



## Making a Meal Plan Work in a Family

Have a family meeting. Ask everyone for suggestions about how you can eat healthier as a family. Be flexible, creative, and try new things. The support of your family is important!

### What if I need to eat foods my family does not like?

### What if my spouse or partner will not cook healthy foods?

- Be prepared to eat a separate meal. If necessary, just eat together even if the food is different.
- Keep your own stash of healthy foods, but encourage your family to try them. Your family may be pleasantly surprised.
- Make a separate small portion for yourself without added fat and salt. You can make your family higher-calorie dinners or desserts, but make only enough for one meal. No leftovers mean less temptation!
- Use different spices and herbs to add some pizzazz. The MOVE!<sup>®</sup> Handout “Spice It Up” can give you some great ideas.



## How do I handle my spouse or partner saying that a food is healthy, even if I know it has too many calories and fat?

- Review the food labels or look the food up in a calorie guide and share this with your spouse.
- Be specific about the ways in which you need to decrease calories to lose weight.
- Provide a grocery list of healthier foods that you prefer and give it to the food shopper or offer to take over food shopping.



- Ask each member of the family to make a list of his or her favorite treat foods. Then pick those that you like least to keep in the house. They'll be satisfied, and you won't be nearly as tempted.
- Offer to help with meal preparation.
- Share MOVE!<sup>®</sup> Handouts and other information you learn from the MOVE!<sup>®</sup> Program.

- Ask a registered dietitian for additional help and include your spouse/partner.

## What do I say to my family's complaints about wanting "real" food, not "diet" food?

- Healthy food does not have to be *diet* food.
- Eating lower-calorie foods can mean that you can eat more.
- Healthy food makes you feel healthy and have energy.

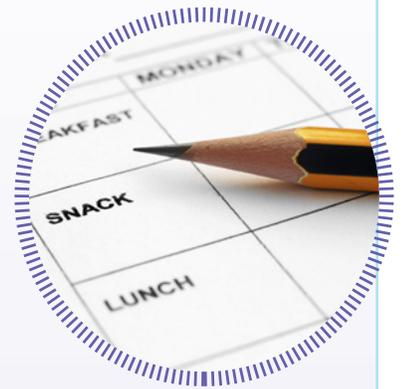


- To avoid temptation in the supermarket, put only the healthiest foods on your shopping list. Then ask your spouse or kids to have a “goodie run,” where they go to the market once a week and buy their favorite treats. Have them keep their treats in a place you don’t go every day – maybe the garage or basement.



### **What if I have tried low-fat, low-calorie recipes and foods and no one will eat them? I end up throwing out more food than we eat.**

- Start small. Only change one recipe at a single meal.
- Try substituting a similar food; just use a version that is lower in fat, sugar, or salt.
- Do not announce that the food is “healthy,” just say it is prepared in a “new” way or say nothing at all.
- Work on gradual, small changes. Start adding water to the orange juice or pouring skim milk into a whole milk container, or cut some sugar and fat out of each recipe. Chances are no one will even notice.



### **What do I do? My family only wants to eat out.**

- The MOVE!® Handout “Make It Quick” can help.
- Work with your family to make a meal preparation plan where 5 days a week, you plan the meals; 2 days a week, others in the family get to choose where and what to eat. You compensate by eating smaller portions.
- If you do eat out, the MOVE!® Handouts “Restaurant Tips” and “Fast Food Alternatives” can help you to choose healthy, low-calorie options.