



What a waist: Simple steps can help you be less likely to be tempted by snacks, bread or nibbles before you eat your main meal

Battle of the bulge

Continuing our special feature on the growing problem of obesity in Australia, dietitian Susie Burrell offers some practical advice to help in the battle of the bulge.

OVEREATING does not necessarily equate to lots of smorgasbords, desserts and indulgent restaurant meals.

Overeating can mean as little as a few extra nuts, snacking when you are not hungry or that sweet treat at night that you know you do not need but eat anyway.

The good news is that, like many behaviours, overeating can be managed with a few simple techniques that will help to teach you how to identify if you are overeating and how to stop.

One of the simplest things you can do to determine if you are overeating is to keep a food diary for a few days. Make a note of everything you put into your mouth and you may be surprised at the number of extras that slip in – the nibbles before dinner, the biscuits at work, and the children's leftovers are just some of the little extras that creep into our

SIMPLE STRATEGIES

Strategies to combat overeating:

- Don't buy uncontrolled portions of chocolate, chips or biscuits. If you buy them, you will eat them.
- Don't skip meals as this leaves you prone to overeating.
- Get out of the house or call a friend at times you know you overeat.
- Fill up on low calorie vegetables and soup to fill your belly.
- Keep a food diary of everything you eat and drink during the day and see where the extras slip in.
- Seek professional help if you find that mindless eating is affecting your day-to-day functioning.

Susie Burrell

day without us even realising it.

Remember, the average female will burn between 6000 and 7000 kilojoules each day and the average male between 8000 and 10,000 kilojoules. For slow, sustainable weight loss, aim to eat 100-200 calories (convert this to kilojoules) less than you are eating each day.

Once you have identified if you are

overeating, the next thing is to determine when you are most likely to overeat. Do you only overeat when you are at home alone? Does it happen when you are eating out with friends or when you have not had time to plan your meals?

Once you have identified a pattern, you can begin to make plans to avoid such scenarios. For example, if you identify that you overeat when you are by yourself at home, you can start to consider what purpose the eating is serving. Is it to curb loneliness or boredom?

Try keeping a diary for a week and link your eating behaviour to the thoughts you are having at the time. One of the simplest things you can do is make sure you do not fuel your overeating by purchasing high fat, tempting foods such as biscuits, cakes and chocolates. If the food is there you are more likely to eat it.

Secondly, try not to become too hungry as you also are more likely to overconsume when you are starving.

Aim to eat small, regular meals every three to four hours to avoid the 3pm-5pm munchies that can trigger the start of a binge-eating session after school or work.



HEALTHY FOOD

Ten foods we should eat everyday but probably don't.

- 1) Beets:** a rich source of folate as well as natural red pigments that may be cancer fighters. Eat fresh, raw and grated to make a salad. Heating decreases the antioxidant power.
- 2) Cabbage:** loaded with nutrients such as sulforaphane, a chemical believed to boost cancer-fighting enzymes. Eat: in salads or slaws or as a crunchy topping on burgers and sandwiches.
- 3) Swiss chard:** a leafy green vegetable packed with carotenoids that protect ageing eyes. Chop and saute in olive oil
- 4) Cinnamon:** may help control blood sugar and cholesterol. Sprinkle it on coffee or oatmeal.
- 5) Pomegranate juice:** appears to lower blood pressure and is loaded with antioxidants.
- 6) Dried plums:** Okay, so they are really prunes, but they are packed with antioxidants. Wrap them in prosciutto and bake.
- 7) Pumpkin seeds:** the most nutritious part of the pumpkin and packed with magnesium.
- 8) Sardines:** health food in a can, they are high in omega-3s, contain virtually no mercury and are loaded with calcium. They also contain iron, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, zinc, copper and manganese as well as a full complement of B vitamins. Choose sardines packed in olive or sardine oil. Eat plain, mixed with salad, on toast or mashed with dijon mustard and onions as a spread.
- 9) Turmeric:** the superstar of spices, turmeric is believed to have anti-inflammatory and anti-cancer properties. Mix with scrambled eggs or in any vegetable dish.
- 10) Blueberries:** Eat fresh in season or frozen all year-round.

BAD FOOD

Here are the top 10 foods never to place in your supermarket trolley!

- 1) Two-minute noodles.** Even if they are no longer fried, they still contain masses of salt and the same amount of carbs as three slices of bread. Choose hokkein or flat fresh noodles instead.
- 2) Meat in a can.** Doesn't the name say it all?
- 3) Jelly,** a mix of sugar and artificial colours and in many varieties, the recently UK-banned sodium benzoate preservative.
- 4) Fruit Twists.** High GI carbohydrates marketed as a healthy snack choice.
- 5) Cordial** (see jelly).
- 6) Frozen meals.** If a food has an ingredient list as large as the box, it cannot be that good for you. An omelette or tuna-topped potato are just as quick to prepare.
- 7) Fruit straps.** If fruit was supposed to be flat, God would have made it that way and no, it is not as good as the real thing.
- 8) Chocolate nut spreads.** More sugar than nuts and it is too hard to stop eating it.
- 9) Chocolate-flavoured or iron man breakfast cereal.** Does that surprise you?
- 10) Prepackaged cakes.** More trans and saturated fat than you need in a week, also see No. 6 re: ingredient list.

