

Ten steps to healthy diets

Ten steps to healthy and sustainable diets

For everybody, everywhere

- 1 Make a variety of plant foods the basis of your diet
- 2 Use oils, fats, sugar and salt in moderation to convert foods into dishes
- 3 Limit or avoid ready-to-consume products
- 4 Eat freshly cooked meals regularly, mindfully, in pleasant places
- 5 Enjoy meals in company
- 6 Buy food in places that offer a variety of fresh, locally produced foods
- 7 Learn, value, practice and share the art of cooking
- 8 Give the pleasure of eating a central place in your life
- 9 Choose places to eat out that serve freshly cooked meals
- 10 Beware of information and orientation from sources with conflicted interests

1

Make foods the basis of your diet

Food - not products derived from food - should be the basis of your diet. Foods in great variety, mainly of plant origin, are the best foundation for nutritionally balanced and delicious diets. Variety means foods of all kinds, including grains, legumes, vegetables, roots and tubers, fruits, nuts and seeds, milk, eggs, meat, poultry, fish and seafood, and water, as well as variety within each type, such as different grains, legumes, vegetables, fruits, meats, fish, and other foods.

2

Use oils, fats, sugar, and salt in moderation to convert foods into freshly prepared dishes and meals

Oils, fats, sugar, and salt are products that should be used sparingly to season and cook food, and to convert them into nourishing and delicious dishes and meals.

3

Limit or avoid consumption of ready-to-consume products.

Some ready-to-consume products, such as artisanal breads and cheeses, can be part of a healthy diet when, in small quantities, they complement and do not replace food. Other products such as white breads, sweet breads, cookies, candies, cereal bars, instant noodles, dehydrated soups, instant seasoning, soft drinks, and ready-to-heat products, should be avoided or consumed only occasionally.

4

Eat freshly cooked meals regularly, mindfully, and in pleasant places

Try to eat meals at similar times each day, and avoid eating in between meals. Always eat slowly and enjoy what you're eating, without being involved in another activity. Try to eat in clean places where you feel comfortable, and avoid noisy or stressful environments. Also avoid eating in environments where there is pressure to consume unlimited amounts of food.

5

Enjoy meals in company

Whenever possible, prefer eating in company with family, friends or colleagues at work or school. The company of others encourages eating with regularity and attention, goes hand in hand with appropriate environments, and enhances the enjoyment of food.

6

Buy food in places that offer a variety of fresh foods

In supermarkets and other stores where you can find all kinds of food and products, use a shopping list in order to avoid buying more than you need. Avoid the deals that offer giant packages of ready-to-consume products or that offer 'prizes' to children. Do at least some of your shopping in markets or farmers' markets, preferring fresh foods that are in season and from local producers.

7

Learn, value, practice and share the art of cooking

If you have culinary skills, try to develop and share them, especially with children and youth, regardless of gender. If you have no culinary skills – and this goes for men and women – try to learn some. Talk with people who know how to cook, ask family, friends, and colleagues for recipes, read books, browse the internet, and even take courses and ... get cooking!

8

Plan your days to give your nourishment the time it deserves

Plan your shopping for food, organize your pantry, and plan weekly meals in advance. Share the responsibility for the chores related to meals. Take the act of preparing and eating meals as a privileged moment of enjoyment that you can share with others. Think about how you use your time and consider which of your activities could make room for your nourishment.

9

Choose places when eating out that serve freshly cooked meals, and avoid fast food chains

For the day to day meals eaten outside of the home, look for places that serve freshly prepared meals at a fair price. Restaurants where you pay by the kilo of the food chosen can be good options as well as cafeterias that serve homemade food in schools or in the workplace. Occasionally, if you can, go to restaurants that serve more elaborate dishes cuisine from other countries.

10

Be critical of information, guidance and messages from propaganda about food

Remember that the function of advertising is essentially to increase sales of products, and not to inform, and even less, to educate people. Think critically about what you read, see and hear about food and health in advertisements and encourage others, especially children and youth, to do the same.