

Self Assessment: Do You Eat Like a Happy, Fit Person?

Be completely honest. Do you skip meals sometimes? Snack from the vending machine at work? Occasionally dine from the drive-through? Do you drink soda? Snack on chips? Are you eating to fuel a good mood or depression? Let's get brutally honest. Now is the time to really take a look at what you're eating.

Answer the questions (honestly!) then tally your score to see how you rate and what is working for you and what isn't. Rank your answers 0 to 2 (0 = never, 1 = sometimes, 2 = always)

1. Every day I eat at least eight servings of colorful fruits and/or vegetables (potatoes, fries and iceberg lettuce don't count). _____
2. Every day I eat at least two dark green vegetables, such as Romaine lettuce, spinach and broccoli. _____
3. Every day I eat at least one dark orange fruit or vegetable, such as carrots, apricots, sweet potatoes or cantaloupe. _____
4. At least five times a week, I eat one or more of the following: nuts, soy, legumes, tart cherries, berries or wheat germ. _____
5. Every day I include in my diet at least one serving of citrus fruit. _____
6. I eat primarily whole grains, including 100% whole-grain breads, cereals, pastas and crackers. _____
7. I average three servings daily of nonfat milk, milk products and/or calcium-fortified soy milk/cheese or OJ. _____
8. I include salmon or other fatty fish in my diet at least twice a week or make sure I get at least 200 milligrams of the omega-3 fat DHA in my daily diet. _____
9. I am careful about my fat intake and only use healthy fats, such as olive oil or oils from nuts. _____
10. I read labels and choose foods with little or no added sugar. I also eat few desserts and always keep the serving size small. _____
11. I limit intake of processed, convenience and fast foods. _____
12. I eat breakfast every day. _____
13. I eat minimeals and snacks throughout the day so that no more than four hours goes by between meals. _____
14. I drink at least eight glasses of water every day. _____
15. If I drink coffee or caffeinated beverages, I do so in moderation (i.e., no more than 24 ounces a day). _____
16. At restaurants, I order low-fat, healthy foods like salads, steamed vegetables, grilled chicken or fish and fresh fruit. I also watch portion sizes. _____
17. I drink alcohol in moderation or not at all (i.e., one drink or less/day). _____
18. I limit my vices to small amounts of red wine, dark chocolate and/or tea a few times a week. _____
19. I take a moderate-dose multiple vitamin and mineral supplement. _____
20. I exercise for at least 30 minutes every day and up to an hour or more three or more days every week. _____

Score:

35 to 40 Outstanding. Your diet borders on perfection. You should be blissfully happy and fit. If not, recheck to make sure you are being completely honest, especially about portion sizes and activity level.

29 to 34 Good job. You are well on your way to being happy and lean. Stick with your current habits, but tweak your eating style to raise those scores lower than 2.

20 to 28 Average. You fit right in with most people, which means there are some changes to be made ASAP. Identify three or four 0 and 1 scores that you want to boost into the 1 to 2 range. When you've successfully accomplished this, tackle two or three more.

0 to 19 Needs serious improvement. Time to start taking your health a whole lot more seriously if you really want to be happier, healthier and leaner. Set a goal to gradually improve your score by three points every month until your score is above 19.