

EAT WELL at MIT!

1. **Do NOT skip meals** – Eat at least 3 times a day!
 - **Poor performance.** Meal skippers don't perform as well. They accomplish less work, are physically less steady, and are slower at making decisions.
 - **Brain drain.** The brain's exclusive fuel, glucose, is compromised within four to six hours if you have not eaten. That's because the glucose stored in the liver as glycogen, runs out during this time period. The liver is like a traffic cop for blood sugar. When blood glucose dips too low, the liver converts glycogen into glucose and releases it into the blood. But if its glycogen has been depleted, the body has to turn to less efficient fueling methods.
 - **Calorie loading.** Calorie loading easily occurs if you eat just one meal a day (typically dinner). Eating just one large meal tends to overwhelm your body with calories that it does not need at that moment. It's like plugging all the appliances in your house into one socket. Even though the entire electrical system can handle all the appliances, if they are concentrated on just one circuit, you'll blow a fuse. It is better to spread the nutrient load.
 - **Regularly Eating Breakfast Reduces Weight Gain.** Breakfast frequency and BMI are inversely associated. The association between eating breakfast and body weight has been explored in cross-sectional studies and in several small prospective cohort studies. In a 5-year prospective study, investigators in Minnesota examined the association between breakfast eating patterns on self-reported BMI and weight changes. In cross-sectional analyses, adolescents who ate breakfast daily had lower BMIs than those who never or intermittently ate breakfast.

2. **Select Whole Grains** whenever possible
 - Are high in fiber, vitamins and minerals
 - Keep you full longer and help maintain sustained energy and a balance blood sugar
 - Reduce the risk of many chronic diseases

3. Remove **TRANS FATS** from your diet; **READ YOUR FOOD LABELS.**

- These substances, which were first used in margarine, don't exist in nature, but result from a chemical treatment of fats and oils to extend shelf life...microbes (bacteria, fungus and molds) which normally feast on whole, non-chemical food, can't digest trans fats. They have no taste for plastic and leave the altered food alone.
- But our human bodies can't digest plastic food either! We don't have the enzymes to break down Trans fats for digestion and elimination, so once they're taken in, they can only exit our bodies by clinging to dietary fiber that's excreted in bowel movements. If your diet is low in fiber, and Trans fats aren't carried out of your body, they can build up inside your intestinal tract, blood vessels, and brain.

4. Select **lean and/or low fat** dairy and meat.

- The fats from meat, milk, and milk products are the main sources of saturated fats in most diets.
- Saturated fat raises blood cholesterol more than other forms of fat.
- High levels of saturated fat and cholesterol in the diet are linked to increased blood cholesterol levels and a greater risk for heart disease.
- Focus on heart healthy fats (those that come from vegetable sources) like nuts, natural peanut butter, avocado, olive or vegetable oil, etc.

5. Consume at least **5 SERVINGS** of fruits and vegetables each day.

- Provide a variety of vitamins, minerals (including antioxidants)
- Lower risk of many chronic diseases and illnesses
- Color is Key – eat a variety of colors. Each provides a different assortment of vitamins.
- Low in fat and calories and sweet due to the natural sugar
- More matters....any increase from what you currently consume will have a positive impact on your health.

6. **Drink eight (8 oz.) glasses of water a day.** If you are sick, exercising or it is really hot outside try to add at least another 4 glasses.

- Aids in the processing of toxins and stress chemicals
- Reduces fatigue and headaches often caused by dehydration
- Increases alertness
- Improves hair and skin
- Aids in digestion and satiety