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### **Living Healthy**

**Winning the War on Weight** doesn't require an "all or nothing" approach. Losing just 5-10% of your weight can delay or prevent many chronic conditions. Keep in mind a few basics in order to find an approach that works for you:

- Set a goal of a gradual weight loss of about one to two pounds per week
- Choose a low-calorie eating plan that offers a wide range of healthy foods
- Reduce your food intake by 250 to 500 calories per day
- Educate yourself about healthy eating and learn to be more physically active – everyday

#### **Foods to get your health in tip-top shape:**

- Almonds – Go nuts for this heart-healthy snack that is rich in "good fat." Monounsaturated fats have been associated with reduced risk of heart disease. It's a high protein snack, rich in vitamin E and magnesium. Almonds have been found to promote healthy weight loss.
- Avocado – The fats found in avocados have been shown to maintain good cholesterol while reducing bad cholesterol. The high fat content helps you start feeling fuller faster. Research shows that avocados aid in better nutrient absorption.
- Berries – One cup of strawberries contains almost as much vitamin C as a cup of orange juice. Blueberries make an ideal brain food, protecting from oxidative stress while reducing the effects of age-related conditions. Cranberries protect against urinary tract infections and support a healthy gastrointestinal tract, as they are a natural probiotic.
- Broccoli – Full of fiber, broccoli aids in digestion and combats high cholesterol levels. Vitamin C in broccoli keeps your skin glowing while also aiding iron absorption in the body. This can help prevent the development of cataracts and ease symptoms of the common cold.
- Garlic – Studies have shown that garlic improves cardiovascular health with its ability to lower blood triglycerides and total cholesterol. Garlic has even been shown to help fight allergies with its antiviral properties. Garlic can also help regulate blood sugar levels by increasing the release of insulin in diabetics.
- Green Tea – Green tea has been shown to aid in weight loss by enhancing one's metabolism.
- Salmon – Just a four-ounce serving of wild salmon provides an entire day's requirement of vitamin D, as well as over half a day's B12, niacin and selenium. Salmon is also extremely high in protein and "good fat." Omega-3 fats have been proven to reduce inflammation in our bodies, which can be the root of many health problems.
- Spinach – The sidekick in spinach, lutein, makes it one of the best foods to prevent cataracts. This also protects against age-related macular degeneration. Spinach's beta carotene promotes good eyesight. Spinach is also good for your bones with its source of vitamin K, which retains calcium in the bone matrix.
- Whole Grains – People who eat whole grains regularly – in comparison to their white bread counterparts – have a lower risk of obesity and lower cholesterol levels. Whole grains are also an excellent source of B vitamins, vitamin E, magnesium and iron.
- Yogurt – Yogurt comes from milk, so you automatically benefit from the calcium, vitamin B2, B12, potassium and magnesium. Yogurt provides the amino acids your muscles need for repair and also contains "good" bacteria (probiotics) which can benefit the digestive tract.

## Going to the Doctor Checklist

Going to the doctor today is a far cry from 20 years ago. We seemed to have more time – and so did our doctors. Times have changed. Not only are we pressed for time, but so are our doctors. In some cases, there are fewer doctors in certain fields, meaning less time to spend with each patient. Other times, doctors are trying to see as many patients as they can because of the economics of how they're paid. The end result: you may feel more like a number than a patient these days.

So where does this leave you? Dissatisfied at times. Confused, too. So what can you do? Get in the driver's seat. Understand what you should be getting from a doctor's visit – and go for it! It takes some commitment and planning on your part but you're likely to get more than you paid for – in a good way.

### Checkup Checklist

- I'll seek the right "level" of care: primary care in most situations and specialty care when warranted or recommended by my primary care physician. If I'm not sure I need to see a doctor, I'll call a Health Coach at 877-789-2583 – they're available 24/7.
- I'll avoid unpleasant surprises at the doctor's office by knowing how much the visit is likely to cost. I will be comfortable calling BCBSF Care Consultants at 888-476-2227 (M-F 8am-9pm) to ask questions about my upcoming appointment.
- I'll know "why" I'm going to the doctor and be prepared to use my time with the doctor efficiently. I will be able to tell the doctor my concerns and symptoms. I will be able to list all the medications, over-the-counter and prescribed, that I am taking. I will have a list of questions for the doctor to better understand my health. I will jot down what the doctor recommends.
- I'll remember to share the results of my Personal Health Assessment with my doctor. I will also tell my doctor if I am participating in any disease management or behavioral change programs.
- If my doctor recommends a test, I will ask its purpose and what it involves. I will ask my doctor my options for having the test done to find the most effective facility for the test. If I am seeing more than one doctor, I will alert the doctor if I have recently had the same or a similar test.
- Where will the test cost me the least amount of money? I will call my Care Consultant at 888-476-2227 (M-F 8am-9pm) to find out about my options for getting the test done.
- Before going home, I'll make sure that I am comfortable with what I have heard and know what I must do.



**Checklists are a great way to get you driving in the right direction when it comes to your health care.**  
**The more you use them, the more you'll start thinking like a savvy health care consumer.**