



COIN Weight Loss Program

Tuning In to Eating

Week 10

This week you will:

- ✓ Continue focusing on healthy eating strategies
- ✓ Tune in to your food environment and practice mindful eating

- *Why do I eat more than I need or want?*
- *Why do I keep going back to the pantry even though I'm not hungry?*
- *Why can't I stop thinking about ice cream?*

The answers to these questions are complicated. Even if you come up with an answer, how will you know it is "right"? And even if it is "right", how will it help you figure out what to DO?

If you are struggling with overeating, there are likely many reasons. For example, you may be skipping meals earlier in the day and overeating at night because you come home so hungry. You may also be overeating because you associate sitting by the television with eating and do it out of habit. If this is the case, some solutions might be:

- Don't skip meals. Eat breakfast and lunch.
- Break the habit! Find something else to do when you are watching television (e.g, knit, stretch, get up and move around during commercials, lie down on the sofa and focus on being still and relaxed, etc.).

This week, we are going to focus on additional strategies for reducing your calorie intake, including managing your food environment and eating mindfully.

Managing your food environment

There are many factors that motivate when and how much you eat, including the smell and sight of tasty food. These factors make up your "food environment". Your food environment plays a big role in the decisions that you make about eating. The more we see and smell tasty foods, the more we want to eat them. Below are strategies to help you control your food environment and reduce your calorie intake:

- Don't bring "high-risk" foods into your home, office or car.
- Don't walk by the vending machine or snack table at work. Don't drive by your favorite fast food spot. Find another route.
- Put healthy food on the counter, in a basket, or in the refrigerator at home and work so healthy food is at your fingertips and in your vision.
- At parties, stand apart from the food. Join rooms and areas with more activity and laughter and LESS food.
- Turn off the television while you eat.
- Put away the computer and smartphone while you eat.
- Create a welcoming eating environment that is designated only for eating. Think about the lighting, colors, comfort, etc. of your table and chairs.
- Try not to eat in your office. Get up from your desk. Eat with others or go somewhere relaxing or in nature.

Practice mindful eating strategies: Slow down and pay attention to your eating behavior

- When you sit down to eat, take a moment to pause and think about how much and what you want to eat. Be intentional.
- Slow down. Put your fork or spoon down between every bite.
- Focus on *what* you are eating and your senses.
 - *What do you taste?*
 - *What are the textures?*
 - *How does it smell?*
- Set a timer and try to take longer to eat your meals and snacks.
- Check in with your feelings of hunger and fullness.
- Take a break and let feelings of fullness set in.
- Do one thing at a time.
 - Don't couple eating with other behaviors. If you are listening to your family speak, listen. If you are speaking, speak. If you are driving, drive. If you are eating, eat. You get the point—don't multitask—be mindful!

Please also read the following supplemental materials:

- MOVE!: Mindful Eating
- ACSM: Why We Eat?