

# A Registered Dietitian Can Help You Weather Economic Troubles through Nutrition and Health, Says American Dietetic Association

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CHICAGO – In difficult economic times, when people’s stress levels – both psychological and financial – increase, eating healthfully becomes more essential than ever, according to the experts at the American Dietetic Association.

“When people are under pressure, like so many are today, we need all the help we can get to weather the storm,” says registered dietitian and ADA Spokesperson Amy Jamieson-Petonic. “While eating healthfully is always important, the food you put in your body can get you through tough times.”

Jamieson-Petonic encourages individuals and families alike to turn to a registered dietitian for workable solutions that include saving money on groceries and lowering health-care costs. “An RD is a health coach who can help you make small changes that add up, making recommendations that fit into your lifestyle,” she says.

Her advice comes in advance of the second annual Registered Dietitian Day, to be commemorated on March 11 during National Nutrition Month®. Registered Dietitian Day was created by the American Dietetic Association to increase awareness of RDs as the indispensable providers of food and nutrition services, and to recognize their commitment to helping people enjoy healthy lives.

“Stress and anxiety can make it hard just to get through the day,” Jamieson-Petonic says. “Food has such an impact, not only on our physical health but our mental health and spiritual health. It is connected to so many levels of our being.

“When we get stressed, we tend to eat foods that are lower in nutritional value, which is a double-edged sword: Now, you are in a cycle that just leads to feeling worse,” Jamieson-Petonic says.

“People often don’t realize how good they feel when they start eating well. It can give you a better outlook and the clarity of mind and body to face tough situations.”

Research shows you can save money by buying healthier foods, Jamieson-Petonic says. “Eating right, being physically active and achieving a healthy weight all have a positive impact on your overall health.

“For certain chronic health conditions such as obesity or high blood pressure, working with an RD to develop a personalized eating plan can lead to both improved health status and lower health-care costs. For example, if you have high blood pressure, following the DASH Diet – eating more whole grains, fruits, vegetables and cutting down on sodium – may reduce the cost of blood pressure medications,” Jamieson-Petonic says.

The American Dietetic Association is the world’s largest organization of food and nutrition professionals. ADA is committed to improving the nation’s health and advancing the profession of dietetics through research, education and advocacy. Visit the American Dietetic Association at [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org).