

YOU ARE WHEN YOU EAT

One of the lesser understood but clinically useful nutrition strategies when it comes to weight, energy, mood and appetite regulation is the field of bio-circadian nutrition.

Simply put, when we eat is often as important as what we eat.

When you skip meals, you put your body into “famine” mode and your body naturally stores your next meal as fat, in expectation of a recurring “famine”. To lose weight, you must eat and at regular times.

Skipping meals can slow down your body's metabolism.

As we eat our meals at the same time every day, our body is able to metabolize the food in a better way as that's how our body adjusts its metabolism. It knows that the food will be coming in at this particular time and thereby it prepares itself to metabolize that food efficiently.

It's important for us to eat small meals every 2.5 to 3 hours rather than eating a huge meal after a long gap. Spacing out the meals and breaking it down into smaller meals gives our body enough time to metabolize the food better.

When you sleep, your metabolism slows down considerably. That's why when you wake up, you feel groggy and lazy at times. You need food; you need fuel to kick-start your metabolism and, in turn, get your body mechanism started. So you have breakfast.

Make your breakfast the largest meal of your day:

When you wake up, your body is like the cold engine of a car. It needs to be warmed up to start. Your metabolism is the same. It needs to be jump-started. Once your metabolism is at optimum levels, your bodily functions perform efficiently. Breakfast is that source of fuel. If you skip your breakfast, your body has really not woken up and you start your day on a tired note, physically or mentally or both.

It usually takes your digestive system approximately 2.5- 3 hours to completely digest your food or snack. So by the time the digestion is done, instead of keeping an empty stomach, you feed more food to your body, which means more energy, higher metabolism and high levels of energy.

When you eat every 2.5 to 3 hours you will find that your portion size at lunch and dinner will cut down considerably because you are not severely hungry.

Since you have small snacks during the day, your digestion will be uniform.

The smaller your meals, the more efficient is your digestion, leaving little or no chance for food to get converted to fat and stored in your body.

By eating a tiny or no breakfast and minimal or late lunch, you assure major hunger in the late evening. Unfortunately, our thermic efficiency – meaning our ability to burn calories – is lower in the evening. So the exact same large meal eaten at 8pm actually places more of a caloric load on the body than if you ate it at lunch. Probability wise, it'll make you fatter.

By consuming a big meal right before bed, much of the metabolic energy that is usually spent on maintenance, detoxification, repair, and growth is necessarily rerouted into digestion. That's simply how the body works. So with an excess of blood flow and metabolism focused on processing your meal as you sleep, you'll most likely wake up feeling congested and heavy because you didn't detoxify fully during the night.

It's recommended that we eat our dinner about 2-3 hours before bedtime. That much period is sufficient for most people to metabolize a meal.

You will then go to bed without raising your body temperature; through the metabolic effect of food, thus increasing your probability of restful sleep. You'll also do what you were meant to do while lying in bed – healing, detoxifying and rebuilding.

To accomplish this, you may need to retrain your body and reorient your lifestyle. Focus on having a smaller and earlier dinner and have a more robust breakfast. Eating a relaxed, sane and balanced lunch makes it easier to have a lighter dinner.

Fruits are best choice to be eaten at a breakfast as it gets digested quickly by the body, providing instant energy to the individual consuming it.