

12

Weeks

TO HEALTHY EATING

WEEK ONE – ARE YOU READY TO CHANGE?

Prior to making a change in your nutritional habits, it is important for you to assess your priorities and reasons for wanting to make changes. This process requires time to contemplate what areas you would like to begin to address. It is important to realize that the nutritional habits you adopt are under your control. Healthy eating changes need to become part of your lifestyle in order for you to continue to reap the benefits. It is important to understand that the “all or nothing” rule does not work for long-term sustainable change. You must identify your reasons for staying on track. If committing to healthy eating does not reach the top of your priority list, then there is a chance that you are not ready to dedicate the time and effort toward making healthy changes. You may consider pursuing these changes when you are committed and ready. Before embarking on your journey to improving your eating habits, take some time to complete the questions below; it will help you to better understand where you are at in the change process.

Determine where you fit in on the readiness for healthy eating scale

- I do not feel I need to change my eating habits at this time.
- I will consider changing my eating habits some time, but I am not ready to make that commitment now.
- I am ready to start making healthy changes to my eating habits NOW!
- I recently, in the last six months, made healthy changes to my diet and am already eating healthy.
- I have been eating healthy for the last six months or longer.

If you have identified that you are ready to move forward, your next step is to review and answer the questions below. Answering these questions will help set a strong foundation for discarding old, non-effective eating patterns.

Spend some significant time answering the questions below.

Describe your present eating habits.

List some of the areas of your diet you would like to change.

What are the advantages of making these changes?

What is your long-term health or healthy eating goal?

List the changes that are a priority for you in achieving the above goal

What is the most important area for you to focus on?

What benefits would making these changes provide you?

When do you want to start making these changes?

Why do you want to start making changes to your diet now? Why not yesterday? Why not tomorrow?

What do you need to do in order to make these changes happen?

How committed are you to making these nutrition changes? Scale of 1–10 with 10 being completely committed.

Below are some questions to review that will further assist you in building a personal case for change readiness. Read through these questions and answer a simple “yes” or “no” by circling your corresponding answer.

Readiness quiz

1. Do you have a support system for your healthy eating plan?

Yes / No

2. Are you willing to dedicate time and effort to planning and implementing your healthy eating plan?

Yes / No

3. Have you thought about your current eating habits and thought about what areas you would like to change? Have you set a long-term healthy eating goal?

Yes / No

4. Will changing your eating habits positively impact other areas of your life?

Yes / No

5. Do you view this change as temporary or a permanent lifestyle change? Do you understand a healthy eating plan is a lifestyle change?

Yes / No

6. Are you willing and able to explore your habits and your inner self to make healthy eating changes?

Yes / No

7. Do you have an idea of other resources you can utilize to assist in making these changes?

Yes / No

8. Have you thought about what your life would be like if you make these healthy eating changes?

Yes / No

9. Have you thought about how you might incorporate these changes into your current lifestyle?

Yes / No

10. Are you willing to devote adequate time to learning about what you need to change, want to change and how to make the necessary changes?

Yes / No

11. Are you prepared and ready to make healthy eating a priority in your life and are you ready to get started?

Yes / No

Your responses to these questions will change over time and it is important to truly understand what it is you want to change, why you want to change it and how you are going to go about making that change. This road to healthy eating behaviour change is all about YOU. Be realistic in the goals you set out to achieve; small changes with frequent rewards are easier to achieve than reaching for immediate, large changes. Be kind to yourself and give yourself permission to go off the "ideal" plan. Flexibility is the key to success. You must be flexible with your plan and incorporate balance, which will help you achieve long-term success.