**Healthy Eating Plan for the Middle-Aged Adult**

**GO NUTRIENT DENSE AND HIGH FIBER**
1. Buy cereals that give you a larger portion for the calories.
2. Serve meals loaded with complex carbohydrates such as pasta, rice (brown for more fiber), barley, and potatoes.
3. Be creative with your potato toppings—plain yogurt mixed with herbs, picante sauce, or melted low-fat cheese.
4. Use meals such as lean beef and skinless turkey and chicken, not as the biggest part of the meal, but more as condiments. Serve them in 2- to 3-oz portions.
5. Use romaine lettuce in salads instead of the pale, anemic-looking variety. Romaine lettuce has approximately eight times more vitamin A and double the iron of iceberg lettuce.
6. Serve an iron-rich plant food such as a legume or dried fruit with a vitamin C-rich food such as citrus fruit. Vitamin C helps your body use the iron more efficiently.
7. Chop fruits and vegetables as little as possible, cook them just a short time, and minimize standing time. A number of vitamins are destroyed by air, light, and heat.
8. Choose dark green and bright orange vegetables and fruits. They tend to have more nutrients than the paler plant foods. One half cup of cooked, chopped broccoli, for instance, has more than double the vitamin A and eight times more vitamin C than the same amount of lighter green beans.
9. Choose plain, low-fat yogurt and add your own fruit.
10. Steam foods rather than cook them in large amounts of water, which can leach away important nutrients.
11. Select whole grain products more often than refined ones.
12. Try to avoid empty calories (those giving you few nutrients) such as those found in alcohol or in desserts such as cake and pie.
13. Work more fiber into your meals with peas and beans: mix them with rice or pasta, use them in meatless chili, or sprinkle them on salads.

**EASE MORE FISH INTO MEALS**
1. Try fish in your favorite meat and chicken recipes.
2. Do not overcook fish. Cook fish for approximately 10 minutes per inch of thickness, be it on the grill, under the broiler, or in an oven preheated to 450°F.
3. Be creative: serve fish and shellfish in soups, salads, stews, pasta, and stir-fry dishes.

**CUT THE FAT**
1. Reduce fat in the diet by eating ordinary foods and cutting back on just four things: fat used in prepared foods and in cooking, oils, red meats, and whole milk dairy products. These measures will reduce fat intake to approximately 20% of caloric intake.
2. Avoid fried foods. Simulate the crunch of fried foods by oven frying. For instance, dip fish or chicken in egg whites and then in bread or cracker crumbs and bake on a nonstick cookie sheet at 300°–350°F until done; or slice potatoes into spears and bake in the oven at 350°F for 30 minutes.
3. Invest in cookware that uses little or no oil when sautéing or pan frying. Lightly coat regular pans and casseroles with nonstick vegetable spray.
4. Experiment with low-fat, low-calorie flavor enhancers such as Dijon mustard, horseradish, chopped green or red peppers, onions, and seasonings such as tarragon, dry mustard, dill, and curry powder.
5. Chill sauces, gravies, and stews ahead of time so the hardened fat can be skimmed from the surface.
6. Make sauces without fat by slowly mixing cold liquid directly into the flour or cornstarch. Stir until smooth and bring to a boil, stirring frequently.
7. Use evaporated skimmed milk instead of cream in coffee and recipes.
8. In place of sour cream, use nonfat sour cream, low-fat or nonfat yogurt, or lowfat cottage cheese that has been mixed in a blender with a little milk and lemon juice.

**BOOST MILK INTAKE (WITHOUT DRINKING A DROP)**
If your system is not lactose intolerant, but you prefer not to drink milk as a beverage:
1. Sneak nonfat dry milk powder into anything you can: soups, sauces, casseroles, meat loaf, and stews. Add a few teaspoons of it to coffee; this blend will taste like café au lait.
2. Treat yourself to low-calorie puddings made with skim or low-fat milk.
3. Make milk-based soups with skim milk.
4. Use a blender to make a low-fat milk shake with a few ice cubes, skim or low-fat milk, fresh fruit, and low-calorie sweetener.
5. Experiment with fun flavorings in low-fat milk: vanilla, rum extract, or even cocoa with a little artificial sweetener.
6. Have cold breakfast cereals with milk and fresh fruit.