

A Reasonable Strategy to Eat Better, Live Healthier, (and lose weight).

First steps:

- Learn how to read labels and determine which foods have added sugar in them.
- Figure out what foods are high in antioxidants.
- Learn mindfulness and mindful eating.
- Commit to exercising 20 minutes every day. Exercise to control your diet, not to burn calories.
- Make a plan for dealing with cravings.
- Make a plan for eating out at restaurants.

Regular Daily Meals

- Avoid foods with added sugar. Any extra sugar that you take in makes your body store fat. Sugar also increases your appetite and makes you want to eat more. Almost everything in the store has added sugar. Start reading labels. Ingredients must be listed on labels in the order of how much is in the product. If sugar is listed in the first three ingredients then it has too much sugar. Food producers are tricky and list sugar under many different names so that they can make it look like there isn't that much added sugar. Know the other names for sugar and look for them on the product label.
- Try to eat foods with only 1 ingredient. Whole fruits, vegetables, nuts, chicken, fish, steak are good.
- No condiments ever. No catsup, barbecues sauce or store bought salad dressing. These are loaded with sugar.
- No white bread. It is loaded with sugar and hard to digest.
- Drink lots of water with every meal. It helps in digestion and tells your brain that you are full and to stop eating.
- Eat when you are hungry, not when you are emotional. Learn to distinguish between true hunger (your body needs energy) and eating when you are stressed (when you think you deserve a treat since you had a bad day).
- Eat foods that are high in antioxidants.
- Always drink a glass of water and wait 20 minutes before having a second helping. It takes 20 minutes for your stomach to tell your brain that it is full. So if you eat something then wait 20 minutes you might not be hungry for seconds anymore.

Dealing with Cravings

Sugar is addictive. If you have been eating foods with lots of added sugar over the years your brain has become addicted to sugar. Your brain keeps telling you to eat more and more sugar. You will have cravings as you start to eat foods that do not contain added sugar. To get over the cravings:

- Exercise at least 20 minutes a day. While exercising really does not burn many calories, exercising does reduce your appetite. It makes you less likely to crave foods or to eat emotionally.
- Drink at least 6 full glasses of water a day. The water will reduce your cravings and will help your brain lose its addiction.
- If you absolutely have to eat a food that is bad for you. Take a small amount, pay attention to eat bite, drink a full glass of water then wait 20 minutes before deciding if you have to eat more. It takes 20 minutes for the brain to register that you have eaten. After 20 minutes many of the cravings have gone away.
- If you love sweets, learn how to make sweet treats from Stevia and use them as your go-to snack. Use \geq 70% cacao dark chocolate as a snack.
- Have a plan for what to order in restaurants that is no sugar added. (Flaxseed oil and vinegar dressing)
- Figure out recipes for a beverage other than water.