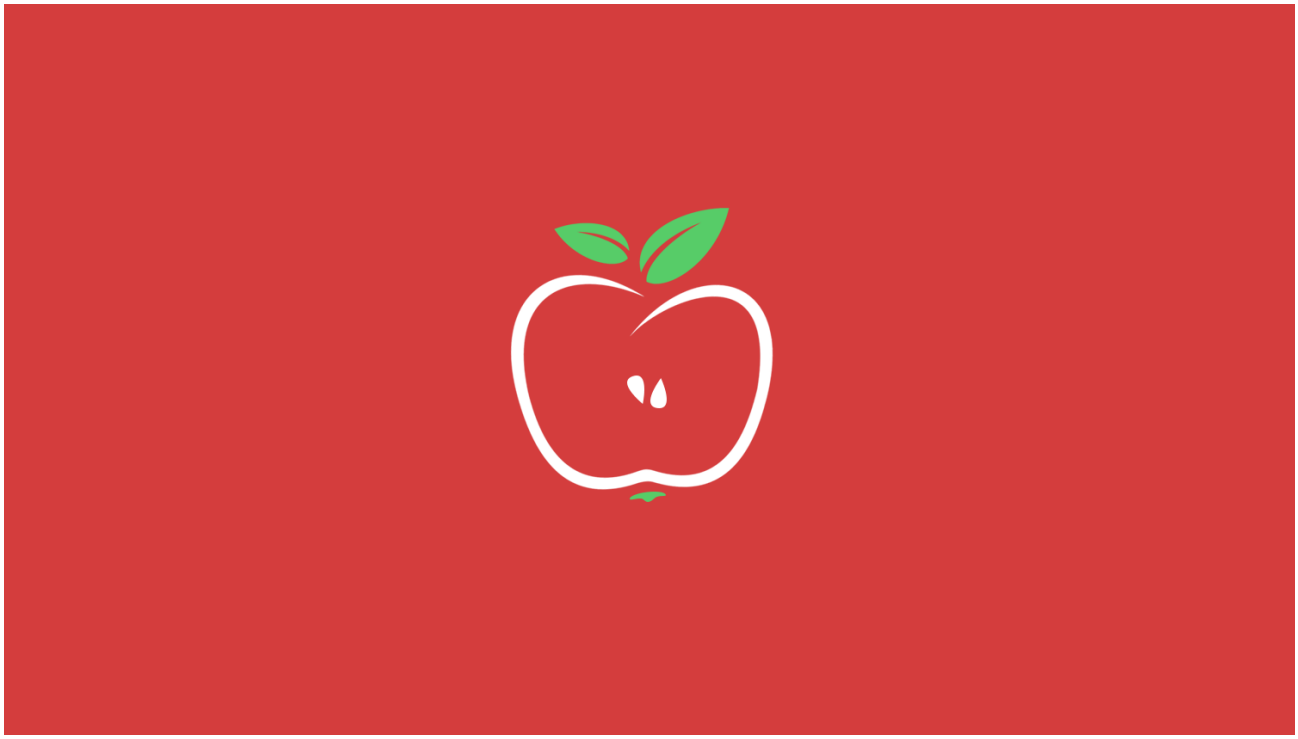
7 ways for caregivers to plan and stick to a healthy diet

You know that sticking to a balanced diet is crucial for overall health and well-being, but it's common to fall off track. Between busy schedules and the convenience of fast food, it's not always easy for your family to avoid unhealthy choices. Here are seven ways to help you plan and stick to a healthy diet:



1. Follow a daily checklist

- [ ] By encouraging your family to follow a daily checklist, you can ensure everyone eats the right amount of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein and dairy products throughout the day. A great resource is the MyPlate Daily Checklist, which creates personal calorie and portion recommendations based on age, gender, and physical activity.

2. Create a meal calendar

- [ ] How many times have you gone to the grocery store without knowing what to buy? This leads to filling your cart with nonsense, or overbuying fresh ingredients that end up spoiling in the fridge after a week. Instead of shopping blindly, create a weekly grocery game plan calendar. Use this template to write out meals you want to try during the week.

3. Substitute the bad for the good

- [ ] Cut the unhealthy ingredients out of your diet and shop for nutritious alternatives. For example, you can replace refined all-purpose flour for whole-wheat for cooking and baking. Olive oil, coconut oil and grapeseed oil also make healthier substitutions for marinades and dressings. Once your cupboard is full of the healthier choices, you won't have to worry about falling off track.

4. Read labels before you purchase

- [ ] Even when the label says "healthy" or "non-fat," be sure to carefully read the ingredients before buying. Helpguide reports that food manufacturers often hide lots of sugar and sodium in packaged products, so it's worth finding out before you make the purchase. Make it a habit to examine labels thoroughly to avoid consuming unhealthy products.

5. Keep a fruit basket handy

- [ ] Bad food cravings are natural, but that doesn't mean you have to give in to them. Instead of breaking your healthy eating habits, just keep a large fruit basket in the kitchen. Make it the first thing you see when you walk into the room looking for an unhealthy snack. This creates a simple reminder of how you're all trying to improve your eating habits. Plus, fresh fruit will surely curb those sweet cravings.

6. Use a food tracker

- [ ] Once you've adjusted your eating habits and want to work on your fitness goals, consider using a progress tracker. The SuperTracker by MyPlate can create a personalized nutrition and physical activity plan for you and provide tips and support to help achieve your goals.

7. Stop eating in front of the television

- [ ] Distracted eating often makes you consume more, which can ultimately lead to weight gain, according to Harvard Health Publications. Instead of eating in front of the television, encourage your family to talk about the day's highs

Make and Share Free Checklists
checkli.com