

Take Control of Your Eating!

Strategies to help you eat better...

1. **Keep a food journal.** Write down everything you eat and how much. Research shows that people who do this are better at managing their weight.
2. Use **smaller plates, bowls, glasses and cutlery.** These will hold less food than large plates and bowls and will result in eating less. Be sure that second servings do not end up on the plate!
3. Slow down when you eat. Put down your fork or spoon between bites. Chew your food. Aim to take at least **20 to 30 minutes to eat a meal. Stop eating when you are satisfied.**
4. **Eat breakfast.** Eating breakfast raises your metabolism out of rest mode. If you are not used to eating breakfast, start by eating something small and gradually increase how much you eat in the morning.
5. **Eat at least 3 times a day.** Snack on vegetables and fruit between meals. Do not let yourself get so hungry that you then overeat.
6. Try to leave 2 to 3 hours between each time that you have something to eat.
7. **Eat vegetables and fruit!** Are you getting at least 7 servings per day? One serving = ½ cup (125 ml) of most fruit or vegetables, or 1 cup (250ml) of raw leafy greens.
8. **Try to drink 8 to 12 cups (2 to 3 litres) of low calorie fluids per day.** Drink water during the day. Other good choices are low fat milk, plain coffee or tea (limit coffee and tea to 4 cups per day due to caffeine). **Avoid all soft drinks,** both regular and diet. 80% of the time when you think you are hungry you are actually thirsty.
9. **Do not eat in front of the TV.** You will be hungry every time the TV is turned on. Most people are unaware of how much they eat when in front of the TV!
10. Be sure to **maximize your activity.** In order to lose fat, you must exercise. Talk to your health care professional about the type of activity that is best for you and will not increase your pain.
11. Are you an emotional eater? Do you ever feel guilty or other negative emotions 20-30 minutes after eating? Attend a Mindful Eating class to learn how to tackle emotional eating.

What to do instead of eating?

Do you eat when you are bored, depressed or upset? Are you really hungry? If you are not eating because of hunger, here are some alternative activities:

- 1. Phone, write, or e-mail a friend.*
 - 2. Read.*
 - 3. Surf the internet.*
 - 4. Go for a walk.*
 - 5. Go for a swim.*
 - 6. Go to the gym.*
 - 7. Do some gardening.*
 - 8. Play cards or another game with family or friends.*
 - 9. Get involved in a hobby or make some artwork.*
 - 10. Get involved with organized games or activities at your community centre.*
 - 11. Join a walking group.*
 - 12. Finish things on your to do list.*
 - 13. What else could you do?*
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