Start now with some simple health challenges that fit easily into your routine. For example:

- **Practice deep breathing** several times a day to release your tension. Just slow down, sit and breathe for two minutes.
- **Brush your teeth for** two minutes twice a day; floss each night for healthy gums.
- **Whip up a morning fruit smoothie** with nonfat milk or yogurt.

### Fruited Yogurt Smoothie
1. 13oz. can fat free evaporated milk, chilled
2. 1 cup vanilla yogurt
3. 1 cup frozen unsweetened strawberries, partially thawed
4. 1 banana
5. 1 7oz. can crushed pineapple

Chill evaporated milk. Add all ingredients and blend until smooth in a blender. Makes 4 (9oz.) servings.

- **Avoid rushing.** Leave 10 minutes earlier.
- **Track your calories** in a journal if you’re watching your weight.
- **Open doors and windows for 10 minutes** to create cross ventilation and freshen indoor air.
- **Spend 10 minutes** a day doing core exercises or stretching out your muscles.
- **Take a few minutes each week to plan** balanced meals and healthy snacks and shop in advance.

### Veggies With Color!
Let your children see you enjoying a variety of colorful vegetables.

- **Bake a sweet potato.**
  - Serve with a small amount of margarine, dash of brown sugar and cinnamon. Top with crushed pineapple.

### Roasted Chickpeas
Crunchy, crispy and delicious!
1. (15 ounce) can garbanzo beans
2. 1 teaspoon chili seasoning
3. ½ teaspoon garlic powder (optional)
4. 1 tablespoon olive oil or vegetable oil
5. salt to taste

Drain and rinse garbanzo beans. Place beans on a paper towel and toss gently to remove moisture. Toss the beans with chili seasoning and olive oil. Spread beans in a single layer on a baking sheet. Place in a 400° oven for 20 to 30 minutes. Stir beans every 10 minutes while baking. Remove beans from oven. Toss beans with salt and serve. Roasted garbanzo beans do not keep well.

Roasted chickpeas are done when they are brown and crisp. Continue baking if they are still soft in the center.

### What’s In Your Food Environment?
Temptation abounds in our food-fill world. From the office vending machine to the shopping mall food court and all the other places in-between, food is everywhere.

It’s important to be mindful of your food environment so you can avoid temptation and overeating. **Here’s how:**

- **Cook fresh or frozen broccoli or cauliflower.**
  - Sprinkle with parmesan cheese, shredded cheddar cheese or lemon juice.

- **Have a salad.**
  - Top chopped romaine or leaf lettuce with chopped tomatoes, broccoli, peppers, cauliflower or shredded carrots. Serve with low fat salad dressing.
Start at home: You control your fridge and pantry, so stock kitchen with good-for-you items instead of unhealthy snacks. If chips and cookies aren’t in your cupboards, you can’t indulge. Try snacking on plain air-popped popcorn, whole-grain cereal and whole fruit or vegetables between meals.

Carry healthy snacks: It’s easy to grab a muffin or donut at the coffee shop, or a cupcake from the specialty baker when you’re hungry. But before you choose, consider the effect of extra calories, fat and sugar that wreak havoc on your heart and your waistline. Plan ahead and arm yourself with healthier snacks at all times. Enjoy an apple, a banana or some carrot sticks.

Keep food close. You’ll be less likely to sample the pastry tray at your 3 p.m. meeting if you’ve just eaten a healthful snack. If your office has a fridge, stock low fat cheese, yogurt, hummus and cut vegetables. No fridge? Keep non-perishable, high-fiber snacks (dry cereal, nuts, oatmeal) in your desk drawer. Attend meetings on a full stomach.

The key to overcoming food temptation – whether at food courts, the break room or coffee stands – is to plan ahead and keep healthy snacks nearby.

Eat Less Sodium
Compare the sodium content in soups, boxed foods and frozen meals. Choose the food with the lower sodium on the label.

- Choose low sodium soups.
  Or make your own soup with low sodium broth or homemade broth without added salt.

- Use fewer processed foods –
  Boxed dinners and frozen dinners.

- Cook more meals.
  Learn how to make more dishes with fresh ingredients.

- Eat fewer processed meats
  Such as sausage, hot dogs and bacon.

Soothing Soup
Whether it’s a filling appetizer or a hearty meal, you can enjoy soup with healthful ingredients. Here are tips for making and buying soup.

Making soup is easy. Most soups start with liquid, vegetables and herbs. Adding legumes, chicken, meatballs, brown rice or whole-grain noodles turns soup into a meal. To reduce sodium, start with plain water instead of canned broth or bouillon.

Tip: Only 6% of our sodium intake comes from salt added during or after cooking, while 77% comes from packaged foods such as soup broth.

Soup shopping? Choose a variety labeled “no added salt,” or look for soups with no more than 360 mg of sodium per cup (140 mg or less is considered low sodium). Note: The claim “sodium reduced” means the product has 25% less sodium than the original version. If the original had 1,000 of sodium per serving, the reformulated one still has 750 mg of sodium — that’s pretty salty soup.

One soup caution: Restaurant and store-bought soups can have 750 to 1,000 mg of sodium per serving. The 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend you limit sodium to fewer than 2,300 mg a day. Lower that to 1,500 mg daily if you’re age 51 or older, if you have high blood pressure or other chronic conditions, or if you’re African-American.

For loads of flavor without adding salt to your cooking, experiment with herbs, citrus juices and vinegar. Deliciously different!

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