

# Tips to Lowering Calories on DASH

Making simple substitutions can cut calories and add up to a big difference in your weight as you aim for your DASH goals.



The DASH eating plan may help you lose weight. It's rich in lower-calorie foods, such as fruits and vegetables, which provide a rich source of nutrients and help make you feel full longer. The best way to take off pounds is to do so gradually—get more physical activity and eat a balanced diet lower in calories and unhealthy fat. Following the DASH eating plan and reducing your total daily calories over time can help you maintain a healthy weight.

The DASH eating plan is rich in fiber, which makes you feel full and is good for your body, but may cause some bloating and diarrhea at first. To avoid these problems, gradually increase the amount of fruit, vegetables, and whole grain foods that you eat over several weeks and drink more water. Your body should adjust, and you'll be on your way to a life of healthy eating.

## Tips for reducing calories

- ➔ Reduce the amount of meat that you eat while increasing the amount of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and cooked dry beans.
- ➔ Substitute low-calorie foods, such as when snacking (choose fruits or vegetables instead of sweets and desserts) or drinking (choose water or seltzer water instead of soda or juice).
- ➔ Use fresh or dried herbs and sodium-free spices in cooking instead of extra condiments to add flavor to dishes.
- ➔ Put a bowl of fruit on the kitchen counter and make a family agreement not to have chips or other high-calorie, high-sodium snacks.

Learn more about living a heart healthy life and maintaining a healthy weight at [www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/heart-healthy-living](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/heart-healthy-living).

## REPLACE HIGH CALORIE FOODS WITH LOWER CALORIE CHOICES

### To increase fruits—

- ➔ Eat plain oatmeal with fresh fruit instead of sugary cereal for breakfast.
- ➔ Instead of pre-sweetened yogurt, add fruit to plain, low-fat yogurt.
- ➔ Eat fruits canned in their own juice or in water, not syrup.

### To increase vegetables and reduce meat—

- ➔ Have a hamburger that's 3 ounces of meat instead of 6 ounces. Serve with ½ cup of carrots and ½ cup of spinach.
- ➔ Instead of 5 ounces of chicken, have a stir fry with 2 ounces of chicken and 1 ½ cups of fresh vegetables.

### To increase fat-free or low-fat milk products—

- ➔ Have ½ cup serving of low-fat frozen yogurt instead of full-fat ice cream.
- ➔ If you're lactose-intolerant, have small, frequent dairy products, yogurt, cheeses, lactose-free, low-fat, or fat-free milk.