

Feeding Yourself When You Just Don't Feel Like It

Healthy Eating Tips for People with Complex Chronic Disease



THE GOAL: **Normal Eating.** What does that mean?

Balance Aim to eat from at least 3 of the 4 food groups for main meals and 2 of the food groups for snacks. (fruits & veggies, dairy & alternatives, meats & alternatives, grains/starches)

Variety Try not to eat the same foods every day.

Moderation Try to listen to your hunger and fullness cues and eat mindfully.

Regular Meals Try to eat something at least every 4-5 hours. It might help you to set an alarm.

Adequate Energy Consume the right amount of food fuel for your individual body.

Enjoyment & Satisfaction! Be able to enjoy the process.

BUT HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE WHEN I FEEL SO TERRIBLE?

Your eating patterns may not ever be perfect and that's okay, but some of these tips may help...



Tip #1: BE EQUIPPED

Make sure you have the right equipment to speed up the process and take over some of the work for you. The following tools can help: rice cooker, blender, food processor, crock pot, toaster oven, casserole dishes.

Tip #2: KEEP IT SIMPLE

Avoid recipes that require a lot of chopping, measuring, or monitoring. Instead of making a stir-fry that requires significant time spent prepping, try tossing chicken thighs or drumsticks (bone-in) and brussel sprouts with olive oil and then place ingredients in a baking dish. Season with salt and pepper and your favorite herbs (try rosemary or sage). Bake at 425 F for 34-40 minutes. Serve with rice or quinoa cooked in the rice cooker. Rest while all the food is cooking. Start a collection of easy recipes or meal combo ideas so you're not eating the same thing every day. **VARIETY!**

Tip #3: BREAK THE RULES

If your energy levels are higher when you first wake up, don't feel obligated to eat "breakfast foods". If you want to add some excitement to the day and you're craving a big salad or a bowl of soup, go for it! If you listen to your body, being mindful about food and eating, you will improve your overall nutrition. **MODERATION & ENJOYMENT!**

Don't feel like you have to follow recipes or make a traditional meal. You can still achieve nutrition and balance even if it seems like a strange combination of foods. If you feel like eating steamed broccoli followed by a handful of walnuts and some rice crackers, then do that. It's not fancy but you're still eating nutritious foods and just ate three of the four food groups. **BALANCE!**

Tip #4: LET OTHERS SHOP, PREP, COOK, AND CLEAN UP FOR YOU

Give friends and family an opportunity to support you in a practical way. Provide glass storage containers and a list of the foods you try to avoid. When someone else is grocery shopping or cooking a meal, it's easy to pick up a few items or portion a serving for you. Freeze the meal and then take it out of the freezer and put it in the fridge the night before you plan to eat it. This can help you work toward your goal of eating **REGULAR MEALS!**



Tip #6: CHECK IN WITH YOUR LOCAL FRIENDLY DIETITIAN

If you're struggling with multiple food intolerances, menu planning and/or finding recipes that work, make an appointment with a Registered Dietitian that specializes in chronic disease management.

Tip #5: KEEP A FOOD SYMPTOM LOG

If you're frustrated by uncomfortable symptoms experienced after you've eaten and you're turned off by food, start a food log. Keep track of when and what you eat, portion sizes, and symptoms you experience. Logs can also help ensure you're getting enough to eat. **ADEQUATE food ENERGY!**