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For Immediate Release

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March is National Nutrition Month Enjoy Foods that Suit Personal Lifestyle, Health Needs and Tastes

Lansing, Mich. March 1, 2013 – Each March, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics encourages Americans to return to the basics of healthy eating through National Nutrition Month. This year’s theme, “Eat Right, Your Way, Every Day,” emphasizes the inclusion of foods people love as part of a healthful eating plan that is tailored to individuals’ lifestyles, traditions, health needs and tastes.

A common misperception is that eating healthfully means giving up favorite foods. According to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics’ position paper, “Total Diet Approach to Healthy Eating,” in 2011, 82 percent of U.S. adults cited not wanting to give up foods they like as a reason for not eating healthier. However, the most important focus of healthy eating is the total diet or overall pattern of food eaten, rather than any one food or meal. All foods can fit within the pattern when enjoyed in moderation and combined with physical activity.

There isn’t a particular way to eat that’s right for everyone. When eating is customized to suit personal needs and preferences, healthful eating becomes a part of a lifestyle that can be sustained long-term. Planning ahead, such as packing lunches and snacks, is one of the best ways to satisfy appetite and nutritional needs on a busy schedule. Whatever your lifestyle, a registered dietitian can help personalize an eating plan to best meet nutritional needs and food preferences.

The WIC Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children supports National Nutrition Month. WIC serves low and moderate income pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women, infants, and children up to age 5 by providing supplemental food, nutrition education and counseling, and referrals based on health screening and assessments of need. WIC has demonstrated a positive effect on pregnancy outcomes, child growth and development. (To learn more about enrolling in WIC, please call the WIC agency nearest you, 1-800-26-BIRTH, or “211,” the hotline link to community resources near you.)

Tips to Eat Right, Your Way, Every Day from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

On-the-Job. Busy work days and business travel can lead to on-the-fly meals.

- For desktop dining, keep single-serve packages of crackers, fruit, peanut butter, low-sodium soup or canned tuna in your desk.
- Always on the go? Tuck portable, nonperishable foods in a purse, briefcase or backpack for a meal on the run. Try granola bars, peanut butter and crackers, fresh fruit, trail mix or single-serve packages of whole-grain cereal or crackers.

Students. The student lifestyle can be fast-paced and low-budget. Students can eat right on a budget with some savvy food shopping tips. Stock smart snacks that combine protein and carbohydrates to fuel you such as:

- Apples with peanut butter, carrots and hummus, hardboiled eggs and fruit, banana and yogurt, almonds with low-fat cheese or whole-grain cereal. These also double as a quick grab-and-go breakfast to wake up your brain and muscles for the day's activities.
- At the cafeteria, salad bars are a great choice, just go easy on the cheese, bacon, creamy dressings and other high-calorie add-ons. Follow the [MyPlate guidelines](#) and make half your plate fruits and vegetables.

Families. Caring for family—children, elderly parents or both—can be a handful. However, family meals allow parents to be role models to promote healthy eating. And, just because a meal is made quickly doesn't mean it can't be nutritious.

- Keep things simple. Build a collection of recipes for quick and easy family favorites. Choose ingredients that you can use for more than one meal. For example, cook extra grilled chicken for chicken salad or fajitas the next day.
- Ask for help. Get the kids involved making a salad, setting the table or other simple tasks.

As a part of the National Nutrition Month public education campaign, the Academy's [National Nutrition Month website](#) offers a variety of helpful tips, games, promotional tools and nutrition education resources.

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The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is a federally-funded program that serves low and moderate income pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women, infants, and children up to age 5.

The mission of the Michigan WIC program is to improve health outcomes and quality of life for eligible women, infants and children by providing nutritious food, nutrition education, breastfeeding promotion and support, and referrals to health and other services.

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