

# Light Side

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## Weight Loss: Some Women-Specific Hindrances

### Eating on the run

Women have very hectic lives, and often find that they need to eat on the run. When you eat fast, you do not truly appreciate the food in front of you and are more likely to get hungry again shortly thereafter. In addition, women often rely on energy bars and drinks, which can provide several hundred calories, but then they end up eating full meals in addition to these supplements. What can you do when eating on the run?

Pack yourself a nutritious snack before heading out the door, trying to combine protein and carbohydrate; some good choices include:

- Whole wheat crackers and low-fat cheese
- Apple slices with peanut butter
- Sugar-free instant breakfast drink
- Snack mix (light on M&M's®)

Keep nutrition guides from your favorite fast-food establishments in your vehicle, and know that:

- Fast-food restaurants are always changing their menus—make sure you have the most current version.
- New items that are deceptively healthy sometimes are not good choices—ask for the nutrition information.

### Preparing multiple meals

You know the drill. Your husband wants a meat and potato dinner. Your children hate meat and potatoes, but love macaroni and cheese. You are so full from sampling and so tired from cooking that you have no energy left to balance out the meal. What is a woman to do?

- Chew gum while cooking—It may be old fashioned advice, but it helps keep you from sampling. Trident Xtra Care with recalcified can protect, strengthen and rebuild your tooth enamel.
- Hold a family meeting and try to compromise on some healthy meals that everyone can eat all or part of.

### Eating like a man

Many couples find themselves going out to eat as their main social event. It gets us out of the kitchen, allows us to spend time talking to each other, and it certainly tastes good. Most restaurants offer low-calorie or low-fat choices; so, that is not the problem. All of this is meaningless, though, if we are easily persuaded to order dessert or another fruity drink, or we unconsciously try to eat the same amount as the person we are dining with.

- Get the restaurant's menu before going out to eat, if possible; try picking a meal that is appealing and a wise choice from a nutrition standpoint.
- Eat less of your main course if you want dessert.
- Share the meal with your spouse or ask your server to bring a take-home container to the table with your meal, and promptly put half of your meal in the container

### Emotional eating

Sure, men do it too, but not as much as women. Women are, by nature, amazingly resilient, but we also have a tendency to hold our feelings inside. This leads us to feel that we could use a little comforting, and if we can not find another way to get this comfort, food becomes the easy cure. What can you do about emotional eating?

- Try to figure out what feelings usually cause you to eat more than you are physically hungry for, and try keeping a food record of what you eat and how you feel when you eat for a few days. Also look for patterns.
- Brain storm other things that could help you recover from the emotions, once you have established what your patterns are. Angry? Try a brisk walk. Sad? Take a bubble bath or read a book.
- Keep healthful alternatives in your house; different foods seem soothing to different people but many people choose crunchy foods when they are angry like potato chips or smooth foods like pudding when they are sad or tired.

## Nighttime eating



It is 11 pm, the house is silent,

and you are folding laundry or packing your briefcase for work tomorrow. You are restless. You are tired. Maybe you are even a little angry that it is 11 pm and you are folding laundry or packing your briefcase. You suddenly feel like a bowl of ice cream is exactly what the situation calls for.

What can you do about nighttime eating?

Stop and ask yourself if you are really hungry: Do you feel like eating would help keep you alert? Instead of eating, try:

- Brushing your teeth
  - Sucking on a sugar-free hard candy
  - Drinking some flavored water
- Ignore the old tale that eating at night automatically leads to weight gain, and that you should not eat anything after 6 pm—this is simply not true

Follow this advice:

- What matters is how many calories are taken in vs how many are expended, over several days
- If you did not eat much earlier in the day, let yourself eat whenever you want, but ice cream probably is not the best choice
- If you really feel that ice cream is what you want, choose a low-fat version

## Top 20 Fitness Trends for 2009



The trends were ranked according to an online survey by 1,540 professionals certified by the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM).

1. Educated and experienced fitness professionals
2. Children and obesity
3. Personal training
4. Strength training
5. Core training
6. Special fitness programs for older adults
7. Pilates
8. Stability ball
9. Sport-specific training
10. Balance training
11. Functional fitness
12. Comprehensive health programming at work
13. Wellness coaching
14. Worker incentive programs
15. Outcome measurements
16. Spinning (indoor cycling)
17. Physician referrals
18. Exercise and weight loss
19. Group personal training
20. Reaching new markets.



### Caramel Fruit Dip

- 1 (8 oz.) pkg. Fat-free cream cheese
- 1/2 c. caramel ice cream topping
- 1 T. honey
- 1/4 tsp. ground cinnamon

Beat cream cheese in a bowl. Add caramel topping, honey and cinnamon. Stir until combined. Store covered, in refrigerator. Serve with fresh fruit.

Yield: 10 servings, 3 tablespoons each.

Nutritional information: Calories 80, Fat 0, Carbohydrates 14 g, Fiber 0, Sodium



### Chocolate Cinnamon Coffee

- 1 T. cocoa powder
- 8 T. decaff coffee
- 1 T. ground cinnamon
- 8 c. water

Place cocoa powder, decaff coffee and ground cinnamon into a coffee filter; place in coffee maker. Pour water into coffee maker and allow to brew as usual.

Yield: 8 cups.

Optional topping: Fat-free Reddi-Whip and a little sprinkle of cocoa powder on top.

Nutritional Information: Calories, Fat, Carbohydrate, Sodium: negligible.



Think of snacks as extra nutritional insurance. Very few people get all of the whole-grain, fruit, vegetable, and dairy products that they should from their meals. Snacks are a way to make up for these deficits. Snacks that contain protein and/or fiber will keep you full for a longer period of time. No one should say, "My diet is really lacking in cookies; so, I better eat a few."



This issue of *On the Light Side* written by Registered Dietitian Cindy Harms.

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