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March marks the beginning of Spring, but it is also National Nutrition Month. Since 1973, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics has sponsored this event in March to raise awareness of the importance of healthy food choices. Each year, National Nutrition Month has a theme. This year's theme, "Eat Right, Your Way, Every Day" reminds us that healthy foods can fit into anyone's daily diet.

Healthy eating does not mean you need to completely change your diet or avoid all of your favorite foods. You can simply make one or two substitutions to make it "healthier" without sacrificing taste. Some ideas for changes include eating smaller portions, cutting down on sugar beverages, or choosing whole-grain products. A healthy lifestyle does not happen overnight. Start with small changes and progress over time will lead to long-term success in regards to healthy living.

For me, I remember growing up with rice served on the dinner table every night. To this day, I love and eat rice often. As a registered dietitian, I know that white rice is not the healthiest food, but it is my comfort food. What I do is limit my portion of white rice, or eat brown rice, which has more fiber and vitamins. For rice-lovers out there, be sure to check out the **Lentil and Rice Stuffed Squash** recipe on our website.

It can be overwhelming at times to plan well-balanced meals and improve physical activity habits. You may consider seeking the services of a registered dietitian. Registered Dietitians are qualified food and nutrition experts who can help you set goals and develop positive dietary and lifestyle changes. This year, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics has designated March 13, 2013 as Registered Dietitian Day. Visit [eatright.org](http://eatright.org) and click on "Find a Registered Dietitian" to connect with an online referral service. You can also learn more about National Nutrition Month and obtain handouts and tips at [eatright.org/nnm](http://eatright.org/nnm).