

UNINFORMED EATER

When it comes to healthy eating for weight loss you have the best of intentions. You've researched about the latest popular diets and are interested in nutrition and motivated to eat well. You may have even tried the latest popular diets and tried strategies such as cutting out carbohydrates, avoiding fats (even the good ones) or eliminating your favourite foods but you're not getting any closer to your goal. You may find that restrictive diets backfire on you as it's tough to follow these plans for very long. This has left you confused about what really works.

GOAL:
Learn how to balance healthy food choices with favourite foods. Focus on a healthy, non-diet approach.

LETTING GO OF FOOD LABELS

As an uninformed eater, your relationship with food may be somewhat judgemental. You may put foods into 'good' and 'bad' categories and feel that you need to deprive yourself of foods you consider 'bad' and only eat foods you consider 'good'.

How 'bad' foods drive a negative cycle

What happens when you label a food as 'bad'? First you stop eating it on a regular basis. Then, you try not to think about it, which can actually backfire and make you think about it more. It can also leave you totally unprepared to manage your food urges because you have avoided making a plan. You might say, 'What the heck, I already blew it. I might as well eat the whole thing!' This might leave you feeling guilty, ashamed and like you have failed. Those negative feelings may lead you to overeat even more.

Be careful – it's easy to go from labeling foods to labeling yourself too. Do any of these statements sound like something you'd say?

1. 'Guess what I ate this week – I was really bad!'
2. 'Of course I didn't deserve to lose weight – after all I ate all those biscuits!'
3. 'I'm so weak – I can't believe I ate that!'

A better way

Try to let go of the judgement around food and yourself. Your food choices don't make you good or bad. Try to consider all foods as morally neutral – there is no such thing as 'good' or 'bad' foods, just foods you eat all the time, and foods you eat occasionally. And it's perfectly ok to enjoy occasional foods from time to time.

PRACTICING MODERATION

Instead of thinking of your favourite treat foods as bad, think of them as foods to enjoy in moderation. Your Jenny Craig menu is a great tool that shows you how to eat your favourite foods moderately and enjoy the pleasure of eating while still reaching your goals.

The Jenny Craig menus highlight balance, variety and moderation in food choices. The menus reflect the National Dietary Guidelines with an emphasis on fresh fruit, vegetables and wholegrains as a complement to the portion-controlled meals and snacks featured each day.

FOCUS ON EATING FOR HEALTH

In the past you may have been fixated on kilojoule counting, restricting certain food groups or foods or avoiding foods you believe to be 'bad'. An important part of becoming an 'informed' eater is to begin to make choices that focus on enhancing your health rather than being restrictive and focused purely on losing weight.

Understand that you can enjoy a variety of healthy foods and a diet that is:

- » Based on fruits, vegetables, wholegrains, reduced fat dairy and alternatives, lean meat and alternatives, and nuts and healthy fats.
- » Low in saturated fats, sodium and added sugars.