

Health & Wellness by Kim Dumont **Nutrition & Hydration**

Like a finely-tuned racing car, your body needs the right fuel (food) and hydration as well as regular maintenance (exercise, lifestyle and mental attitude) to achieve its true health potential.

Basics of Healthy Eating: (Low Fat, High Fiber, Vitamins, Minerals and Anti-oxidants) It is important to limit fats from fatty and fried foods, butter, cream, margarine and oils. Nutritionists all over the world agree that by doing this modification with fats helps people maintain a healthier diet and weight. More importantly cutting down on saturated fat in particular is important for the heart. Fiber is responsible for so much good. It not only keeps our insides moving smoothly but it helps to lower cholesterol, prevent gallstones and bowel cancer, and keeps our weight in check. Whole meal and grain breads are full of it, as are brown rice, barley, lentils, beans and vegetables.

Vegetables, fruit and grains carry an abundance of vitamins, minerals and numerous other natural substances such as Anti-oxidants. Anti-oxidants fight off free radicals that could otherwise damage our cells, membranes and DNA. Numerous studies show that people who eat lots of veggies and fruit have lower rates of heart disease and cancer. Sugar in modest amounts adds to the flavor of cooking and is a useful fuel. In excess, however, sugar can displace other more important foods. In chewy and sticky form, sugar also can cause dental cavities (or tooth decay).

Our modern diet is laden with salt. It's not until you avoid salt for a few weeks that you notice how it masks the true flavor of foods. As 75 percent of our total salt intake comes from everyday commercial foods (including bread, biscuits, cereals, butter, deli meats and snack foods), it is imperative to buy salt-reduced or no-added-salt product

Why is it so important to stay hydrated?

Our bodies depend on water for survival. Water makes up more than half of our body weight. Every cell, tissue and organ in your body needs water to function correctly. For example, your body uses water to maintain its temperature, remove waste and lubricate joints. Water is essential for good health. You lose water each day when you go to the bathroom, sweat, and even when you breathe. You lose water even faster when the weather is really hot, when you exercise, or if you have a fever. Vomiting and diarrhea can also lead to rapid fluid loss. If you don't replace the water you lose, you can become dehydrated. Symptoms of dehydration may include:

Little or no urine or urine that is darker than usual, dry mouth, sleepiness or fatigue, extreme thirst, headache, confusion, feeling dizzy or lightheaded and or no tears when crying.

How much water should I drink each day?

There are different recommendations for water intake each day. Most people have been told they should be drinking 6 to 8 8-ounce glasses of water each day, which is a reasonable goal. Some people are at higher risk of dehydration, including those who get a lot of exercise, have certain medical conditions, are sick, or are not able to get enough fluids during the course of the day. Older adults are also at higher risk. If you are concerned that you may not be drinking enough water, check your urine. If your urine is consistently colorless or light yellow, you are most likely staying well hydrated.