



# Monthly Wellness Tips

October

## OCTOBER

...is a month filled with sweet temptations that are high in sugar and unhealthy fats. Although treats seem to be endless, don't let them get you off track. How and what you eat this month is really what matters.

This fall, try limiting candy and other sugary, high-fat goodies you consume to help maintain your weight, reduce tooth decay, and set a good example for your family and friends.

Eating foods that are high in unhealthy saturated fat and sugar can lead to high cholesterol, diabetes, high blood pressure, and cancer. If you are diagnosed with diabetes, it can lead to kidney, eye, nerve, and foot problems. High cholesterol and high blood pressure can lead to blocked arteries. This can cause a heart attack or stroke.

## READ THE LABEL

There are three different kinds of fats in foods: saturated, unsaturated, and trans fats. The best fats to choose are unsaturated fats, but they are still high in calories - so eat fats sparingly. Fats should only make up 20-35% of the calories consumed per day.

Saturated fats come from animals and some plants. They can be found in foods like beef, ham, lamb, candy, baked goods, butter, sour cream, ice cream, and salad dressing.

Unsaturated fats are usually liquid at room temperature, and they are better choices for your heart than saturated fats. There are two types of unsaturated fats: polyunsaturated fat and monounsaturated fat. Research has shown that eating certain polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats can help decrease your risk for type 2 diabetes and heart disease by controlling blood sugar, insulin levels, and blood cholesterol levels, as well as lowering blood pressure.

You can find monounsaturated fats in nuts, vegetable oils, canola oil, olive oil, high oleic safflower oil, sunflower oil, and avocado. Polyunsaturated fats can be found in soybean oil, corn oil, safflower oil, canola oil, walnuts, flaxseed, and fish. Polyunsaturated fats can also be broken down into two types:

- Omega-6 polyunsaturated fats — these fats provide an essential fatty acid that our bodies need, but can't make.
- Omega-3 polyunsaturated fats — these fats also provide an essential fatty acid that our bodies need. In addition, omega-3 fatty acids, particularly from fish sources, may have potential health benefits.

Trans fats are found in liquid oils that have been changed to be solid at room temperature. Margarine, which is often made from vegetable oil, is one example. Vegetable shortening is another. Trans fats are often found in packaged goods. Check ingredients for the words "hydrogenated" or "partially hydrogenated." This means the foods contain trans fat. Stay away from these fats as often as possible.

Make wise decisions about your treat choices without depriving yourself of things you enjoy. Limit serving sizes and try healthier alternatives in recipes. It is easy to trick your taste buds into enjoying healthier treats!



## BAKED STUFFED APPLES

### INGREDIENTS:

4 large apples  
½ cup low-fat granola  
2 tablespoons maple syrup  
1 ½ cups apple cider or juice

### DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Core the apples from the stem end, leaving the base to form a well. Arrange the apples in a shallow baking dish. Fill each apple with 2 tablespoons of granola and drizzle maple syrup over the apples. Pour the cider or juice into the baking dish. Bake uncovered, basting occasionally, for 40 minutes or until tender. If the cider or juice evaporates, add more to the dish. Serve the apples hot, at room temperature, or chilled with the leftover liquid from the dish spooned over them.

Serves four.

*Each serving contains about 121 calories, 1 gram fat (7 percent from fat), 0 milligrams cholesterol, 12.5 milligrams sodium, and 50 grams carbohydrates.*

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## OCTOBER CHALLENGE

During the month of October, don't forget that some of the things you consume could come back to haunt you. Below are tips to try throughout the month to make small but achievable changes that really make a difference. Complete a minimum of one tip per day for 20 days. As you finish a healthy tip, check the circle to track your progress. Remember, you can use each tip multiple times. Just add a checkmark in front of the circle for those completed more than once.

- ☐ I cooked using non-stick cooking spray instead of butter today.
- ☐ I grilled meat instead of frying it.
- ☐ I chose a vegetable or fruit instead of a sweet.
- ☐ I used olive or canola oil instead of vegetable oil.
- ☐ Instead of red meat, I chose a lean meat like chicken, turkey, or fish.
- ☐ I brought a healthy appetizer or snack to a Halloween party.
- ☐ I used a healthy alternative to an ingredient in a dish I made.
- ☐ I passed out a non-candy treat to trick-or-treaters.
- ☐ I used skim milk instead of 2%.
- ☐ I ate fresh fruit instead of a high-fat dessert.
- ☐ I used plain, non-fat yogurt instead of sour cream in dips and toppings.
- ☐ I drank water instead of a high-sugar soda or juice.
- ☐ I used honey, 100% fruit spread, or all natural peanut butter instead of butter or margarine.
- ☐ Having a party? I offered guests a variety of fruits, vegetables, and low-fat cheeses.
- ☐ I used hummus, bean dip, low-fat dressings, and/or salsa for crackers and vegetables instead of high-fat dips.
- ☐ I used party games and/or trick-or-treat time as an opportunity to get in at least 30 minutes of physical activity.
- ☐ I found healthier recipes for my favorite treats on StayWell Online® at <https://wellmass.staywell.com>