

SENSIBLE DIET TIPS

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SENSIBLE DIET TIPS

Start your diet with a food diary, record everything you eat, what you were doing at the time, and how you felt. That tells you about yourself, your temptation, the emotional states that encourage you to snack and may help you lose once you see how much you eat.

Instead of eating the forbidden piece of candy, brush your teeth. If you're about to cheat, allow yourself a treat, then eat only half a bite and throw the other half away. When hunger hits, wait 10 minutes before eating and see if it passes. Set attainable goals. Don't say, "I want to lose 50 pounds." Say, "I want to lose 5 pounds a month." Get enough sleep but not too much. Try to avoid sugar. Highly sweetened foods tend to make you crave more.

Drink six to eight glasses of water a day. Water itself helps cut down on water retention because it acts as a diuretic. Taken before meals, it dulls the appetite by giving you that "full feeling." Diet with a buddy. Support groups are important, and caring people can help one another succeed. Start your own, even with just one other person.

Substitute activity for eating. When the cravings hit, go to the "Y" or health club if possible; or dust, or walk around the block. This is especially helpful if you eat out of anger.

If the pie on the counter is just too great a temptation and you don't want to throw it away, freeze it. If you're a late-night eater, have a carbohydrate, such as a slice of bread or a cracker, before bedtime to cut down on cravings. Keep an orange slice or a glass of water by your bed to quiet the hunger pangs that wake you up.

If you use food as a reward, establish a new reward system. Buy yourself a non-edible reward. Write down everything you eat - - everything - including what you taste when you cook. If you monitor what you eat, you can't go off your diet.

Weigh yourself once a week at the same time. Your weight fluctuates constantly and you can weigh more at night than you did in the morning, a downer if you stuck to your diet all day. Make dining an event. Eat from your own special plate, on your own special placemat, and borrow the Japanese art of food arranging to make your meal, no matter how meager, look lovely. This is a trick that helps chronic over-eaters and bingers pay attention to their food instead of consuming it unconsciously.

Don't shop when you're hungry. You'll only buy more fattening food. Avoid finger foods that are easy to eat in large amounts. Avoid consuming large quantities of fattening liquids, which are so easy to overdo. And this includes alcoholic beverages. Keep plenty of crunchy foods like raw vegetables and air-popped fat-free popcorn on hand. They're high in fiber, satisfying and filling. Leave something on your plate, even if you are a charter member of the Clean The Plate Club. It's a good sign that you can stop eating when you want to, not just when your plate is empty.

Lose weight for yourself, not to please your husband, your parents or your friends. Make the kitchen off-limits at any time other than mealtime. Always eat at the table, never in front of the TV set or with the radio on. Concentrate on eating every mouthful slowly and savoring each morsel.

Chew everything from 10 to 20 times and count! Never skip meals.