Simple Swaps to Stay Lean

Sometimes eating can be a mindless process where we simply go for the first thing we see. Unfortunately, this haphazard style of eating can become a habit that can lead to poor nutrition, low energy levels and unintentional weight gain. To help boost the quality of your diet, keep your mind sharp and your body lean, consider these simple food swaps.

**Beverages**

Lots of calories from sugary drinks can sneak their way in during the day. The worst part is, calories from these types of beverages don’t satisfy us the way solid food calories do. So, lose the liquid calories and choose low-to-no calorie drinks instead.

- **Lose These:** Sugar sweetened soft drinks, teas, juices, energy drinks, and coffee drinks with syrup or heavy cream.
- **Choose These:** Water, water flavored with citrus slices or frozen fruit, 100% vegetable juices, skim or 1% cow or plant-based milks, unsweetened teas, and black coffee or coffee with skim milk.

**Entrees**

Fill up without feeling weighed down! Starch-heavy meals and fried foods are not only loaded with calories, they can zap your energy level. Lighten-up by filling half of your plate with colorful vegetables and the other half with a combo of lean protein and whole grains.

- **Lose These:** Foods described as “fried” or “crispy,” including chicken, beef, pork, fish or vegetables, highly processed meats including bologna, hot dogs and sausage, foods “slathered” in thick sauces or butter and entrees in heavy cream or butter sauces.
- **Choose These:** Lean, fresh proteins (beef, turkey, chicken, fish) and vegetables that are baked, grilled, stir-fried or roasted and entrees described as having “light butter,” vinaigrettes or tomato-based sauces.

**Snacks**

Snacks have a bad reputation, but with a few modifications these between-meal foods can improve and enhance the quality of your overall diet.

- **Lose These:** Chocolate bars, sandwich crackers and cookies, fried chips, ice cream, and heavily buttered and/or sweetened popcorn or kettle corn.
- **Choose These:** Fresh, dried or frozen fruit, vegetables, baked chips, yogurt, nuts, seeds, and snack bars made with whole fruit and nuts.