



# FOOD MYTHS

With so many choices and decisions, it can be hard to know what to do and which information you can trust. Here are some myths and the facts about foods.

**MYTH: To lose weight, you have to give up all your favorite foods.**

**FACT:** You don't have to give up all your favorite foods when you're trying to lose weight. Small amounts of your favorite high-calorie foods may be included in your weight-loss plan. Just remember to keep track of the total calories you take in. To lose weight, you must burn more calories than you take in through food and beverages.

**MYTH: You should stay away from foods high in carbohydrates such as breads, cereals, and pasta.**

**FACT:** Breads, cereals, and other grains do not need to be avoided. They can be part of a healthy eating plan. At least half of the grains you eat should be whole grains. In fact, whole grains can help you feel full. Examples of whole grain foods are: brown rice; whole wheat bread and pasta; oatmeal; and whole grain breakfast cereals. Whole grains provide iron, fiber, and other important nutrients.

**MYTH: Choosing foods that are gluten free will help you eat healthier.**

**FACT:** Gluten is a protein found in wheat, barley, and rye. Foods that are gluten free are only a healthier choice when you have celiac disease or are sensitive to gluten. If you don't have these health problems, but avoid gluten anyway, you may not get the vitamins, fiber, and minerals you need. Talk with your health care provider if you believe you have problems after you eat foods with wheat, barley, or rye.

**MYTH: You should avoid all fats when you're trying to be healthy or lose weight.**

**FACT:** You do not have to avoid all fats when you're trying to improve your health or lose weight. Fat provides nutrients and should be part of a healthy eating plan, but limit fats to avoid extra calories. Cut back on butter, shortening, cream, coconut oil, and palm oil which are high in saturated fat. Use healthy fats such as canola oil and olive oil in cooking.

**MYTH: Dairy products are fattening and unhealthy.**

**FACT:** Dairy products are an important food group because they have protein your body needs to build muscles and calcium to strengthen bones. Many dairy products have added vitamin D to help your body use calcium. Dairy products made from fat free or lowfat milk have fewer calories than dairy products made from whole milk.

**MYTH: Putting cereal in baby's bottle will help him or her sleep through the night.**

**FACT:** Putting baby cereal in your baby's bottle will not make him or her sleep longer and may make your baby choke. Your baby may also drink less than the needed amount of breastmilk or infant formula.

**MYTH: Fruit juice is good for babies.**

**FACT:** Babies under 1 year old should not be given any fruit juice. It is not needed and can take the place of the food they should eat.

**MYTH: Start your baby on solid food as early as possible.**

**FACT:** Solid food such as baby cereal and pureed foods should be given when your baby is about 6 months old but not before 4 months. If you give your baby solid food too early the baby may choke, may drink less than the needed amount of breastmilk or infant formula, and may be at risk of obesity.

## USE ALL OF YOUR WIC FOOD BENEFITS

It is important for you to purchase all of the foods loaded on your WIC EBT card each month. Buy the food within the allowed dates. **Use the Florida WIC App on your Smartphone to view information about your WIC food benefits.** To get started, visit the App Store or Google Play to install the App or scan the QR code. Use your Florida WIC EBT card to register.



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