My Nutrition Flash Cards

There many things found in the foods we eat and drink, each of them with a specific job. Some things are good for our bodies and help them grow and work, while others are harmful. Have an adult cut along the dotted lines and help you fold the flashcards. Practice learning your nutrition words while you are on the way to school, after dinner, or anytime! By knowing about what nutrients are in the foods we eat and drink you will be able to pick out which choices are healthy and which are not.

Calcium is found in many foods we eat and drink. One of calcium’s most important jobs is to help our bodies build strong bones. A good way to get calcium is by drinking fat-free, 1 percent fat and low-fat milk and dairy products. When our bones our strong, the rest of our body can get strong too!

Protein is found in many foods, one of the most common is meat. Protein helps your body to build strong muscles. Without enough protein, our muscles begin to break down and get weak. Some good ways to get protein are by eating beans, nuts, lean meats, poultry without skin and fish.

Fiber is a nutrient mostly found in plants and vegetables. Fiber helps provide a feeling of fullness as well as getting rid of waste and cholesterol. When we don’t have enough fiber, our bodies struggle to get rid of all the waste. Foods that contain fiber include oatmeal, beans, strawberries, and oranges.

Fats are essential to give your body energy and to support cell growth. They also help protect your organs and help keep your body warm. Fats help your body absorb some nutrients and produce important hormones, too. There are four dietary fats found in the foods we eat, saturated fats, trans fats, monounsaturated fats, and polyunsaturated fats.

For more information on heart-healthy eating, visit www.Heart.org/Nutrition or contact the American Heart Association at inquiries@heart.org or (800) 242-8721.
Saturated fats are “bad fats” because they can increase the level of cholesterol in your blood and increase your risk of heart disease and stroke. Saturated fats are found in foods like whole, full fat and 2 percent fat milk and dairy products (cheese, butter), fatty meats, processed meats (bologna, salami) and poultry skin, as well as tropical oils such as palm, palm kernel and coconut oils.

Trans fats are “bad fats” because they can increase the level of “bad” cholesterol and decrease the level of “good” cholesterol in your blood and increase your risk of heart disease and stroke. Trans fats can be found in fried foods like French fries and doughnuts, and baked goods including pastries, pie crusts, biscuits, pizza dough, cookies, crackers, and stick margarines and shortenings made with partially hydrogenated oils.

Monounsaturated fats are “better fats” because they can help reduce bad cholesterol levels in your blood and lower your risk of heart disease and stroke. They are found in liquid vegetable oils such as olive oil, canola oil, peanut oil and mid-oleic or high oleic sunflower oil, avocados, peanut butter, as well as many nuts and seeds.

Polyunsaturated fats are “better fats” because they can help reduce bad cholesterol levels in your blood and lower your risk of heart disease and stroke. They are found in liquid vegetable oils such as soybean oil, corn oil and safflower oil, fatty fish such as salmon, mackerel, herring and trout, as well as many nuts and seeds.

For more information on heart-healthy eating, visit www.Heart.org/Nutrition or contact the American Heart Association at inquiries@heart.org or (800) 242-8721.
Potassium is needed for the normal function of your body’s cells. It helps your body keep the right amount of water in your cells and other parts of the body. Potassium also helps your nerves and your muscles work well. A diet rich in potassium helps control blood pressure because potassium helps reduce the effect of sodium. Foods with potassium include bananas, cantaloupe, grapefruit, oranges, honeydew melon, spinach and potatoes.

Sodium (salt) has an important job when it comes to food. It helps food stay safe when they are sitting in a can or a box in your pantry and helps it to taste better too. While sodium is important, our bodies need very little of it. Often times the foods we buy have much more sodium than our bodies need. Some of the foods that usually contain a lot of sodium are restaurant and fast foods, packaged, processed foods, canned foods, soups, prepared mixes, and condiments.

Sugar is found naturally in many foods, like fruit and milk, and is added into other foods like candy, desserts, sweetened drinks and soda. Too much added sugar is bad for our bodies and can contribute to weight gain which can increase the risk of diabetes. It is important to limit the amount of added sugars we eat. A good way to satisfy a sweet tooth is with a piece of fruit, like a juicy peach!

Carbohydrates (carbs) are found in almost every food we eat. They help our bodies have energy for all the activities we do. Some carbs are better than others. For example, ones found in fiber-rich whole grains, whole-grain bread, whole wheat pasta, brown rice, oatmeal, beans, and fruit keep our bodies energized for a long time. Other foods and beverages like cookies and sodas may have a lot of carbs, but they are mostly made of sugar, which can give you too many calories and contribute to weight gain.

For more information on heart-healthy eating, visit www.Heart.org/Nutrition or contact the American Heart Association at inquiries@heart.org or (800) 242-8721.