

Tips for Filling out Food Diaries

Those who have been successful at losing weight have done so because they watch what they eat and are aware of what they are putting into their bodies. Regular food journaling is vital in making sure that you stay on track with your meal plan. Here you'll find some strategies that may make filling out your food diaries a little easier:

1. Plan Ahead

Filling out food diaries ahead of time can ensure that you are planning for the right portion amounts for each meal and snack. It also makes it easier knowing what you are having the next day so you'll be less likely to grab whatever is around or convenient once it is time for you to eat.

2. Stay Organized

Keeping food diaries together and organized makes it easier to reference back to past diaries, either to copy over foods you've had before or repeat days that went well for you. Keep them in a place where they are easily accessible and where you can always see them (like on the kitchen table); this way you are more likely to remember to keep doing them. There are a number of different ways you can fill out your diaries; they don't always have to be done using pencil and paper. You can create your own Excel spreadsheet on your computer or use food logs attached to calorie counting websites. You can also use a portable calorie-counter that generates a computer print-out or use a calorie-counting application on your phone.

3. Keeping It Simple

If you are a person who tends to eat a lot of the same foods, cycling through food diaries may be easier. Complete a few food diaries in the beginning and rotate through them. Fill in more diaries when you have time to add to your collection. Another strategy is to write out meals or snacks that you have day-to-day on one sheet. Photocopy this sheet and fill in the meals/snacks that vary. This way, you do not have to fill in as many fields and diaries will be less time consuming.

4. Recipe Calculator

If you do your own cooking or baking, you know how time consuming it can be to look up the information for several ingredients individually. Calorie-count.com has a tab you can use to find out exactly what is in your home-made recipe. Click on the 'Foods' tab and then click on 'New Recipe'. Type in your recipe in the text box and type in the number of servings your recipe will yield. Once you hit the 'Analyze Recipe' button, you will get the food label for one serving. This is perfect for when you might make large batches of soups or pasta sauces, for instance, and freeze them for a later day.