

WEEK 6:

Kick Start Healthy TV Habits



Chef Habit: *Kick Start Healthier Television Habits*

Are you overweight and love watching TV for several hours a day? I have good news for you: reducing TV time and changing your television habits is likely to be your most effective key to a lean body.

WHY: Numerous studies come to the same conclusion: the amount of time spent in front of the TV or on the internet strongly correlates to body weight. As time doing sedentary activities increases, weight and BMI also go up. Weight loss programs that reduced media consumption led to a significant and sustainable weight loss. These programs were successful for several reasons:

1) Couch potatoes who click through TV channels or Google in their spare time decrease their daily activity level by participating in sedentary leisure activities. Additionally, during their screen time, they mindlessly munch away at snacks.

For many people, snacks and media consumption always go together, leading to disastrous consequences. Nowadays, many people eat reflexively without realizing it.

2) In addition, many TV commercials include food promotions. The majority of advertisements are for sweets, soda and snacks – which further quickens the appetite.

Additionally, eating while reading newspapers or books leads to mindless eating. Reading the news with the morning coffee or in a coffee bar while sipping a cappuccino is okay – but not when you are enjoying cereal or pastries with your beverage.

3) The increased media consumption leads to a feeling of having a lack of time. Watching TV for three hours a day or more means less time for healthy activities like, for example, preparing a new clean eating recipe.

HOW: Try eating without media distractions, if you don't already. Those of you who live alone fall into this trap more often by pairing screen time with meals.

Step 1: Use lunch or dinner as a trigger.

Step 2: Develop the routine of eating your meal mindfully. Try really hard to do nothing else at the same time. No TV. No internet. No magazines or books. It's just you and your plate. Learn to eat until you are comfortably full but not stuffed.

If you have a family, it is even more important to stick to this Chef Habit to establish quality family time. If your family usually watches TV during dinner, decrease the habit slowly. Begin with one or two TV-free meals a week and gradually increase the number over time. Limit other distractions as well. As you lead with example, this is also a perfect built-in accountability system.

Important: Mealtime is not the place for criticism or rude behaviors. Limit the discussions at the table to agreeable or neutral themes. Focus on the positive by asking questions such as, "Tell something good that happened today."

Step 3: Your reward comes immediately: time seems to slow down, which many people find relaxing and rejuvenating.

Be present while eating. Pay attention to food textures, tastes, what you liked, what you didn't. You will leave your meal feeling satisfied, rather than thinking, "Hey, where did my meal go?"