

Healthy Living

CONNECTING WITH OUR PATIENTS AND OUR COMMUNITY

Nutrition for the New Year: Tips for Making Healthy Food Choices

As we step into the new year, focusing on nutrition is essential for enhancing health. Nutritious eating fuels our bodies with essential vitamins, minerals, and energy, supporting both physical and mental health.

"A balanced, nutrient-rich diet strengthens immunity, enhances energy, and helps the body manage stress and inflammation," said Linda Hudak, MS, RDN, clinical nutrition coordinator, Saint Peter's University Hospital. "For children and adolescents, proper nutrition is essential as they develop physically and mentally. For adults, it supports a vibrant, active lifestyle and reduces the risk of chronic illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes, and obesity."

Top Nutrition Tips for 2025

Choose Whole Foods

Fill your plate with fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats like olive oil, nuts, and avocados. Whole foods are rich in fiber, vitamins, and antioxidants, which support everything from immunity to heart health. Avoid highly processed foods, which tend to contain added sugars, sodium, and unhealthy fats that can negatively impact health over time.

Eat in Color

Different colors in fruits and vegetables often signify distinct nutrients. For instance, **red foods** like tomatoes and strawberries are high in antioxidants,

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Nutrition for the New Year *(continued)*

green leafy vegetables are packed with fiber, and **purple foods**, like blueberries, contain anthocyanins, a group of antioxidants that support brain health.

Plan Balanced Meals

Creating balanced meals with a good mix of protein, complex carbohydrates, and healthy fats can help stabilize blood sugar levels, increase satiety, and provide sustained energy. Aim to fill half of your plate with vegetables, one-quarter with lean protein, and the remaining quarter with whole grains or other complex carbs.

Focus on Fiber

Fiber is crucial for digestive health, regulating blood sugar and supporting heart health. Foods rich in fiber include whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and legumes, such as beans, chickpeas, peanuts, and lentils. Including fiber in every meal can keep you feeling full longer, help you maintain a healthy weight, and reduce the risk of certain chronic conditions.

Stay Hydrated

Proper hydration supports everything from digestion and nutrient absorption to brain function and energy levels. Aim to drink around eight 8-ounce glasses of water per day, though individual needs vary based on activity level, climate, and personal health.


Limit Sugar and Salt Intake

Excessive sugar intake is linked to obesity, diabetes, and heart disease, while too much salt can contribute to high blood pressure. Small, gradual changes in reducing sugar and salt intake can make a significant difference over time.

Whole Foods


are minimally processed, natural foods. They're rich in nutrients and contain no artificial ingredients or additives.

FRUITS




Apples, bananas, berries

Spinach, carrots, bell peppers




VEGETABLES

GRAINS




Brown rice, quinoa, oats

Eggs, fish, chickpeas



PROTEIN

HEALTHY FATS



Avocado, almonds, olive oil

How a Registered Dietitian-Nutritionist Can Help

The registered dietitian-nutritionists (RDNs) at Saint Peter's University Hospital are experts in creating personalized nutrition plans to meet individual health needs. They provide guidance on managing medical conditions through diet, setting realistic health goals, and making sustainable lifestyle changes. An RDN can help with weight management, food allergies, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and more, helping individuals create a balanced approach to health through diet. Their knowledge is crucial for supporting people who need specialized dietary adjustments, such as those with diabetes, heart disease, or digestive disorders.

Saint Peter's RDNs offer outpatient nutrition counseling for both children and adults.

To schedule a nutrition counseling appointment, call 732.745.7930.

Saint Peter's Earns An 'A' Hospital Safety Grade from The Leapfrog Group

Saint Peter's University Hospital earned an "A" Hospital Safety Grade from The Leapfrog Group, an independent national nonprofit watchdog focused on patient safety. Leapfrog assigns an "A," "B," "C," "D" or "F" grade to general hospitals across the country based on over 30 performance measures reflecting errors, accidents, injuries, and infections as well as the systems hospitals have in place to prevent them.



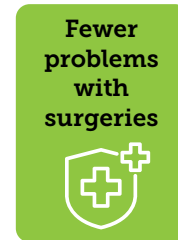
"We realize that patients and their families have options when choosing where they are treated. The Leapfrog Group provides an important service to consumers by supplying them with data and metrics that reflect the safety standards and protocols in place at specific facilities," said Leslie D. Hirsch, FACHE, president and CEO of Saint Peter's Healthcare System. "Safety is one of the most important factors impacting patient outcomes and I'm proud to credit the team at Saint Peter's for once again receiving the highest safety grade. We always strive to not only meet, but to exceed safety standards. This validation from a respected third party like The Leapfrog Group provides added assurance and comfort to our patients in choosing Saint Peter's for their care."

"Achieving an 'A' Hospital Safety Grade is a significant accomplishment for Saint Peter's," said Leah Binder, president and CEO of The Leapfrog Group. "It reflects enormous dedication to your patients and their families, and your whole community should be proud. I extend my congratulations to Saint Peter's University Hospital, its leadership, clinicians, staff, and volunteers for their tireless efforts to put patients first."

The Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade stands as the only hospital ratings program focused solely on preventable medical errors, infections and injuries that kill more than 500 patients a day in the United States. The program is peer-reviewed, fully transparent and free to the public. Grades are updated twice annually, in the fall and spring.

Saint Peter's is Grade A!

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– Leslie D. Hirsch, FACHE, president and CEO of Saint Peter's Healthcare System

To see Saint Peter's full grade details, visit HospitalSafetyGrade.org

To see Saint Peter's other awards and recognitions, visit saintpetershcs.com/award

Cancer Support

Bone Marrow Transplant

For patients who have had an allogeneic transplant

Call for information: 732.235.8522

Breast Cancer

Call for information: 732.235.7011

Gynecologic Cancer

In partnership with the Cancer Support Community Central NJ

Call for information: 732.235.6792

Living with Cancer

Call for information: 732.235.7557

Diabetes Education*

For information about classes, call the numbers listed below.

Diabetes

Self-Management Education

Call for information: 732.339.7630

Gestational Diabetes Self-Management Education

Call for information: 732.339.7630



Saint Peter's Virtual Urgent Care

Monday through Friday
5 to 10 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.



saintpetershcs.com/virtualurgentcare

Parent Education

Some parenting classes are being held online. Once registered for a class, access information will be provided to you.

Register at saintpetershcs.com/ParentEducation for information about the following classes, please call Parent Education at 732.745.8579.

Baby Care	Marvelous Multiples
Birth Center Class (for moms under midwifery care)	New Daddy Class
Breastfeeding Class	Prenatal Yoga/Exercise Class
Grandparents Class	Prepared Childbirth/Lamaze Classes
Hypnobirthing	Sibling Class

Support Groups

Bariatric Nutrition Support

2nd Thursday of each month

Next meeting:

January 9 • 6 – 7 pm

Call 732.339.7450 for Zoom meeting information

Bereavement

Call Pastoral Care for information: 732.745.8565

Craniofacial Teen Girls

Call for information: 732.745.8600, x8113

MyGoal Autism Family

2nd Sunday of each month

Next meeting:

January 12 • 3 pm

Call 877.886.9462 or email

info@mygoalautism.org for virtual meeting information

SHARE

3rd Thursday of each month

Next meeting:

January 16 • 7 – 9 pm

Call 732.745.8522 or email

imariano@saintpetersuh.com for Zoom link

Spouse/Partner

Caregiver Support

Call for information: 732.745.8600, x8653

Parent Support

Registration is required. Visit saintpetershcs.com/ParentEducation or call 732.745.8579.

Breastfeeding Support Group

1st Tuesday of each month

Next meeting: January 7 • 1 pm

New Moms Support Group

“Life Will Never Be The Same”

1st Tuesday of each month

Next meeting: January 7 • 12 pm

COVID-19 Vaccines



For age eligibility and clinic dates, visit

saintpetershcs.com/covidvaccine

Need a doctor? To find a Saint Peter's physician, visit saintpetershcs.com/findaphysician.

Online scheduling is also available with select Saint Peter's Healthcare System physicians via Zocdoc at BookMySPDoc.com

This calendar is for information only. Do not rely on it to make healthcare decisions on your own; instead, talk with your healthcare provider for advice and treatment. Do not ignore medical advice or delay seeking it because of something you read here. We do not suggest or endorse that you have any tests, use products, or use other information in this document without advice from your healthcare provider.



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Sponsored by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Metuchen
State-designated children's hospital and regional perinatal center

