

Facing Nutritional Challenges

Your body is a wonderful, quickly adapting machine! It has adapted your tastes to the Standard American Diet because that is what most people in the U.S. are eating on a regular basis. Over time, as you start eating fresh whole fruits and vegetables and less processed meals, it will adapt to your new diet and you will begin to enjoy and crave these foods!

A couple keys to facing challenges to your new food plan are to be prepared with openness and organization.

- 👍 **Be open** to new tastes and ideas of food preparation.
- 📅 **Be organized** and prepare for the week ahead by making lists of food at the market, being conscious of striving for a variety of colors.
- ⌚ **Be patient** with yourself and your changing body as you learn to appreciate your new food plan, acknowledging your cravings but not letting them take over.

Peer Pressure

Patience and organization can help overcome peer pressure from friends and family to revert to the Standard American Diet. Hopefully if they see you improving yourself — feeling better and looking better while eating healthy — they may be encouraged to eat the same. Until that time, it is best to stay organized to avoid temptation by clearing an area of the kitchen and pantry that will be yours.

Some people may attempt to distract you from eating healthy, often because they do not want to come to terms with their own eating habits. Just as a therapist would encourage you not to let someone else's emotional baggage weigh you down, **try your best not to let someone else's unhealthy eating habits weigh you down.** Ask him or her to support you on your health journey, even if he or she does not eat the same way you do.

Social Situations

Continue your organization when you **anticipate social situations.** Plan ahead by thinking, "What food will be at this party?" Fill up beforehand on nutrient-dense, low-calorie foods so that you do not attend on an empty stomach. Eat foods available to you on your food plan — the food plan has a wide variety of fresh vegetables and soups that can curtail hunger cravings. These foods will help decrease those "hangry" (hungry + angry) reactions people get that lead to impulse eating. You will be able to enjoy socializing instead of feeling tired of eating food off the meal plan.

Volunteer to bring a side dish. Prepare a dish that meets your dietary needs and that others may enjoy as well. Look at recipe options such as the ones located in this binder.