

Client Handout



Nutrition Awareness

The first step to changing a behavior is awareness of the behavior. To become more aware of the quantity and the quality of what you eat you may want to keep a food and mood journal. Using the sample food journal format shown to the right, record everything you eat and drink, daily for at least 3 or 4 days. Record your moods before and after each meal. You may discover that you eat differently on the weekends, eat when you are bored or eat sugary fattening foods when you're under emotional stress. Once you have completed a journal, you are ready to analyze your eating habits and behaviors. Keep in mind the following:

Are you eating the recommended amount of calories for your age, height and weight?

A healthy person requires approximately 10 calories per pound of body weight just to meet the needs of their resting metabolic rate. Most active women should consume about 1800 to 2200 calories per day and estimates for an active male is 2000 to 2600 calories per day. Regardless of excess body weight, no one should consume less than 1400 calories per day.

Are you consuming the USDA recommended percentages of carbohydrates, protein and fat?

The USDA recommends that about 60% of your daily intake be in the form of carbohydrates (preferably complex), 10 - 20% from protein and 30% or less from fat.

Are you following the food pyramid recommended servings?

The food guide pyramid recommends the following number of servings: 6-11 grains, bread and cereals; 2-4 fruit; 3-5 vegetables; 2-3 meats, fish and poultry; 2-3 milk, yogurt and cheese; fats, oils and sweets used sparingly.

Are you following the recommended serving sizes?

Breads, grains & cereal: 1 slice bread, cup cooked pasta
 Fruits: 1 small piece of fruit or cup canned fruit
 Vegetables: cup cooked or 1 cup of leafy green vegetables
 Meat, fish and poultry: 2-3 ounces of lean meat or cup cooked beans
 Milk, yogurt and cheese: 1 cup of yogurt or milk or 1-2 ounces of cheese
 Fats: limit calories from these, especially for weight loss.

Are you drinking enough water?

You should be drinking a minimum of 8 - 10 8-ounce glasses of water per day. If you drink caffeinated beverages, such as coffee or colas, or are very active, you will need to drink more than the recommended 8 - 10 glasses of water. Caffeine acts as a diuretic, which causes your body to lose water and additional water must be consumed to replace the water lost from sweating.

Sample Food Journal

Monday - 9/11

Time of Day	Food / Beverage	Amount of food / beverage consumed	Mood before eating	Mood after eating
8 a.m.	Cereal, milk, decaf coffee and a banana	1C cereal 1C 1% milk 2C decaf coffee sm banana	Tired & grumpy, just got out of bed	Much better, awake & energetic
Noon	Cola	12 ounces	Very hungry, too busy to eat	Still very hungry & moody
3 p.m.	Candy Bar and a glass of water	Giant size	Starving, sleepy & crabby	Not hungry, feel guilty
6 p.m.	Giant Hamburger, cola & Fries	Super sized	I blew it w/ the candy bar, didn't eat lunch, I deserve a break today	I feel awful and depressed

Can you identify pitfalls in the sample food journal? Are there better choices that could have been made? Did choosing a giant sized candy bar have anything to do with what was consumed for dinner? How do these choices line up with the Food Pyramid? Can you find one positive choice? How does mood affect food choices and amounts?

Look for the positive steps you make towards better eating habits. Recognize and learn from the less than positive choices. Chart your moods. Make small, gradual changes in your eating and exercise habits. They will go a long way to making long-term lifestyle changes.