



*Partners in*  
**HEALTH**  
*and*  
**WHOLENESS**

AN INITIATIVE OF THE  
NORTH CAROLINA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

“God said, ‘See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.’ And it was so.”

– Genesis 1:29-30

*Being healthy. Being faithful.*

## EATING FAITHFULLY

### THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Eating fruits and vegetables is important to your health because they:

- Lower the risk of diabetes
- Reduce high blood pressure
- Lower the risk of some cancers
- Lower the risk of heart disease and stroke
- Help with weight management

### THE TRUTH ABOUT CARBOHYDRATES AND ADDED SUGARS

Your body uses carbohydrates to make glucose, which is the fuel you need to remain active and fully functioning. Foods that are high in dietary fiber and whole grains are the healthiest sources of carbohydrates, as well as foods with natural sugars and starches such as fruits, vegetables, breads and low-fat milk.

You should limit your intake of foods and beverages that include added sugars because they lack the proper nutrients and provide extra calories. Examples of foods and beverages with added sugars include: regular soft drinks, candy, cakes, pies and ice cream.

### HOW MANY FRUITS AND VEGETABLES SHOULD I EAT?

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, you should eat one to two cups of fruit per day and one to three cups of vegetables per day based upon your gender and age.

### HOW CAN I INCLUDE MORE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES IN MY DIET?

- Have a piece of fruit as a snack.
- Add fresh or frozen fruit to your breakfast.
- Top yogurt with fresh fruit.
- Eat a salad for or with lunch.
- Snack on raw vegetables with low-fat dip.
- Add sliced tomato, onion, cucumber, bell peppers, lettuce and sprouts to sandwiches and wraps.
- Add two vegetable sides to your dinner.
- Order pizza with vegetables like spinach, peppers, mushrooms, onion, broccoli and eggplant.
- Add vegetables like zucchini, carrots, broccoli or mushrooms to omelets, casseroles and pasta sauces.



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### A QUICK WORD ABOUT PORTION CONTROL

*“Do not join those who drink too much wine or gorge themselves on meat, for drunkards and gluttons become poor, and drowsiness clothes them in rags.”*  
Proverbs 23:20-21

It is important to eat the right amount, not too little or too much, of each food group in order to remain healthy and strong. Studies have shown that people inadvertently eat more calories if they are given larger portions, which can lead to weight gain. If you are mindful of the portions you are eating, you can maintain a healthier lifestyle.

To learn more about portion control and sizes, visit [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov).

### THE TRUTH ABOUT WHOLE GRAINS VS. REFINED GRAINS

Whole grains contain the entire grain kernel, supplying your body with important vitamins and minerals that help lower your risk of some diseases and improve your overall health.

Refined grains lack the bran and germ found in whole grains, therefore eliminating key nutrients like dietary fiber, iron and many B vitamins. Most refined grains are “enriched” by having some of these nutrients added back but still lack the dietary fiber of whole grains.

### Why is Fiber Important to My Health?

- Lowers your risk of heart disease
- Improves bowel function
- Reduces blood cholesterol levels
- Helps with weight management

### THE TRUTH ABOUT DIETARY FAT

A certain amount of fat is needed in your diet in order to maintain normal body function. However, the type of fat that you choose can make all the difference as some fats are healthier than others.

### Healthy vs. Unhealthy Fats

Polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats are better for you than trans fats, saturated fats and cholesterol. Examples of healthy sources of fat include: nuts, olive oil, avocado, soybean oil, walnuts and salmon.

To reduce the amount of unhealthy fats in your diet, remember to check your food labels and limit your intake of processed foods, high-fat cheeses, high-fat cuts of meat, whole-fat milk and cream, and butter.

### WHAT ELSE CAN I DO TO EAT MORE HEALTHILY?

- Choose low-fat or skim milk instead of whole milk.
- Drink water instead of sugar-sweetened beverages.
- Choose whole grain and low-fat breads and pastas instead of regular breads and pastas.
- Instead of frying chicken or meat, grill or bake it.
- Try cooking a lower fat or lower calorie version of your favorite foods.
- Choose low-sodium beverages, vegetables and soups.
- Eat smaller portions of food.



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### WHAT CAN MY CHURCH DO?

- Offer water in place of sugared drinks at all church functions.
- Serve fruit for dessert instead of cake, cookies or pies.
- Serve meat that is grilled or baked instead of fried.
- Provide children and youth with healthy snacks at all youth events.
- Offer cooking demonstrations or workshops to promote healthy eating.
- Advocate for public policies and programs that increase one's access to healthy, locally grown foods.
- Show your commitment to health as a practice of your faith by becoming a Partners in Health and Wholeness Certified Congregation and signing the PHW Endorsement Resolution. For more information, please visit: [www.healthandwholeness.org](http://www.healthandwholeness.org).

"If we're not willing to settle for junk living, we certainly shouldn't settle for junk food."

~ Sally Edward, bestselling author and triathlete

### EATING FAITHFULLY ON A BUDGET

"When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Leave them for the poor and the alien. I am the LORD your God." Leviticus 23:21-23

#### North Carolina Key Facts (2009):

Poverty rate: 16.9%

Child poverty rate: 24.5%

Food insecurity\* rate: 13.7%

North Carolina has the 9th highest food insecurity rate in the nation.

*\*Food insecurity is defined as the limited access to or availability of nutritious, safe foods.*

As the price of food increases and the economy worsens, it is important to find creative, practical ways to stretch the money you earn as far as it will go. Below are several tips on how to cut costs while still eating healthily.

#### A Cheaper, Healthy Choice

**If you can't afford:**

**Try:**

Fresh fruit

Canned fruit (in water or juice, not syrup)

Dried fruit, Frozen berries

Fresh vegetables

Frozen vegetables

Low-sodium canned vegetables

Fresh fish

Canned tuna or salmon (in water)

Low-fat (liquid) milk

Powdered milk



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### CREATIVE WAYS TO CUT MORE COSTS:

- Buy generic brands instead of name brands.
- Look for sales and cut coupons.
- Buy non-perishable items in bulk.
- Shop at the farmers' market or grow your own fruits and vegetables.
- Have breakfast for dinner. Replace your regular dinner entree with a cheaper breakfast alternative like yogurt, fruit, whole grain toast or bagels, omelets with vegetables and fortified cereals.
- Prepare meals at home instead of eating out.
- Refrigerate leftovers and eat them for lunch or dinner the next day.

### GET YOUR CHURCH INVOLVED:

- Host a nutritious potluck dinner at your church and invite community members.
- Sponsor a community garden and/or farmer's market.
- Donate healthy, safe food to your local food bank or pantry.
- Volunteer at your local soup kitchen or homeless shelter.

### CONTACTS & OTHER RESOURCES:

- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program** (formerly Food Stamps) is the USDA Food and Nutrition Service's largest nutrition assistance program. It works in conjunction with 15 other programs to guard against hunger in the US. More than 28 million low-income individuals are helped by this program each month: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/snap.htm>
- **WIC: Women, Infants and Children**, a federal program that provides supplemental foods and nutrition education for pregnant women, breastfeeding and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and infants and children up to age 5 who are at nutritional risk: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/>
- **National School Lunch Program**, a federal program in public and private nonprofit schools that provides nutritious low-cost or free lunches to children: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Lunch/default.htm>
- **Food Banks and Pantries**, good sources of emergency food. Look in your local Yellow Pages or visit [www.feedingamerica.org](http://www.feedingamerica.org) to find the one nearest you.

For more information, please see the following, from which information in this handout was drawn:

- Anderson, S.A. "The 1990 Life Sciences Research Office (LSRO) Report on Nutritional Assess-



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ment defined termed associated with food access. Core indicators of nutritional state for difficult to sample populations." *Journal of Nutrition* 102 (1990): 1559-1660.

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:**  
<http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/fat/index.html>  
<http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/fat/unsaturatedfat.html>  
<http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/fat/saturatedfat.html>  
<http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/carbs.html>
- **N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, N.C. Division of Public Health:** *African-American Churches Eating Smart and Moving More: A Planning and Resource Guide*, 2010
- **Smallstep Adult and Teen:** [http://www.smallstep.gov/portion\\_control.html](http://www.smallstep.gov/portion_control.html)
- **University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, School of Law:** <http://www.law.unc.edu/centers/poverty/quickfacts/archive2010/default.aspx>
- **U.S. Department of Agriculture, MyPlate.gov:**  
<http://www.choosemyplate.gov>  
[http://www.choosemyplate.gov/foodgroups/fruits\\_amount\\_table.html](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/foodgroups/fruits_amount_table.html)  
[http://www.choosemyplate.gov/foodgroups/vegetables\\_amount\\_table.html](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/foodgroups/vegetables_amount_table.html)  
<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/foodgroups/grains.html>  
[http://www.choosemyplate.gov/foodgroups/grains\\_why.html](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/foodgroups/grains_why.html)
- **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Agriculture:** *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, 2010
- **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute:** *Body & Soul: A Celebration of Healthy Eating & Living: A Guide for Your Church*, 2004