



Nighttime Eating Habits

Many people coming into the clinic saying they have no problem eating healthy during the day but at night it's a different story. Usually when we reach for food at night it's due to boredom, emotional stress or to help us relax after a long work day. Here are a few tips to help develop healthy nighttime eating habits:

1. Make sure you're eating frequently throughout the day and not skipping meals. This will help to keep your hunger satisfied during the day so that you are less likely to overeat at night. People generally have more energy and feel better when they eat frequent meals throughout the day.
2. Drink some water or tea. Tea often has a soothing effect and will help to relax you. You can jazz up your water by adding a piece of fruit to it like a lemon or lime slice.
3. Make the last snack on your meal plan a high fibre or protein snack. Plan this snack out ahead of time so you don't have a choice of what you're going to eat. Focus on whole grains, fruits and vegetables, low fat dairy and lean proteins. For example you could have low-fat yogurt with some blueberries and bran, peppers and carrots with a low-fat yogurt dip or melba toast with low-fat cheese.
4. Don't bring unhealthy foods into the house. If there are unhealthy foods or trigger foods in the house make sure you place them in hard to reach places that are out of sight.
5. Chew sugar-free gum. This will keep your mouth occupied while providing you with the sweetness you may crave. Sometimes it's just the action of chewing that we need.
6. Keep a copy of your meal plan on the fridge. This will help keep your mind on your weight loss goals.
7. Relax without food. If you're eating at night to unwind from a busy day find something else that relaxes you, such as playing with your pets, talking with a friend on the phone, going for a walk or gardening. Whatever you do, make sure you feel a sense of peace from it this will help to replace the comfort you're getting from food.
8. Get involved and excited about something. If you're eating due to boredom find something to do at night that you can get excited about, this will distract you from wanting to eat. For example you could take a ballroom dancing class, singing lessons or take up playing an instrument.

9. Try sucking on hard candy most hard candy only has a few calories. This will help to satisfy your sweet tooth and the process of consuming it will probably take longer than munching on cookies or chips.

10. Brush your teeth. Use a mint flavoured toothpaste as mint helps to curb the appetite.

11. Write in a journal. Get yourself a journal and start writing when you feel like eating at night. Write out why you want to eat and how food is going to make you feel after you eat it.

12. Exercise. It doesn't have to be something strenuous--a 30 minute walk will do. Make sure you stretch afterwards it helps you recover and it'll help you sleep better.

13. Go to bed a little bit earlier: go to bed on time and you're less likely to think of snack