive days, including one weekend day. For each “DAY” record all food eaten in a 24-hour period, including snacks, and also include the amount eaten. You can then visit the website listed below to get a calorie count for each day.

MEALS	DAY 1 (list food and amount)	DAY 2 (list food and amount)	DAY 3 (list food and amount)
BREAKFAST			
LUNCH			
DINNER			
SNACKS			
TOTAL			