Lunch at Home

A healthy lunch can add a nutritional boost to your day. Nutrition experts agree that how you eat may be just as important as what you eat. Eat slowly and listen to internal signals of fullness. This can aid in digestion and help maintain a healthy weight.

Plan

- **Take time to plan ahead when making lunches for you and your family.** This will help make sure that healthy options are available. Do not wait until you are overly hungry to eat. This can cause you to make less healthy, high calorie choices.

- **Make a list.** Take some time on a quiet evening to make a list of foods that your family likes to eat for lunch. Get suggestions and ideas from each family member.

- **Stock the pantry.** Stock your kitchen with easy to fix items. These can include frozen vegetables, cheese sticks and canned tuna.

- **Rely on planned leftovers.** Make extra when you cook. Freeze single servings for a quick, easy lunch when you are pressed for time.

Eat

- **Fruits and vegetables:** Add colorful fruits and vegetables to your lunch. Fill half your plate or bowl with fruits and vegetables.

- **Whole grains and legumes:** These foods have fiber that makes you feel fuller longer. Enjoy sandwiches on whole-grain breads. Eat whole-grain crackers with a large salad. Beans and peas (also called legumes) are great in soups, burritos and salads.

- **Lean protein and low-fat dairy:** A serving from these groups will help you feel full until dinnertime. A serving is about 3 ounces of lean meat, fish or chicken; 8 ounces of 1% or skim milk; 8 ounces of yogurt; or 1 ounce of cheese.

Enjoy

- Take time to sit and enjoy your lunch. Put down your work and turn off the TV. Pay attention to your food and enjoy the flavors in every bite. You may eat less. Also, listen to your stomach and stop when you are full.