

Meal Planning to Eliminate Binge Eating

Objective

To identify basic strategies to normalize long-term eating habits through meal planning.

You Should Know

Planning meals can be challenging if you are changing how and when you eat. There are some basic guidelines you can follow when you are planning what to eat so that you no longer feel compelled to binge eat.

Meal planning is working for you when you achieve the following goals:

1. You consistently check in with how your body feels (e.g., you can accurately assess if you are hungry or satisfied).
2. You feel hungry at regular meal or snack times.
3. You rarely feel 'starving' or overly hungry before meals.
4. You have healthy digestion; in other words, you do not experience constipation, bloating, or excessive gas.
5. You do not feel sluggish, develop headaches, or have other symptoms between meals.
6. You feel energized and you think clearly.
7. You are less irritable and rarely experience mood swings.
8. You rarely experience intense food cravings.
9. Your desire to binge is reduced or eliminated.

Begin at the most basic level when you begin meal planning. The first step is to follow these guidelines for one week.

- Schedule specific times for each meal and eat at about the same time every day.
- Eat three meals and two snacks every day.
- Include all three macronutrients in each meal and snack: protein, healthy fat, and carbohydrates.
- Drink 8–10 cups of water each day.
- Move your body at least once each day, even if it is only a 10-minute walk.

Changes in your eating habits might take months. You might want to consult with a registered dietitian, certified nutritionist, or nutrition coach for support. Making small, sustainable changes is more effective over the long term than attempting major, sweeping changes. This

worksheet will help you plan what you will be eating each day. Make several copies and plan your meals on the same day each week (for example, every Sunday evening). This habit will help you track your meals and remain accountable to yourself.

What to Do

First, plan your meals for the upcoming week. Choose meals and snacks that nourish your body and mind. For now, avoid foods that might trigger overeating or bingeing episodes. Also, avoid strictly counting calories. Make several copies of the following chart or use a notebook to track your meals.

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snack 1	Snack 2
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					

Next, record your progress. For each day rate yourself from 1 = I wasn't able to meet my goals, to 5 = I met all my goals. Copy this chart to track your progress each week.

Goals	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
Rating:							
I ate on schedule.							
I ate three meals.							
I ate two healthy snacks.							
I drank 8–10 cups of water or herbal tea.							
I engaged in at least 10 minutes of physical activity.							
I included protein, healthy fat, and carbs at each meal/snack.							
I abstained from bingeing and overeating.							
I practiced meditation or another mindfulness activity.							

Reflections on This Exercise

What additional tools or resources can you use for meal planning?

Which goals were most challenging for you to meet each day?

What can you do to make the meal planning process easier?

How helpful was this exercise? _____

(1 = not very helpful, 5 = moderately helpful, 10 = extremely helpful)

Describe what you learned from this exercise.
