

Healthy Eating on the Run.

Let's start with the "B" part of this title—"on the run." That in itself may be a whole new thought to those of you who have recently experienced dramatic weight loss. Before, you may not have had the energy or the motivation to let yourself get overwhelmed with the everyday activities of life. Your life may have been sedentary, the very opposite of on the run.

However, while it may be uncharted territory, it's also very fresh and exciting territory. Imagine, being so active that you need to be concerned with keeping yourself fueled for it! No longer do you see food as an emotional comforter because your limitations have you depressed. No longer do you seek the unhealthy quick-fix foods that soothe you in the short term, but ultimately only add to the misery.

You suddenly find yourself in a huge fundamental shift, not only in what you eat, but *why* you eat. And you want to make sure you protect your new healthy eating ways, because the bad food out there will continue to make a play for your attention.

For instance, as you find yourself out and about enjoying life more, you'll also find there is a direct connection between fun places and events, and unhealthy food (for whatever reason). Amusement parks, zoos, and airports have found very little incentive to think healthy with their food choices. Social gatherings, like family reunions and high school pot-lucks, don't fare much better. And you're not going to find too many vendors at ball games yelling, "Get yer steamed veggies right here!"

The solution, put simply, is to take your own healthy food with you to these places and functions. This of course presents some practical challenges, but nothing that cannot be overcome. And with your health in the balance, the effort is well worth it.

One challenge is making sure you're prepared for these occasions as they arise. Sooner or later, if you don't prepare, you'll be caught short. Then you'll find yourself struggling against the urge to go ahead and, just this once, get the corn dog, or the pop, or the chips--or all three. Too many of those "just this once" scenarios, and before you know it, you're on a slippery slope back to your old eating ways.

So to make it really work for you, you need to have a doable game plan. And then stick to it.

Start by sitting down and making out a menu for the entire month. Think of how this can benefit you. With your meals scheduled you can thaw out food ahead of time. No impulse buying because you know exactly what you need to buy and how much of it. You'll make fewer trips to the grocery store, saving time and gas money. You'll also save more by preparing more meals at home. And, because home-cooked meals tend to be lower in fat and calories, you'll be eating healthier. And that's the most important benefit of all.

Remember too that every time you eat, it doesn't have to be an elaborate meal. Rather than thinking three meals a day, think six smaller ones. Research shows that this is a healthier routine for better weight loss results.

Stock your home with individual servings of carrot sticks, jerky, cheese and crackers, light cheese sticks, protein bars (2 grams or less added sugar), ready-to-drink protein drinks (2 grams or less added sugar), soy nuts, fresh fruit. Remember they work as snacks alone, and as meals in combinations.

Brown bag it to work and wherever else it makes sense to do so. Keep a cooler in your car during the warm months to keep healthy snacks and drinks at the ready. You'll find plenty of info on the Barix website about what's good and what isn't good for you. And the good-for-you stuff provides some very fertile ground for the healthy-meal planner. Give yourself enough time to really think about it, and you'll be surprised at all the nutritious ideas you'll come up with.

The best part of all this food preparation is the reason why you need to do it in the first place: you finally have the active life you've been missing. Feed it well. And by all means, enjoy it.

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