

11 SIGNS OF Unhealthy Eating Patterns



GET YOUR DIET UNDER CONTROL TODAY!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Role Of Food.....	1
Consequences Of Poor Nutrition	2
Obesity.....	2
Hypertension.....	2
Stroke.....	3
High Cholesterol.....	3
Gout.....	3
Cancer.....	3
11 Unhealthy Eating Patterns.....	5
Making Changes	11

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THE ROLE OF FOOD

Food is intended for the human body as sustenance and nutrition. Truly, that is its only intent. It is meant to provide essential nutrients that work to support internal bodily process and nutritify major organs. It provides us with energy and is essential for the proper physical development of children.

Somewhere along the way, we have seriously lost touch with this fact. Of course, the endless rows of goodies at the supermarket, and unlimited choices of junk food have not helped us in any way. Healthy eating still eludes many of us, as America struggles with obesity and lifestyle choices are the leading cause of premature death from diseases like that of the heart that result from them.



CONSEQUENCES OF POOR NUTRITION

Obesity

Obesity is at epidemic levels in the US. According to the Centers For Disease Control:

- 35.1% of adults age 20 or older were obese in 2012
- 69% of adults age 20 or older were overweight or obese in 2012, that's more than 50% of the US population!

Children as young as 5 years old are being diagnosed with obesity, which maybe the biggest tragedy of all.

According to the Centers For Disease Control:

- Obesity rates have more than doubled in children and quadrupled in adolescents in the past 30 years.
- In 2012, more than 1/3 of children and adolescents were overweight or obese.

Of course, poor eating habits put you at risk for more than just obesity because when the body does not have proper nutrition, it poses other serious health risks.



Hypertension

The National Institutes of Health advises that hypertension (high blood pressure) can result from poor nutrition. Hypertension is often diagnosed until it damages the body beyond repair. Too much salt, sugar, and fatty processed food can cause hypertension.

Stroke

Experts advise that foods high in salt, cholesterol and fat increase chances for stroke. Strokes occur when plaque builds up in a blood vessel and then breaks free when a clot travels to the brain and creates blockage. Stroke can result in paralysis and death.

High Cholesterol

Poor nutrition leads to high cholesterol, which is the main cause of heart disease, the #1 killer of Americans. More than 500,000 people die each year in the US from heart disease, typically caused by a high fat diet. Some of the culprit foods are excesses of beef, sweets, ice cream, and processed high fat foods.

Gout

Gout is condition where uric acid buildup creates crystals in the joints. It is painful and leads to permanent joint damage. Poor nutrition is a contributing factor to gout. Foods high in uric acid include whole milk, cheese, ice cream and some seafood.



Cancer

Experts, like those at the National Institutes of Health advise that poor nutrition is a high risk factor for breast, colon and bladder cancers, just to name a few. A diet that is high in refined sugar, hydrogenated oils, nitrates in hot dogs and bacon, and fatty foods like French fries put you at risk for cancer. Conversely, it is fruits and vegetables that are high in antioxidants that help protect cells in the body decrease risk for cancer. A diet rich in antioxidants is key to maintaining proper health and preventing a wide range of diseases.

No doubt, you have repeatedly heard that you should eat healthy and which foods constitute “healthy foods,” this information may not be sinking in or it may not be enough. All of us have eating habits, and for many these habits or patterns are not conducive to good health. Evaluating your eating habits closely is an important step in improving your diet for the better.

11 UNHEALTHY EATING PATTERNS

You may be continuing unhealthy eating patterns without even knowing it. You may need another wake-up call around ways you can eat healthier in order to avoid the complications that come from poor nutrition and poor eating habits:

Here 11 signs that indicate you are not engaging in healthy eating habits:

1. You Finish Your Meal Before Anyone Else

If you are the first one done eating at the dinner table, you are probably eating mindlessly and are not savoring your meal in healthy ways.

Chowing down your meal within a few minutes can lead to indigestion and seconds, which can lead to your becoming overweight.

Instead, you should eat more slowly, taking part in whatever conversation is going on around the table. Your hormonal signal to turn off eating takes about 20 minutes so if you finish much

sooner than that, you will feel hungry even when you have taken in enough calories, which typically results in eating more food than you really need.



2. You Eat Food That Has Been Created In A Factory

Instead of cooking with fresh ingredients, you might be choosing to eat pre-processed foods, which are high in preservatives and are usually high in salt and/or calories. Take the time to cook a meal with fresh ingredients, which are healthier foods. Find a nice selection of home-prepared meals you can put into your own personal cookbook. When you cook for yourself, you know exactly what has gone into making any particular meal and you have the piece of mind that comes with knowing what you put into your body.



3. You Shop In The Center Part Of The Grocery Store The Most

If you find yourself going up and down the center aisles of the market, where canned and processed foods reside and less or no time in the periphery of the store that holds fresh produce, meat and dairy you are eating foods that are high in preservatives, salt and sugar and NOT real whole food. Remember, food that does not need refrigeration is usually processed (except whole grains of course) Spend more time in the produce section of the grocery store because this leads to eating healthier fruits and vegetables instead of eating unhealthy, processed foods.



4. You Eat Right Out Of The Box Or Carton

If you find yourself eating potato chips right out of the bag or ice cream out of the carton, you are probably not eating the right portions of food and will have a tendency to eat more food than you had originally intended to eat. This is a sure fire way to obesity. Instead, portion out your foods onto a plate or bowl so that you stop when that portion is gone and save the rest for another meal.



5. You Eat From The Drive Thru Regularly

Unless you are ordering a salad every time, which most of us don't, eating from a drive thru regularly is not conducive to good nutrition. Most drive thru restaurants offer fast food, which is greasy, fat filled and lacks any real nutrients. Consider whole food, which is food typically made up one ingredient and unprocessed. Fresh fish, chicken, fruits, vegetables, and whole grains are whole foods and they are not offered at the drive thru.



6. You Eat In Front Of The TV

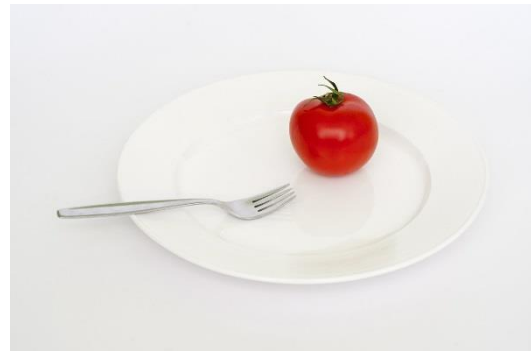
When you find yourself drawn toward eating in front of the television, it means you are probably eating mindlessly and not directing your attention to how much you are eating or to the signals your body gives off when you are full. This leads to overeating and obesity. Sit down to your meals and listen to



soothing music or to nothing at all. That way you can focus on your meal and not on something else.

7. You Eat A Narrow Variety Of Food

If you just eat the same limited amount of food each day, you stand a good chance of missing some key nutrients in your diet. Fill your menu with different foods so that you can be sure to get the nutrients you need. Colorful plates are healthy, filled with many colors of vegetables and fruit for dessert to get key nutrients from plant foods. Look at the USDA's Food Groups Chart and make sure to choose foods from each group daily, this is the easiest way to ensure you are eating a well-balanced diet.



8. You Eat To Appease Emotions

Emotional eating or overeating is always unhealthy. Mainly this takes place when people are bored, lonely, tired, upset, stressed, or angry. It always occurs when one is not truly hungry, but is trying to use food to cover up emotions and the food or foods of choice is always junk food. As cocaine, or other illicit drugs junk food stimulates pleasure centers in the brain because it is loaded with sugar, fat or factory created flavoring that holds no nutritional value.



Emotional overeating can be a serious problem that can lead to obesity, depression, guilt, and anxiety over the eating itself. This is one of the most serious unhealthy eating habits and plenty of help is available to address the problem.

9. You Eat Two Or Less Giant Meals Daily

It is much healthier to eat 5 to 7 small meals each day than to eat two or worse yet one large one. When you eat small meals several times per day you keep the metabolism revved and never let your blood sugars drop. When you starve yourself the whole day and then down a big meal, you put yourself at risk for obesity and you will not maintain optimal energy levels you're your daily activities.



10. You Eat More Calories Daily Than You Burn

The simple formula for weight management and weight loss is to eat less calories than you burn so to create a deficit. This is true for men and women, and becomes even more detrimental as we age and our metabolism slows naturally. Online calorie calculators can determine how many calories you need to either lose or maintain weight based on your age, weight, and activity level.



11. You Eat In Secret

If you are hiding food, or eating meals in secret so that your spouse, friends or family do not see you, something is wrong. It could be that you have a negative association with your eating habits that you want to keep secret or you have some guilt or



shame attached to eating. In this case, it is important to identify and deal with the issue, a therapist can help.

Eating healthy is not really so hard if you follow the tips noted above. Healthy eating means eating mindfully and choosing foods that are best for your body.

MAKING CHANGES

The takeaway is simple: Eat To Live... Don't Live To Eat!

It's really all about choices, and it's all in our hands. Take the time to evaluate your diet and eating habits. Make the necessary changes before it is too late, as prevention is worth a thousand cures.



Make small changes every week, instead of drastic shifts where you will feel the biggest impact. Make a list of all the foods you need to cut down on in your diet, and keep cutting one out each week.

- ✓ Be mindful of your eating habits and commit to change at least one each week.
- ✓ Ask for help and support from family and friends.
- ✓ Educate yourself on what are healthy foods, and the food groups.
- ✓ Make friends with healthy eaters, they can be your best support and role models for changing bad habits.
- ✓ Keep a list of all the changes you need to make and look it over every day to keep this information at the forefront of your mind.
- ✓ Use positive affirmations to instill a healthier thought process toward food and eating as thoughts and beliefs guide our behavior.



Keep with it and before you know it, new healthy choices and patterns will become habits, just as the old unhealthy ones once were.

Certainly, these efforts are worth your while, as life is short and we should enjoy it at our very best!