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Eat your way to better health

Good food is the key to good health

If we ate a variety of healthy foods and didn't eat too much, we may all be healthier. That's what medical research shows. At least four of the ten leading causes of deaths are linked to what we eat:

- Heart disease
- Cancer
- Stroke
- Diabetes

The wrong diet can be harmful, but eating right can lead to a healthier life. To stay healthy, your body needs the right balance of carbohydrates, fats and protein. Here are some facts about nutrition's three main parts.

Carbohydrates

You need carbohydrates for energy. Try to eat the "carbs" that are good for you — grains and vegetables, for instance. They are complex carbohydrates. They give you energy, plus a healthy dose of vitamins, minerals and fiber.

Avoid simple carbohydrates. Candy, cake, table sugar, syrups, and sweetened cereals, for instance. If a food or drink label says high fructose corn syrup, think twice about buying it. Simple carbs give you energy, but no nutrients.

To learn more about eating right, visit Aetna IntelliHealth[®] at www.intelihealth.com.

Fats

With all the bad press fat gets, it's easy to forget that eating some dietary fats help:

- Build healthy cells
- Cushion internal organs
- Keep skin and hair healthy
- Provide insulation under the skin

But not all fats are alike. Stick with fats found in vegetable and fish oils. Or those found in olive, canola and peanut oils. They can help improve your health when you use them instead of saturated and trans fats. Read food labels. They can help guide you.

Protein

Without the right proteins, our bodies can't function properly. Your body uses proteins for growth and to build and repair bone and muscles, organs, skin and more. That's why it's important to eat:

- Meat, poultry or fish
- Milk, eggs and dairy foods
- Beans, seeds and nuts
- Grains and soy products

And if carbs and fats can't meet your energy needs, proteins can help.

Benefit Options
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Source: Aetna IntelliHealth. Available at www.intelihealth.com. Accessed January 12, 2011.

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