

What We Eat, How We Feel

Feeling great is a goal everyone can put their mind around! Yet, nutrition, the chief controllable aspect of how we feel, is under-utilized. Malnutrition is taking a peculiar form in North America. Our fast-paced culture encourages us to eat foods that don't



promote health because they are over-processed. These convenient foods are high in preservatives, sugars and fats, but low in essential nutrients. As the world's wealthiest nation, the United States is also building the biggest bodies. Yet it's hardly cause for patriotic pride. How much different could we feel, if instead, we were leaders in the race for nutrition?

Two-thirds of American adults are overweight, and half of these are obese. Even adults in the upper end of the "normal" range, who have BMIs of 22 to 24, would generally live longer if they lost some fat, according to Walter C. Willett, M.D., D.P.H. professor of epidemiology and nutrition at the Harvard School of Public Health.

The epidemic of obesity is a vast and growing public health problem around the world.

"Weight sits like a spider at the center of an intricate, tangled web of health and disease," [writes Dr. Willett](#) in *Eat, Drink, and Be Healthy : The Harvard Medical School Guide to*

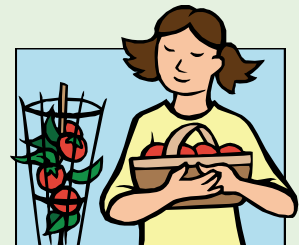
Healthy Eating. He notes that BMI, waist size and weight gained after one's early twenties can be linked to cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and several types of cancer, plus suffering from arthritis, infertility, gallstones, asthma, and even snoring.



Rebecca Morley, MA



Intake of vegetables and fruits, the most nutrient-rich foods on the planet, are sadly lacking for a majority of Americans. Yet every part of our body is impacted when cells receive the benefits from hundreds of protective phytochemicals found in unrefined plants.



The AHA recommends that healthy individuals obtain an adequate nutrient intake from foods eaten in variety and balance. Vegetables, fruits, and whole-grain products should contribute the [majority of daily energy intake](#)—between 55% and 60% of total calories. Daily sugar intake should be no more than 100 calories for women and 150 calories for men.

Total dietary fiber intake of 25 to 30 grams per day from foods will help ensure an eating pattern high in complex carbohydrates and low in fat, thus enhancing your ability to feel great and control your weight.

