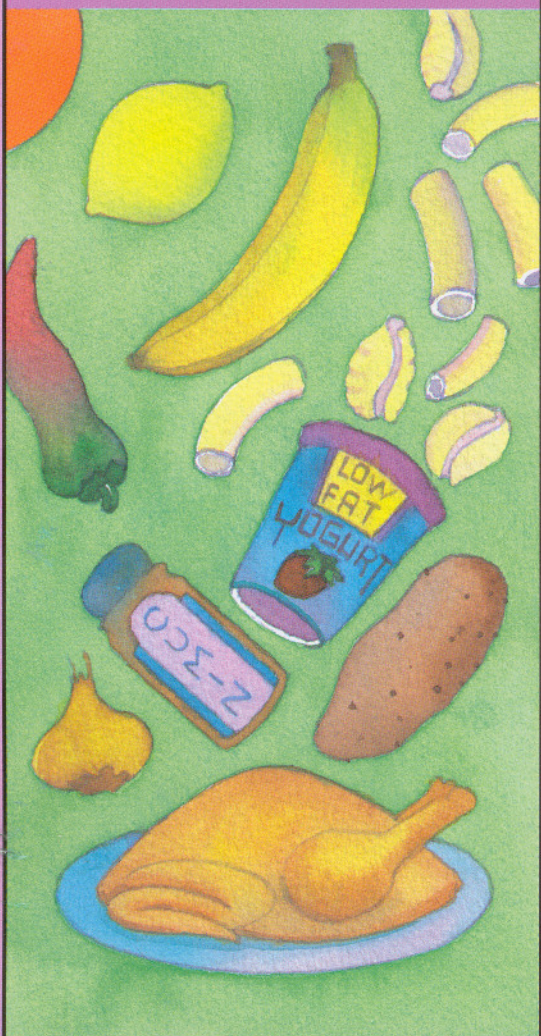


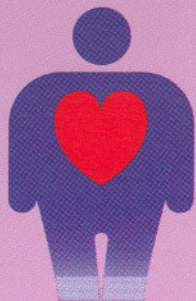
# Eat Right to Help Lower Your High Blood Pressure



NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH  
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute



National High Blood Pressure  
Education Program



NHLBI Obesity Education Initiative

The National High Blood Pressure  
Education Program and the  
NHLBI Obesity Education Initiative  
are coordinated by the National  
Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute,  
National Institutes of Health.

## What is High Blood Pressure?

**“My doctor told me I  
have high blood  
pressure.”**

“What is high blood  
pressure?”

**“It means that my heart  
has to pump harder than  
it should to get blood to  
all the parts of my body.  
This raises my chances  
for a stroke, and heart  
and kidney problems.”**

1



“Does that mean you could have a stroke, heart attack or kidney failure?”

**“Yes. But if I lower my pressure, I will lower my chances. You should ask about your blood pressure too.”**

“That is a good idea. I will go and get my pressure checked.”

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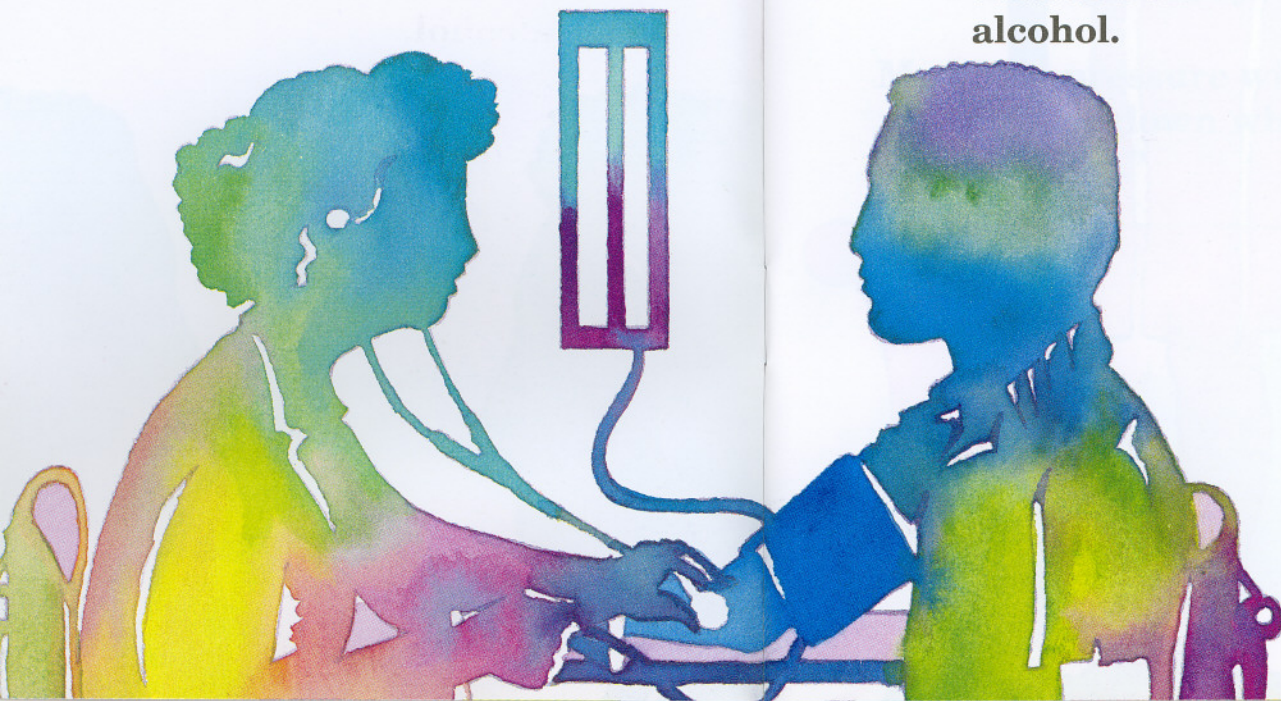
## You Can Lower Your Blood Pressure

“If it is high, can you really lower it?”

**“Yes. That is the good news. The doctor told me to:**

- lose weight, since I weigh too much.
- be more active.
- eat fewer foods high in salt and sodium.
- cut back on alcohol.

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**The doctor told me what foods to eat and gave me a booklet. This will remind me what to do — to eat some foods more often and others less often.”**

“I feel better knowing that you can lower your blood pressure.”

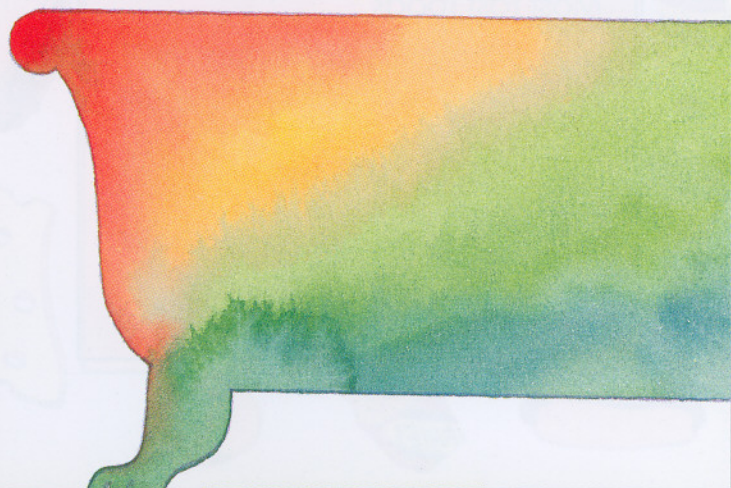


## Lose Weight

**“First I need to lose weight. Here is what I need to do:**


- eat less fat and calories. This is a good first step.**
- cut back on foods high in sugar like soda and candy.**
- eat smaller amounts of foods at meals.**
- eat fewer snacks during the day.**

**My blood pressure will probably go down when I lose weight.”**






## Foods High in Fat




Fats and oils (like butter, margarine, vegetable oils, lard, fat back, salt pork, meat drippings, gravy)

Fatty meats (like hot dogs, bacon, bologna, salami, corned beef, regular ground beef, ribs, sausage)



Whole milk, 2% milk, cream, ice cream


Most cheeses (like cream cheese, cheddar, American)




Many snack foods (like chips and nuts)

Fried foods (like fried chicken and French fries)

Most cakes, pies, and pastries



Many cookies



Most fast foods



## Be More Active

**“Next, I need to be more active. Being more active also will help me to lose weight and help my blood pressure go down.”**



## To Be More Active Everyday

Take a walk

Use the stairs

Get off the bus one or two stops early

Park farther away from the store

Go for a bike ride

Work in the garden

Go dancing

“These are things that would make me feel better too.”

“For sure. Doing them with a friend will help me to do them. We can start today. How about taking a walk with me after dinner.”



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## Fix Foods The Low-Sodium Way

“I need to cut down on salt and salty foods. Eating less salt and sodium also can help my blood pressure go down.”

“I know about salt. But what is sodium? I see it on labels all the time.”

“Sodium is a part of salt. It also is a part of mixtures used to flavor and preserve foods.”

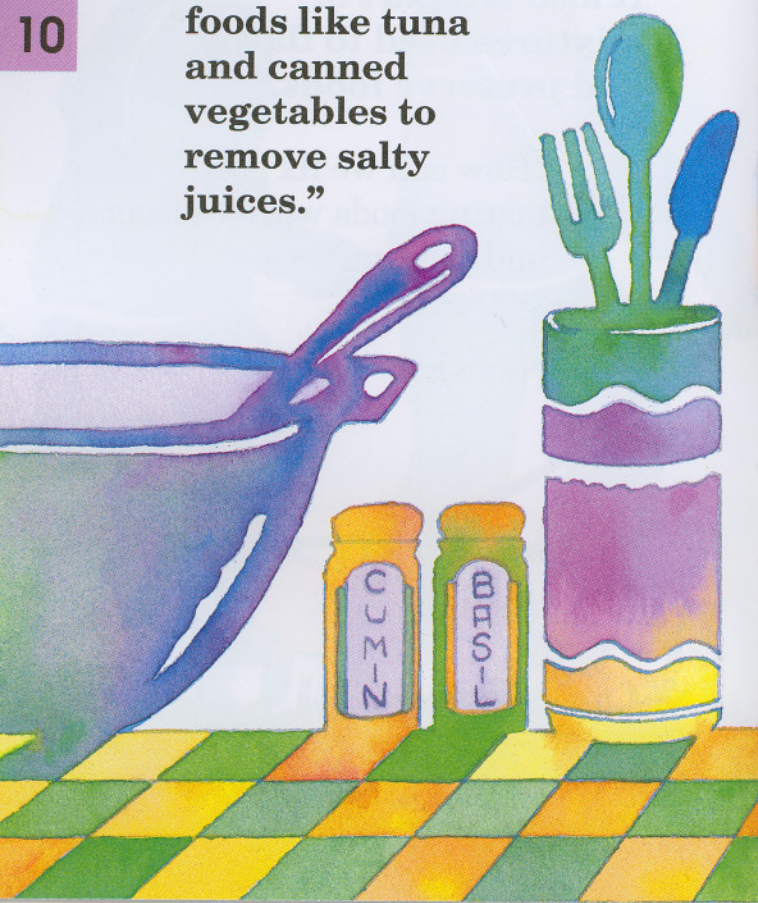
“How can we fix good tasting foods with less salt and sodium?”

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**“Listen to these tips:**

- Try to cook from ‘scratch.’ Start with foods low in salt and sodium.
- Use herbs, spices, and fruit juices to season food.
- Do not add salt to your food when cooking or at the table.
- Rinse canned foods like tuna and canned vegetables to remove salty juices.”

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## Shake On The Herbs And Spices

basil  
bay leaf  
chili powder  
cinnamon  
cumin  
curry powder  
dry mustard  
garlic powder, not garlic salt  
onion powder, not onion salt  
oregano  
paprika  
parsley  
pepper, black and red  
poultry seasoning  
thyme  
no-salt spice blends (try the recipe for Hot 'N' Spicy Seasoning on page 13)

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**“Some of these herbs and spices sound good. Tonight, I will bake the chicken with some lemon juice and oregano. And in the rice, I will add lots of parsley instead of salt for flavor. Adding herbs will help us to cut back on sodium. And, the food will still be tasty so we won’t miss the salt.”**

“Fixing foods this way seems easy enough. I bet we can have some pretty good meals.”

**“This recipe for Hot ‘N’ Spicy Seasoning also sounds good. Maybe I will try it next week.”**



## Hot ‘N’ Spicy Seasoning

- ¼ cup paprika
- 2 tablespoons oregano
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon red pepper
- ½ teaspoon dry mustard

Mix all of the above in a bowl.

Store in airtight container.

Tastes good on meat, poultry, or fish. Instead of salt, sprinkle some on the food and then cook it as you usually do. Or, mix some with plain bread crumbs and then coat the meat with the crumbs. If you like it very spicy, use more.

**“We could start packing our lunches and snacks for work. It is cheaper than buying lunch and this way we get what is good for us. A lot of food you eat out is high in fat, calories, and sodium.”**





## Snack On...

Bagels, raisin toast, or English muffins with jelly and a little margarine

Air-popped popcorn with no salt or butter

Unsalted pretzels and crackers

Low-fat cookies (animal crackers, fig bars, gingersnaps)

Fruits, vegetables

Fruit juices and drinks

Nonfat frozen yogurt, sherbet, popsicles

Hard candy, jelly beans

## Instead Of...

Salted popcorn with butter

Salted pretzels and crackers

Salted chips

French fries

Pork rinds

“What about breakfast? I know sausage, bacon, and biscuits are high in sodium and fat.”

**“We can have some cereals, toast, and fruits for breakfast. They are quick to fix and easy to clean up. We could even have leftovers from dinner for breakfast.”**

“I like those ideas. We should think about how to put this together.”

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## Menu Ideas

### Breakfast

Shredded wheat with banana

Skim or 1% milk

Toast with a little margarine

Coffee with skim or 1% milk

### Lunch

Lean roast beef sandwich on whole wheat bread with lettuce and tomato (easy on the mayonnaise)

Fig bar cookies

Apple

Skim or 1% milk

### Snack

Orange

## Menu Ideas

### Dinner

Spaghetti with turkey meat sauce

Steamed green beans with oregano

Green salad with cucumber, tomato, carrots, and a small amount of oil and vinegar dressing

Skim or 1% milk

Nonfat frozen yogurt

### Snack

English muffin with jelly and a little margarine

## Recipe

### Spaghetti with Turkey Meat Sauce

- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 pound ground turkey
- 1 can (28 ounce) tomatoes, cut up
- 1 cup chopped green pepper
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 1 pound spaghetti

Heat oil in a large skillet. Add turkey; cook for 5 minutes, stir a few times. Drain fat.

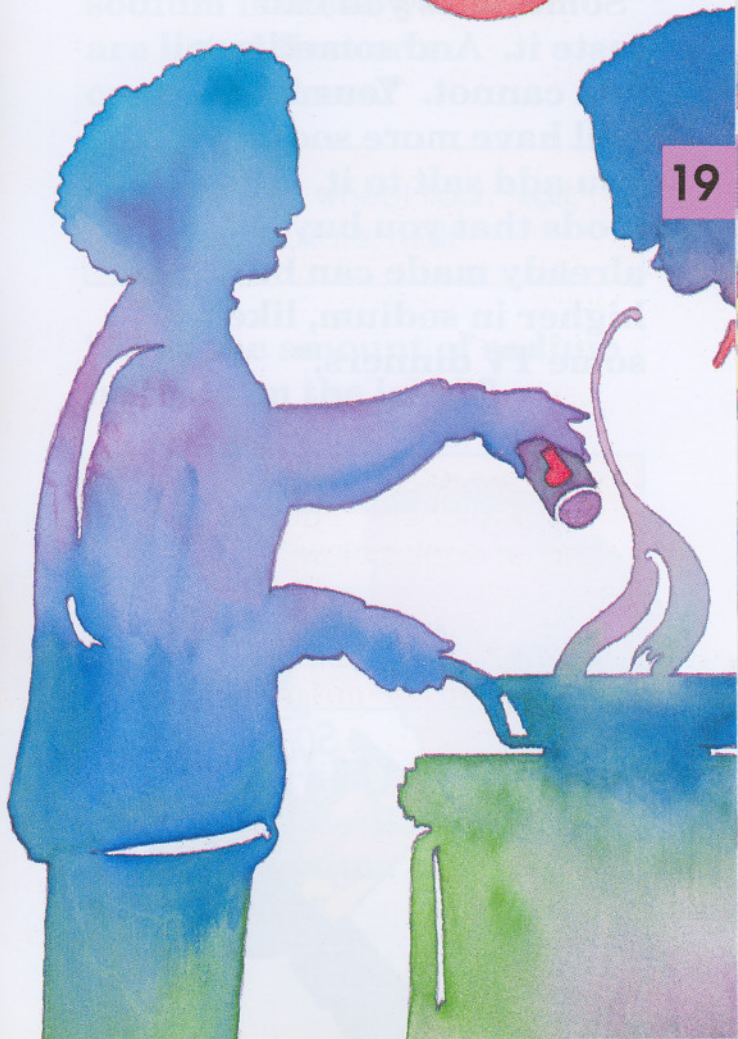
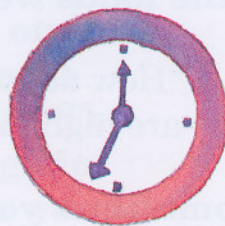
Stir in tomatoes with their juice, green pepper, onion, garlic, oregano, and pepper. Boil; turn down heat. Put lid on pan and let cook on low heat for 15 minutes. Stir a few times.

Take off cover; cook on low heat for 15 minutes more.

In another pot, cook spaghetti in boiling water for 15 minutes. Do not add salt. Drain well. Serve sauce over spaghetti.

“These meals sound like something I would like to eat.”

“They do sound pretty good.”



## Buy Foods Low in Sodium

**“Most of the foods in these meals are easy to find in the store. But, we will need to change some of the foods we buy.”**

“How do you know if foods are high in sodium?”

**“Sometimes you can taste it. And sometimes you cannot. Your food will have more sodium if you add salt to it. Also, foods that you buy already made can be higher in sodium, like some TV dinners.”**



“I know foods like lunch meats and cheese are salty because I get thirsty after I eat them. They are also high in fat.”

**“When I shop, I always try to buy the food that has the least amount of sodium. I look on the label for the words ‘sodium’ or ‘salt.’ The food may be high in sodium if these words are listed first or a couple of times.”**

Ingredients: wheat flour, “salt,” “sodium” sulfate, malt

**“Also, the amount of sodium is listed on the label.”**


### Nutrition Information

serving size .....	
calories .....	
fat .....	
<b>sodium .....</b>	<b>50 mg</b>

**“Foods marked ‘no salt added,’ ‘low sodium’ or ‘reduced sodium’ are good to buy.”**




## Buy More Often...




Chicken and turkey (take off skin)

Fish




Lean cuts of meat

Skim or 1% milk, evaporated skim milk



Cheeses lower in fat and sodium (like low-fat cheddar, part-skim mozzarella)




Low-fat or nonfat yogurt

Margarine, vegetable oils, vinegar


Fresh, frozen, or canned fruit

Fresh, frozen, or no salt added canned vegetables

Plain rice and pasta



English muffins, bagels, loaf breads, tortillas, pita



Cold (ready-to-eat) cereal and cereals cooked on the stove

Spices and herbs (see page 11)

## Buy Less Often...

Fatty cuts of meat

Smoked foods

Lunch meats, bacon, and sausage

Buttermilk

Most cheese spreads and cheeses

Most salad dressings

Fat back, salt pork

Toppings and sauces (like ketchup, mustard, butter, gravy, and barbeque, soy, and cheese sauces)

Regular canned soups, instant soups

Regular canned vegetables

Instant hot cereals

Pickles and olives

Salty crackers and salty snack foods

Garlic salt, celery salt, and onion salts

## Cut Back On Alcohol

**“The doctor also said I need to cut back on alcohol.”**

**“How much do you need to cut back?”**

**“The most I can have is 1 or sometimes 2 drinks a day. A small glass of wine, one can of beer, or a shot of liquor counts as one drink. I really do not mind. Lowering my blood pressure is more important than having a beer.”**

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## You May Need Medicine

**“What if your blood pressure does not go down?”**

**“The doctor said I will have to take medicine everyday to help lower my pressure. The medicine will work better if I lose weight, eat right, and be more active.”**

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“I heard that the medicine can make you feel sleepy.”

**“If the medicine bothers me, the doctor can either change it or change the amount.”**

“Will the medicine cost a lot?”

**“There are many kinds. I can ask the doctor to give me one that works for me and costs the least.”**

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## Speak Up and Ask

When the doctor gives any medicine for high blood pressure, ask about:

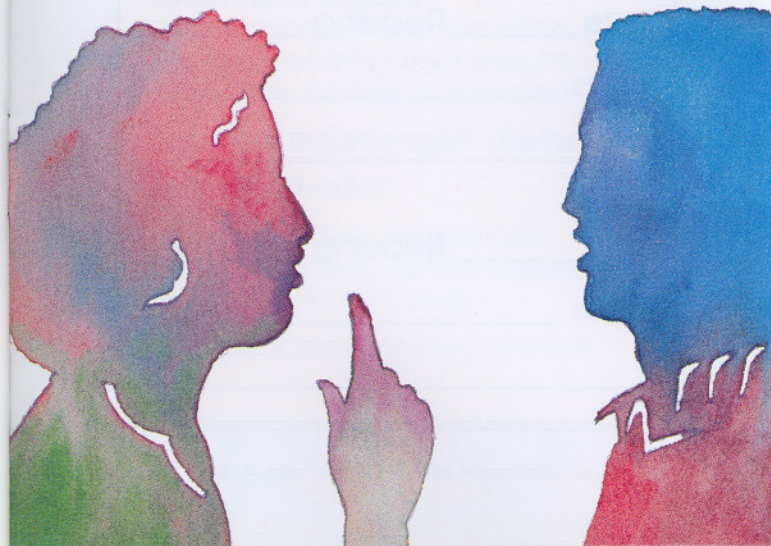
- when to take it.
- what to eat or drink with it.
- what other medicine is OK to take at the same time.

## Expect Your Blood Pressure To Be Lower

“It seems like you have a really big role in lowering your blood pressure. You can eat foods lower in sodium, lose weight, be more active, cut back on alcohol, and take your medicine.”

**“And my doctor can help me too. I will have my blood pressure checked again in a few weeks to see how I am doing. I may have to make more changes if it is not low enough. I think I am well on my way to lowering my blood pressure.”**

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## Get More Help

Ask your doctor, dietitian, or nurse for more help in choosing foods and fixing meals.

You can also get more information from:

**National High Blood Pressure  
Education Program**  
P.O. Box 30105  
Bethesda, MD 20824-0105

## My Blood Pressure

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Reading \_\_\_\_\_

Notes \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Reading \_\_\_\_\_

Notes \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Reading \_\_\_\_\_

Notes \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Foods To Choose When You Shop

Tear off this list and take it along when you shop. Choose these foods more often.

### Meat, Poultry, Fish, and Shellfish

Chicken or turkey

Fish

Lean cuts of meat

Beef: round, sirloin, chuck arm, loin

Pork: leg, shoulder, tenderloin

Lean ham and extra lean ground beef

### Dairy Products

Skim or 1% milk

Low-fat or nonfat yogurt

Cheeses lower in fat and sodium

### Fats and Oils

(Use only small amounts)

Margarine (liquid, tub, stick, or diet)

Oils (like canola, corn, safflower, olive, peanut, or sesame oil)

### Sweets and Snacks

(Don't choose these too often, if you are watching your weight. Some may be high in calories)

Popsicles, frozen yogurt, sherbet

Angel food cake

Fig bar cookies, gingersnaps, animal crackers, vanilla wafers, jelly beans, hard candy

Plain popcorn, unsalted pretzels



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TEAR OFF

## Foods To Choose When You Shop

### Fruits and Vegetables

Fresh, frozen, canned, or dried fruits (like oranges, apples, bananas, grapes, berries, prunes, peaches, melon, fruit cocktail)

Fresh, frozen or no salt added canned vegetables (like green beans, carrots, greens, zucchini, cabbage, tomatoes, broccoli, squash)

Fresh, frozen or canned fruit juices

### Breads, Cereals, Pasta, Rice, Dry Peas and Beans

Sliced breads (like wheat, rye, or white)

Sandwich buns, dinner rolls, pita breads, English muffins, bagels

Taco shells, plain tortillas

Unsalted low-fat crackers (like graham crackers)

Cooked hot cereals (not instant)

Rice

Pasta (like plain noodles, spaghetti, macaroni)

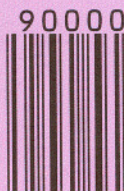
Dry peas and beans (like split peas, black-eyed peas, chick peas, kidney beans, navy beans, lentils, soybeans)

### Herbs and Spices

Choose one from page 11 to try today. Write it on the line to remind you to pick it up.

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