



State of Wisconsin  
Department of Health Services

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Jim Doyle, Governor  
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## **Eating Right, Staying Fit Can Help You Weather Tough Times**

*March is National Nutrition Month*

State health officials are reminding everyone that eating right and staying fit are important no matter one's age, and especially during stressful times, such as an economic downturn.

"It's tempting to eat inexpensive fast food and to forget about exercise when we are facing difficult times," said Dr. Seth Foldy, State Health Officer. "People need to realize that healthy food is not necessarily expensive. Sticking to healthy food choices and adding physical activity to your daily routine can be good for your mind and body. Doing both can improve your mood and your health from the very first day you begin changing your lifestyle for the better."

Poor diet and inactive lifestyles lead to being overweight and obesity, which increase the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure and Type 2 diabetes.

The Department shared the following suggestions to get started:

- **Find affordable healthy food for your family.** Many Wisconsin families can get help with free or reduced price food. The FoodShare and WIC programs help thousands of people buy the food they need for good health. See if you are eligible at [www.access.wi.gov](http://www.access.wi.gov).
- **Make your calories count.** Eat a colorful variety of fruits and vegetables, whole-grain foods, low-fat dairy products, lean meats and fish. These provide protein, vitamins, minerals, fiber and other nutrients with fewer calories. Use [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov) to develop a personal plan and help you make smart food and beverage choices for lifelong health.
- **Add simple physical activity.** Regular physical activity, which can start as simply as walking more, is important for your overall health and fitness. Adults should try to get at least 30 minutes of physical activity every day, and children should get at least 60 minutes. Try taking the stairs or parking at the far end of the parking lot to give yourself a boost!
- **Eat "local."** Visit your local farmers market or join the trend of growing your own fruits and vegetables at home or in a community garden. It's satisfying and educational.

"Healthy habits, policies and environments improve your quality of life immediately and in the long term, while also reducing health care costs for everyone," Foldy said.

Learn more by visiting the Department's Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity Prevention Program webpage at <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/health/physicalactivity/>

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