

Health and Wellbeing

10 Top Tips

by Dr Rick Kausman, Australian pioneer of the non-dieting approach to healthy weight management. Dr Rick is also the author of the award-winning book *If Not Dieting, Then What?* and is the creator of the healthy eating, healthy weight management web site www.ifnotdieting.com

1. Focus on achievable, sustainable, behavioural goals

As with many areas of life, having the right goals is essential. Even if we are over our most healthy weight and our aim is to lose weight, it is vital to focus on goals to do with our attitudes, habits and behaviours.

2. Practice a positive attitude towards food

When people eat food they call 'bad' or 'junk', they often feel bad about themselves and guilty about what they have eaten. Often this guilty feeling can make people eat more of that type of food, even when they no longer feel like it. Do your best to look at food as being 'morally neutral', and when you can, think and talk about food as 'everyday' food (rather than 'good') and 'sometimes' food (rather than 'bad').

3. Do your best to eat slowly and enjoy

While this takes some practice, by slowing down our speed of eating, we often feel far more satisfied with significantly less food.

4. Non-hungry eating

We can all eat food when we are not really feeling physically hungry. It is quite normal to do some non-hungry eating, but when we do too much, it can tip our eating out of balance. Do your best to check in with your body before you eat to see if you are really physically hungry or not.

5. Do your best to not get too hungry

It is so easy to get caught up in the busy-ness and the business of life, that we can ignore our body signals that are telling us that we are getting progressively more and more hungry. If this happens, it is very hard to eat slowly, and we can easily eat more food than we really want, and we can end up becoming overfull or completely stuffed full.

6. Plan ahead to have some food on hand

We sometimes don't have access to a wide choice of foods. Because we are often very busy, we can leave decisions about what we are going to eat until the last minute. In this situation, it is easy to go for whatever food is most readily available (even when we don't really feel like this type of food). If you regularly find yourself in this situation, plan ahead to have some food on hand. Before going out, put together a range of foods that you enjoy eating and take them with you for the day ahead.

7. Fine-tune fat content without deprivation

It is definitely healthy to consume some fat (particularly the ones found in fish and other seafood, olive oil, nuts, seeds and avocado), and it is healthy to have some fat on our bodies. However, many people consume more fat than their bodies need. If this is the case, it is helpful to find some ways of decreasing the overall fat content. You might like to think of this as fine-tuning the fat content in a non-deprivational way.

8. Nurture yourself

If we keep giving without looking after our own needs, we may become resentful, frustrated and depressed. As well as giving of ourselves to our families, our friends, our work etc., we need to make sure we are doing things for ourselves. It is very important to nurture ourselves.

9. Don't confuse the thin 'ideal' message with healthy weight messages

Health and vitality come in all shapes and sizes, and it is important to be the healthiest weight we can achieve and maintain, rather than focus on being thin at any cost. By looking after ourselves and our bodies in the best way we can, our weight/size will evolve to the healthiest level that is possible.

10. Look for opportunities to move

Physical activity has long been known to produce beneficial effects. A number of recent research studies are now showing that small amounts of physical activity are cumulative throughout the day, and whatever physical activity we can do is worthwhile.

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