

# HEALTHFUL TIPS

## Combat Excess Snacking

**H**ave you found yourself in the trap of over-snacking? Do you look back over the day and realize you actually grazed from morning to night? The problem with snacking beyond the recommended six meals is that it could get out of control. When we allow so many "little extras" into our diets we run the risk of consuming extra calories and extra carbs, causing a blood-sugar spike, or even eating food best forgotten, like potato chips.

Since snacking is usually driven by cravings, habit, boredom, or an emotional state, rather than legitimate hunger, it can be roped into control. If you are not sure how to do this and stop the excessive snacking, try to incorporate one of these suggestions:



- Take a walk around the block. And if you have a canine friend, don't forget him. This is a great activity after the evening meal.
- Give a friend a quick call. Or write someone a note.
- Work on your to-do list.
- Just dance! But turn on some music so you don't look too silly.
- If it's nighttime, go to bed early.
- Brush your teeth.
- KISS someone!
- Clean out a junk drawer.
- Start sipping a glass of water.
- Plan or do something nice for another person.
- Do some housework; it's a great distraction from over-snacking.
- Play some fun family games (strategic ones like Settlers of Catan, which require focus, might really help keep your mind off the munchies).
- Blog or journal.
- Turn off the TV and read a little. Then you won't be bombarded with food advertisements.

- Drink some herbal tea or decaf coffee.
- Remember where you came from and how awesome the new healthier you feels.
- Stick to eating six small meals a day. Protein boosts the metabolism three times more than carbs or fats, so it's important to incorporate it into every mini-meal.
- Monitor your eating habits.

And finally try waiting 10 minutes. If you can get through the next 10-15 minutes, the temptation starts to go away. And remember,

- Several minutes of pleasure is not worth all the extra calories/carbs/sugars.
- One snack easily leads to another.
- If you are eating out of boredom, anger, or frustration, snacking will not solve the problem or make you feel better once it's consumed.
- You have worked very hard to come this far.
- Only you have the power to take control of your "tool" and keep it working for you.