



December 23rd, 2012

Healthy Eating Over the Holidays – Tips to Keep You Balanced

Over the holiday season, choosing healthy food options can help ward off the flu, stabilize your mood and offer more energy to keep you feeling great.

In my experience, many people try to counter the effects of poor dietary choices by taking vitamins. In reality, while research demonstrates the benefits of a good diet, the evidence supporting vitamin supplements is not as obvious.

Some vitamins can even be toxic if overused. Overuse certain vitamins like Vitamin A has been associated with increased risk of lung cancer and bone fractures.

Balancing Your Diet

A balanced diet does not need to be restrictive. I suggest eating a combination of food to provide the right balance of carbs, good fats and protein to maximize nutrients. If you have a craving for something like ice cream, often a small bowl will satisfy without a complete “ban”.

That said, some foods probably should be on your avoid/minimize list: sugary beverages (soft drinks, juices), processed foods with trans fats (cookies, cakes, pastries, donuts) and processed meats (deli style).

Dark Chocolate Benefits

Chocolate can be a small, healthy part of a balanced diet. Choose dark chocolate (70% cocoa or more) to enjoy the benefits of reduced blood pressure, heart disease, stroke and insulin resistance. Neither milk chocolate nor white chocolate offer the advantages of dark chocolate – and pack a sugary, fatty punch in the process!

Wine – In Moderation

Another guilt-free indulgence is wine – in moderation! Many studies have demonstrated positive effects from wine. Wine can help prevent blood clots and reduces cholesterol and it's relatively low in calories. Beer and hard liquor can't offer these benefits.

Balance. Moderation. These are the keys to a healthy lifestyle. Talk to our pharmacists to help determine what are worthwhile choices as you work towards your best health.

This season, take the time to add colour to your meals, eat as a family and be mindful while you eat. These small changes can support healthy food choices - and allow you to create and maintain a tasty, healthy diet.