

Health In Progress

Lesson 8

Factors Affecting Food Choices



QUESTION 8:

Our food choices may be influenced by many factors including:

- a. Our family
- b. The food industry
- c. Where we obtain our food
- d. Advertisements
- e. All of the above

ANSWER: e. All of the above

1. **What we eat is determined by many factors, especially if you are a child. As a young person, you probably do not think too much about what you eat, but just eat what you like and what is available to you.**
2. **How do you know if you are eating correctly? Here are some tips:**
 - a. Eat 3 small meals a day and healthy snacks in between **only if you are hungry.**
 - b. Eat **a variety of foods**, including fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. (*See Food Pyramid*)
 - c. Watch your **portion sizes**, especially if you are eating at a restaurant. (*See Lesson 13*)
 - d. Drink **water** if you are thirsty.
 - e. Try to eat more **unprocessed or minimally processed foods** and less highly processed foods. (*See Lesson 16*)
 - f. **Minimize intake of "junk foods"** (i.e., chips, candy, soda, French fries, etc.)
3. **What does "variety of foods" mean? The U.S. Department of Agriculture issued dietary guidelines in the form of a food pyramid.** The food pyramid shows what types of foods we should try to eat each day. The guidelines given there are for adults, but are not too different for children your age. To determine the exact recommendations for eating for your age, sex and activity level, you can visit the website www.mypyramid.gov. You can even monitor your eating patterns over time using this website.
4. **It is important to realize that much more money is spent on advertising "empty calorie" foods compared to healthy foods and this influences what we eat.** In fast food and junk food commercials, just as with cigarette advertising, the people consuming these foods look happy, and appear to have no weight or health problems. The commercials do not provide information about the consequences of eating too much of these foods.