



# EAT WHOLE FOODS

*Whole foods contain the vitamins, minerals, phytonutrients, and fiber to keep our bodies strong and living long.* However, every year Americans are spending more of their grocery bill on processed foods, most of which are lacking vital nutrients we need. In the past 30 years the percentage of the American grocery bill spent on processed foods has doubled.<sup>1</sup> Know the harmful effects of a diet high in processed foods and low in whole foods...

## *The Facts:*

- *Processed foods can be loaded with fat, salt, sugar and artificial ingredients.* While these foods may taste good, they may also cause us to consume too many nutrient-poor calories.
- *Studies linking a diet high in plant foods with a decrease in cancer are too numerous to count.*
- The American Heart Association recommends a *variety of fruits, vegetables and whole grains to maintain a healthy weight and blood pressure, which protects against cardiovascular disease.*<sup>2</sup>
- Contrary to popular belief, *a diet high in whole foods can actually cost less money.* Portion for portion, foods like fruits, vegetables and whole grains can cost less money than processed foods, which can be high in salt, fat and calories.<sup>3</sup>

## *CHOOSING A DIET HIGH IN WHOLE FOODS FOR YOUR FAMILY:*

1. **Make sure half your plate contains fruits and vegetables.** Include them in your snacks as well.
2. **Eat whole grains.** Replace refined grains like white rice and white bread with whole grains like brown rice and brown bread. Try different grains and seeds, such as quinoa, triticale, amaranth, and farro, which are high in micronutrients, fiber, and even protein.
3. **Cook at home using fresh ingredients.** Replicate frequently store-bought products, such as sauces and boxed snacks, with your own recipes. By cooking at home with ingredients you choose, you will control the amount of sugar, salt, and fat, and skip the artificial ingredients like preservatives and food dyes. *\*Ready-made sauces and canned goods with 5 or fewer ingredients work in a pinch, but fresh is always best.*

<sup>1</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics

<sup>2</sup> "Diet and Lifestyle Recommendations" American Heart Association

<sup>3</sup> "Are Healthy Foods Really More Expensive" USDA, May 2012

