Eat Fresh!

Do you know the difference between fresh and processed foods? Learn the benefits of choosing fresh foods and substituting other healthy food options.

What is processed food?
Processed foods have been altered from their natural state for safety reasons and for convenience. Processing methods include canning, freezing, refrigeration, dehydration and aseptic processing.

Why are processed foods unhealthy?
- Extra trans and saturated fats
- Extra sodium and sugar
- Often nutrients are removed to make the food last longer or look better
- Higher ratio of calories to other essential nutrients
- Empty calories
- Ingredients in processed foods are often of low quality, but disguised by use of the processing
- Food additives have little nutritional value

What types of food are processed?
- Canned foods
- White breads and pastas made with refined white flour
- Packaged high-calorie snack foods, like chips and cheese snacks
- High-fat convenience foods, like cans of ravioli
- Frozen fish sticks and frozen dinners
- Packaged cakes and cookies
- Boxed meal mixes
- Sugary breakfast cereals
- Lunch meats

What are the health risks associated with eating processed foods?
- Eating processed meats increase your risk of colorectal, kidney and stomach cancer
- Excess sugar and salt intake can lead to high blood pressure, weight gain, and diabetes.
- Food additives may cause adverse health effects

★ But not all processed food is bad...
Frozen vegetables are usually processed within hours of harvest. There is little nutrient loss in the freezing process so frozen vegetables retain their high vitamin and mineral content.

Choosing fresh food instead of processed is best for your health...

What Starts Here Changes The World

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Why choose fresh food instead?
- Fresh food has not been processed other than by washing, cooking, and simple kitchen preparation
- Fresh food contains more of naturally-occurring vitamins, fiber and minerals than processed food
- Essential nutrients in fresh produce may protect you from cancer, high blood pressure, heart disease and Type 2 diabetes
- Eating fresh produce gives you more energy, helps reduce weight gain and may even reduce the effects of aging
- Yellow, orange, red, green and purple fruits and vegetables generally contain the most phytochemicals which reduce the risk for cancer

Sodium in Fresh vs Canned Vegetables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vegetable</th>
<th>Fresh</th>
<th>Canned</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Asparagus</td>
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<td>Carrots</td>
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<td>Spinach</td>
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<td>Zucchini</td>
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Eat This, Not That...

Eat an APPLE instead of APPLE JUICE because it has more fiber and no added sugar.

Eat WHOLE WHEAT BREAD instead of WHITE BREAD because it’s higher in fiber, vitamins B6 and E, magnesium, zinc, folic acid and chromium.

Eat FRESH TURKEY BREAST instead of TURKEY DELI MEAT because it does not have extra sodium or fat.

For more information & handouts, visit http://www.utexas.edu/student/housing/wellness