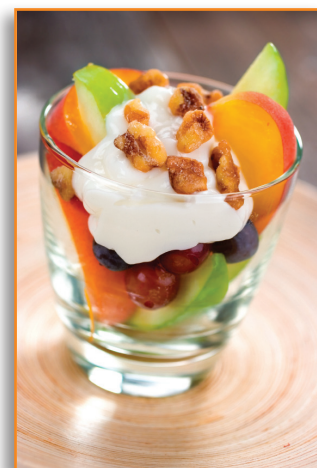




Healthy Weight Loss

Low fat, gluten free, grain free...what's the best choice when you're counting calories or wanting to maintain your weight? Try your hand at this quiz and learn which options may be best for your dietary needs.

1. Grain products such as bread, pasta, and rice are the main reason for the obesity epidemic and should never be eaten.
 True
 False
2. Going "gluten free" is a good idea when I want to lose weight.
 True
 False
3. Enjoying a healthy snack once or twice a day can help me lose weight.
 True
 False
4. I should look for products that are "low fat" or "fat free" when I'm trying to save calories.
 True
 False
5. I should avoid all fats, especially if I want to lose weight.
 True
 False



(answers follow on next page)



Answers

1. False

Research shows that people who eat whole grains regularly may have a lower risk of obesity, as measured by their body mass index and waist-to-hip ratios. They may also have lower cholesterol levels.

Not all grains are created equal. To ensure you're eating healthy grains, look for "whole grains" such as whole wheat, brown rice, whole-wheat pasta, oats, hulled or hull-less barley, quinoa, whole sorghum, whole spelt, and whole rye on the ingredient list. Better yet, enjoy grains in their intact form – simply cooked up as grains.

2. False

Gluten is a protein found in wheat, barley, rye, and a wheat/rye hybrid called triticale. People who have celiac disease or non-celiac gluten sensitivity can't tolerate it. For these people, following a gluten-free (GF) diet is of the utmost importance. However, GF diets aren't necessarily healthier for the general population, as a gluten-free diet without the supervision of a registered dietitian may result in a lack of fiber, certain B vitamins, calcium and other nutrients.

If you're not diagnosed with celiac disease or non-celiac gluten sensitivity, it's best to enjoy naturally gluten-free food such as vegetables, fruits, gluten-free whole grains and lean protein. Processed foods that are labeled "gluten free" may contain more sugar and fats to make them taste better, which can add up to more calories consumed per serving.

3. True

Snacks can have a place in a healthy diet as long as they are nutritious and included in your overall daily calorie intake.

A small, healthy mid-morning snack can keep you full between breakfast and lunch, and a mid-afternoon snack can hold hunger off until dinner time – keeping you from raiding the vending machine or overeating at your main meal. Choose foods like an 8-ounce portion of plain, low-fat yogurt (top with a drizzle of honey, or chopped fruit for a little sweetness), a handful of walnuts or almonds, or a piece of fruit like an apple, pear or orange. Chopped

celery, carrots, cucumbers and peppers are great dippers with individual portions of a yogurt-based dip or hummus.

Be sure to stay hydrated throughout the day, too. Often we think we're hungry, but we're really just thirsty. A glass of water may just save you extra calories you really don't want to consume. It's recommended that women consume about 9 cups of fluid per day, and men about 13 cups. The total amount of fluids can include a mix of tap or bottled water, 100% fruit juice, milk, soups, tea, coffee, and the water naturally found in fruits and vegetables.

4. False

A product that is labeled "low fat" or "fat free" may not necessarily be lower in calories. In fact, because a product with less fat may not taste as good as its full-fat sibling, many manufacturers add stabilizers, starches, salt and sugars to make the product taste better. These added ingredients add calories, sometimes more than the full-fat version! To be sure of what you're buying, check both the ingredient list and the Nutrition Facts label and compare with other products.

5. False.

Like grains, not all fats are created equal. Monounsaturated fats, polyunsaturated fats, and omega-3 fatty acids are some of the healthy fats important for our overall health. They provide fuel for our bodies, support our nervous system and hormones, control inflammation, and allow our bodies to absorb vitamins A, D, E, and K. They can help control our weight, too, when substituted for refined sugar and flour.

Healthy fats give our foods a satisfying flavor and texture and can help keep us fuller longer which is why they're perfect partners in your weight-loss program.

These good fats can be found in foods like seafood, such as salmon, tuna, trout, sardines, and herring, as well as avocados, nuts such as walnuts and almonds, seeds such as pumpkin and sunflower, and olive oil.