

find your 'nutrition focus'

A “diet” is usually restricting, viewed too often as temporary, has a beginning and an end, and carries with it a negative connotation. A nutrition focus, on the other hand, can be positive and proactive, leading to improved nutritional awareness resulting in more informed, healthier food choices.

Now that we've begun acquiring the nutritional tools (healthy groceries) needed to create our *environment of success*, we can begin turning those foods into meals. You should be working to remove temptation from your cabinets and work environments, filling them with healthier snack options: baby carrots, rice cakes, low fat yogurt, apples, baby carrots, and low calorie drinks. You've now discussed this desired “environment” with your family, co-workers, and others. Have you specifically identified your support group. Who are you discussing your improved habits with, your spouse? Are you telling your coworkers how sore you were from your previous workout? Identify the people you discuss these things with the most, and discuss with them your fitness goals. This ‘social liberation’ is key to excelling through this *stage of change*. This week, let's work to develop your “nutrition focus”. You may already have one, “I'm not on a diet, I just try to eat low fat”, is an example. The EB-Loses program helps you clearly identify and/or develop this focus.

What should your focus be?

We are all too familiar with the various marketed diets out there, so let's begin by basing our focus on a hybrid of a few of them, to keep it simple. In other words, if I was to endorse one diet over another, I'd

recommend a hybrid of South Beach and Weight Watchers. With South Beach, you are focusing on unprocessed, natural foods, lots of fruits and veges, and lean sources of protein. Weight Watchers simply emphasizes portion control. Let's look at a few keys to healthy nutrition:

Three P's of Nutrition:

Protein, Produce, & Portion Size. The rule is this: *Attempt to get some produce and protein at each meal of the day. If you get away from this, mind your portion size.* This is the rule to keep in your mind, especially in the moment, when making decisions and when planning your meals for the week.

How many meals should I eat daily?

In a nutshell, your daily focus is:

- 3 meals per day
- 2 snacks (1 a.m. & 1 p.m.) per day
- Protein at every meal if possible

Therefore, aim for 5 “meals” a day; any snack constitutes a meal, and healthy sources of protein include:

Eggs (& egg whites), boneless, skinless chicken, lean deli meat, skim milk, low fat cheese, cottage cheese, tuna, natural peanut butter, fish, tofu, soy, lean ground beef or turkey, almonds, protein powder, low fat yogurt

Sample A.M. / P.M. Snacks:

Natural P.B. / Apple, Cottage Cheese / Peach, Almonds / Raisins, Protein shake / apple, Carrots / skim milk, <250 kcal protein bar (*Pria, Luna, Cliff, Balance*)

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The Fourth P: Preparation

Sunday evening you should know what you are having for (at least) breakfast every day of the following week. *Your nutrition focus will help you in the moment when facing a dietary decision, but your planning and preparation helps minimize those “moments” when temptations arise, your blood sugar is low, and cravings creep up.*

Listen to your body.

Recommending 5 meals a day is simply a guideline used to refine the idea that we should be eating more than 3 square meals daily. Listen to your body and eat when you are hungry, but prepare for those moments by making healthier, lower calorie foods available.

Nutrition - Body Awareness

Especially when journaling your food, note your mood, feelings and context, when choosing a meal or snack. Appreciate the context (social hour, at work, special occasion) and establish the worth (‘budget’ your calories accordingly - *was that cupcake at 3 pm Tuesday afternoon worth it?*) to improve your nutritional awareness and decisions.

What do your goals allow?

Defining your goals allows you to dictate whether Tuesday afternoon cupcakes are allowed. Don't simply restrict sweets, or swear off fast food, instead:

1. Know your short and long term goals and what those goals allow
2. Appreciate the context
3. Budget your calories, decide if those calories are “worth it.”

*Check out our blog at
www.everybodyfit.net/blog
for more nutrition ideas and tips.*