

## To Eat, Or Not To Eat? That Is The Question.

There are so many DIETS/EATING PLANS out there that it is enough to make the average person give up and eat a steady diet of Hagen Daz and Callebaut Chocolates. You have “The Zone Diet” which would have you eat like a caveman, mostly nuts, meat and vegetables. “The Atkins' Diet” which would have you eat all the fatty bacon, meats and fried foods you can get your hands on, but stay away from all those nasty starches and carbohydrates. I believe Dr. Atkin is dead, go figure!!! “The grapefruit diet” and “the soup diet” guess what you get to eat on them? Then there is the ever popular “cleansing diets”. These can vary from a couple of days to several weeks in length and have you eating as little as water and herbs/supplements to removing complete food groups from your diet. Scary when you really think about it!!!

So what do you do when you want to get a little fitter, lose a little body fat and eat a little more, healthy? Keep in mind that the exact same approach isn't going to work for everyone, but there are some basic rules that do. Take these rules and with the help of your trainer we can help you design an eating plan that is right for you.

**RULE #1:** Breakfast is mandatory!! Your metabolism is sluggish in the morning and does not get jump started until you eat, so every minute you don't eat is a minute of low calorie burning. Maximize your calorie burning with a good breakfast.

**RULE #2:** All major meals (breakfast, lunch and supper) should contain some protein. Carbs give you quick energy, but protein gives you long lasting energy and keeps you from being tired throughout the day. Some fat and protein with your carbs keeps your blood sugar more level and you don't get those highs and lows.

**RULE #3:** You should eat smaller meals more frequently, five to six times a day about every 2 ½ to 3 hours. First of all, this keeps you from being too hungry and wanting to eat the fridge. You will be more selective in what you eat. Secondly, your metabolism stays revved up all day, because eating and digesting requires a lot of calories. Portion control is very important. It is simple, just cut 1/4 to 1/3 of what you eat in each “major” meal and have your healthy snacks.

**RULE #4:** Try to eat the majority of your calories before the supper meal, by your afternoon snack. Also most of your starchy carbohydrates should be eaten by your afternoon snack. What I use as a basic rule of thumb is, if I have my supper by 7:30 PM I will have a small amount of starchy carb (potato, rice, bread, pasta, wraps, pitas, etc). If I have to eat after that time I have only protein and vegetables. If my supper is late I don't have an evening snack.

**RULE #5:** Drink lots and lots of water. Keep other beverages to a minimum so you want to drink lots of water. Water is your beverage of choice.

**RULE #6:** Don't cut something out of your diet unless you are planning on removing it for the rest of your life. Make it fit in to your new eating plan, by eating less of it and/or only occasionally. If it helps don't stock your fridge or cupboards with those hard to resist foods. Go out to have them and don't bring home a doggie bag. The 80/20 rule applies here. 80% of the time you eat very healthy and the other 20% not as healthy.

**RULE #7:** Eat clean!! Good quality protein, grains and carbs, a good variety of fruits and vegetables. Keep sauces, gravies, sugars and added fats to a minimum.

**RULE #8:** Will vary with individuals. Keep added fat to 300 to 400 calories, which is approximately 3 to 4 tablespoons. All fats are about 100 calories per tablespoon: oil, butter, salad dressing, peanut butter, cream cheese, margarine, mayo, miracle whip, etc. Low fat versions are usually half the calories (50 calories per tablespoon), but don't have as much flavour so you usually use more.

**RULE #9:** Have an up calorie or as we affectionately like to call it "Pig Out Day" once a week. Now you aren't suppose to go crazy on this day, but just don't be so conscious of the other 8 rules

With the help of your trainer and these simple rules you will be able to find a plan that is right for you without resorting to extremes.

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