



State of Wisconsin
Department of Health Services

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SPRING TOWARD A HEALTHIER LIFESTYLE

March is National Nutrition Month

MADISON—Noting that March is National Nutrition Month, state health officials are calling attention to Wisconsin’s growing adult obesity rate and encouraging people to make healthy lifestyle changes.

“At least half the adults in every county in Wisconsin are either overweight or obese,” said State Health Officer Dr. Seth Foldy. “With spring right around the corner, now is the perfect time to change your lifestyle by becoming more physically active and indulging in delicious, healthy foods.”

Wisconsin’s adult obesity rate has more than doubled since 1990 and was ranked 25th in the nation in 2008. A combination of a poor diet and an inactive lifestyle can increase the risk of obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure, depression and Type 2 diabetes.

Suggested positive lifestyle changes include:

- **Choose healthy foods.** Choose from a variety of fruits and vegetables, whole-grain foods, low-fat dairy products, lean meats and fish. All of these provide essential nutrients with fewer calories. Use www.mypyramid.gov to help you make smart food choices. Many Wisconsin families receive help supplementing their healthy food options through the FoodShare and WIC programs. See if you are eligible at Access.wi.gov.
- **Keep moving!** Adding more physical activity to your day is as simple as walking around the neighborhood or taking the stairs at work. Regular activity reduces the risk of chronic diseases and can help you achieve and maintain a healthy body weight. Adults should aim for 150 minutes of physical activity each week and children should try for 60 minutes each day.
- **Set an example.** Prepare nutritious meals for your family. Plant your own vegetable garden for delicious treats. Play a team sport with your family or friends. Be a leader in healthy living.
- **Involve your community.** Make sure healthy food options are labeled and available at work and school. Support policies, which increase accessibility to low-income residents. Promote an environment that advocates for a healthier quality of life.

“Good nutrition is one of the keys to maintaining a healthy life. Eating a sensible diet combined with adding exercise to your daily routine will not only improve your health and your state of mind, but it will also decrease your risk for chronic health problems,” Foldy said.

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

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