

## Food Weight-Loss Tips

### 1. Establish regular meal times.

Skipping meals leads to overeating later in the day. If you don't have time for a full meal, try to eat a healthy snack or meal replacement bar instead.

### 2. Read food labels when buying food items.

Pay attention to the portion size, the number of calories in each portion, and the amount of saturated fat in each portion. This can help you make the healthiest food choices.

### 3. Make small substitutions in your diet to cut calories.

For example, drink water, diet soda, or unsweetened iced tea instead of high-calorie drinks. Choose low-calorie and low-fat versions of salad dressing, cheese, sour cream, and mayonnaise. Go easy on fried foods — bake, broil, poach, or grill your food instead. To find out the average amount of calories you should be consuming every day, go to [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov).

### 4. Identify “guilty pleasures” such as ice cream, cookies, or potato chips.

Continue to enjoy them by trying the low-calorie versions or eating less of the regular versions.

### 5. Pre-portion your servings to control the amount.

For example, scoop your ice cream in a bowl instead of eating it out of the carton. Bag potato chips or cookies to single-serving sized containers or zip-lock bags. Eat the serving size only when you have a craving. Remember to pass on seconds.

### 6. Control calories when dining out.

At fast-food restaurants, “down-size” food and drinks instead of “super-sizing” them. Check favorite fast-food restaurant web sites for nutrition information to select the healthiest options.

### 7. Share an entrée with a friend at sit-down restaurants.

However, order a personal salad or side of vegetables. Ask restaurants to: “Please hold the cheese,” “Leave the sauce on the side,” “Use low-fat salad dressing,” and “Please substitute vegetables for French fries.” As always, try to avoid fried dishes.

### 8. Pre-plan meals and snacks, and make certain to have the food on hand.

This makes it easier to resist trips to the vending machine and unhealthy, unplanned snacking.

### 9. Avoid places and situations that trigger eating.

For example, if walking past the donut shop causes donut cravings, try changing your route. Replace the candy on your desk with fruit or avoid walking near the office candy bowl. Avoid eating while watching television, reading, or driving. Many people do not recall what they've eaten while doing other things.

### 10. Try substituting other activities for eating.

For example, take a walk, talk to a friend, or listen to music. These activities avoid the extra calories and can be more satisfying than eating.

Source: Adapted from the American Medical Association: Roadmaps for Clinical Practice Series.



*do it for yourself . . .*