

DIET DIARY GUIDE

Tracking your diet and lifestyle is one of the most important preventative health strategies. Most of us think we know of what we are eating and how we take care of our bodies, but it always surprising when you actually track it.

For example, having an occasional cookie doesn't seem so bad until you take the time to review your Diet Diary and see that it happens 3 times a day.

Or noticing that you eat only 2 servings of vegetables when you have a salad for lunch everyday may put things in perspective. You may think you are healthier than you really are.

And this is great news because it means there are simple ways to help you feel and function even better. It only takes a few minutes a day to track and the results will be eye opening and possibly life changing.

What we put into our bodies is the fuel that will allow our bodies to be active, defend against infections and resilient to illness. It also fuels our mind to be sharp, clear and focused. Our bodies and minds are the best indicators to see if we are working at our maximal potential.

There is also a difference between eating healthy foods and the most optimal foods for you.

Some foods, such as food allergens, may be healthy in nutrition but if they cause you severe pain, discomfort, mental fog and sluggishness you should be eating them in moderation or not at all. Using the Diet Diary will help you to pin-point which foods are culprits in preventing you from being the best version of yourself. It's about looking for the patterns

How to use the Diet Diary

Print off the Diet Diary and keep it with you. Spend 2 minutes to fill it out 4 times a day:

1. Morning
2. Mid-day
3. Afternoon
4. Evening

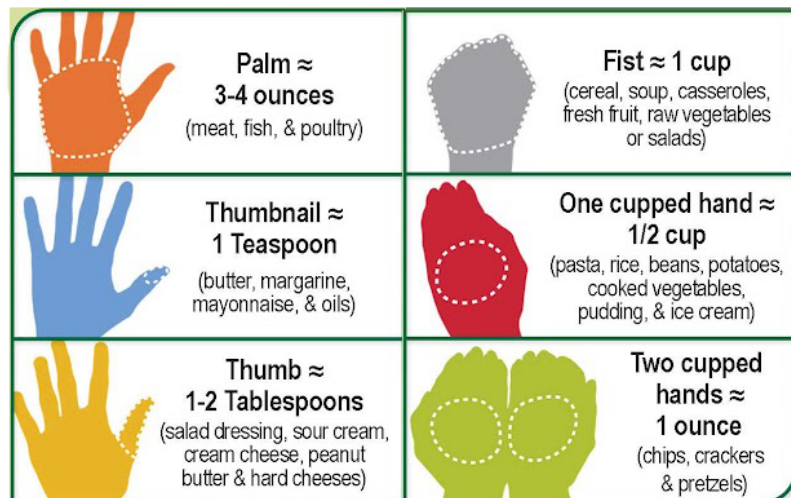
Each part of the day is divided into:

1. Food for your main meal
2. Fluids consumed
3. Snacks
4. Glasses of water drank
5. Mood, energy or any symptoms you may experience

Serving Sizes and Food Groups

After each meal, mark down the **number of servings** you had for each food group (macronutrient). To estimate serving sizes, all you need is your hand:

Image credit: Healthy Choice



Many health guides have varying information about optimal serving sizes for an average adult. This is what I recommend:

Food Group	Servings/d	Examples
PROTEIN	3-5	Lean meats, fish, eggs, nuts, legumes, beans
HEALTHY FATS	2-4	Avocado, olive, nuts, seeds
CARBOHYDRATES	6 or less	Especially avoid sugars and refined carbs
VEGETABLES	Unlimited	Eat lots of leafy greens and bright veggies
FRUIT	3-5	Bright colored fruits
PURE WATER	8 glasses	Pure water is essential for a healthy body

Here's an example of how to track and interpret your Diet Diary:

	What was consumed		What it means
Morning	Breakfast	Whole wheat blueberry muffin (1 Carb)	You're probably not getting enough deep sleep and so are waking up sluggish. You're having a coffee and a sugary, carb-heavy breakfast to pick you up, but then that leads to a crash in energy. Low energy can also be due to dehydration.
	Fluids	1 Coffee with 2 sugar & 1 milk (1 sugar)	
	Snacks	2 donut holes (½ Carb)	
	H2O	None	
	Mood, energy, other sx	Sluggish in the am, better after breakfast, energy crash before lunch	
Mid-day	Lunch	Salad with chicken and olive oil (1 Veg, 1 Protein, 1 Fat)	Lunch looks pretty good, but eating at your desk under stress doesn't help proper digestion. This could be giving you the stomachache. As well, you might be dairy intolerant or sensitive since the pains came on after having the Latte and yogurt.
	Fluids	Latte (1 Protein, 1 Fat, 1 sugar)	
	Snacks	Yogurt and berries (1 Protein, 1 Fat, 1 Fruit)	
	H2O	1 glass	
	Mood, energy, other sx	Ate at my desk, stomach hurt, cramps, 1 bout of diarrhea, stressed with work	
Afternoon	Fluids	1 Coffee with 2 sugar & 1 milk (1 sugar)	Your cortisol hormones are on a rollercoaster with caffeine and sugar highs. The drop in energy after lunch is another indicator of a food intolerance.
	Snacks	2 Chocolate chip cookies (1 carb, 2 sugar)	
	H2O	1 glass	
	Mood, energy, other sx	Very tired and sluggish after lunch, barely able to keep my eyes open, coffee helped my energy	
Evening	Breakfast	Steak and potatoes (3 Protein, 3 Carb)	Unfortunately, this is a very common dinner without any vegetables (potatoes are not veggies) and loaded with carbs and sugar. Again, we see the sugar crash after dinner and the lack of incentive to exercise after a stressful day at work.
	Fluids	Can of coke (5 sugar)	
	Snacks	Chips (3 Carb)	
	H2O	1 glass	
	Mood, energy, other sx	More energy after work, very sluggish after dinner, couldn't move off of couch	

Actual VS Optimal Servings (for an average adult)

Servings	Protein	6	3-4 (lean)	Your diet consists of an excessive amount of carbs and sugar that is causing a yo-yo effect on your mood and energy. Your protein sources are not ideal since dairy may be harmful to your digestion. The lack of veggies and water intake would be the first place to make modification and increase into your daily diet.
	Healthy Fats	3	2-3	
	Carbohydrates	8 ½ (including sugar = 18 ½)	6 or less	
	Vegetables	2	10+ (unlimited)	
	Fruit	1	3-5	
	H2O	2	8 glasses	