



plan of ATTACK

If you are one of the millions of busy women out there, then you know how difficult it is to stick to a healthy eating plan. Lack of time is a major reason why many people give up on healthy eating. A good plan is extremely important when you are trying to keep up with a hectic schedule.

Good nutrition can help your body withstand stress better. But as you are running through your day, the last thing you are likely thinking about is your next healthy meal. Whether you are a stay-at-home mom, full-time student, have a job or juggle any of these, the following are some tips to help guide you on your path to a healthy eating plan.

plan your meals for the week

A plan helps to ensure that you have healthy food available and removes the guesswork when meal times arrive. Weekends are a perfect time to make a plan, purchase the foods, and even prepare some meals for the week ahead. Meals can be frozen and reheated later. This can help to reduce the weekday rush to fast food and takeout.

don't skip meals

Skipping meals unsettles your blood sugar levels and therefore energy levels as well. It can also lead to overeating later in the day and/or unwise food choices.

have healthy snacks on hand

This is the best way to avoid the vending machines. Snacking is a great way to help you feel more energetic. The key is only to snack when you are truly hungry and to choose your snacks wisely. Think of snacks as extra nutritional insurance to get your servings of fruit, vegetables, or whole grains that you lack. Snacks that contain fiber and/or protein will help keep you fuller longer.

If you are going to eat out, here are a few tips to help you make better choices.

- Watch your portion sizes. Skip the “value meals.” Order child size portions. Split your order with a friend or take half home.
- Read menus carefully for clues to fat and calorie content. Skip fried foods and butter or cream sauces. Choose baked, steamed, or grilled items instead.
- It's OK to make special requests. Order salad dressings and sauces on the side. Omit high calorie additions like mayonnaise, bacon, and cheese.
- Hold the bread or chips until your meal is served. Hunger can drive you to eat too much before your meal arrives. Keep the temptation away from the table.
- Pass up all-you-can-eat specials and buffets if you tend to eat too much. If you do choose a buffet, fill up on salad and vegetables first. Try to use a small plate and limit your return trips.
- Eat a lower-calorie food first. Broth based soup or salad is a good choice.
- Beware of calorie rich beverages. Water is available everywhere or choose a calorie free beverage.

By working some of these suggestions into your daily routine, you can reach your healthy eating goals. As always, for special dietary needs consult with your physician or a registered dietitian.

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