

7 Sneaky Diet Derailers

Look out! You just might be standing in your own way when it comes to your weight. These 7 habits could be keeping you from achieving healthy goals.

1 You're not quite sure what you're eating.

This one is for those on the go. Whether it's frequent lunches with co-workers and friends, grabbing food while running errands, or you simply like to dine out, the simple fact that you're not preparing your own food means there may be ingredients with extra calories or fat you weren't counting on. The good news is that many food establishments will post nutrition info online so you know exactly what you are ordering. When ordering salads and sandwiches, ask for any dressings or condiments on the side. That way you can add only what you want and you may even discover that your meal will taste just as good without the full fare.



6 Your peers may be a problem.

Invite your inner circle to embrace healthy change, or at least notify them of your plans so they can help support you in your goals. It's a fact that we tend to model our behavior after those around us. Asking your family and friends to help you achieve your goals will lead to more conscientious decisions regarding eating out and the dishes served at events and parties, and it will help you to avoid temptation in general.

3 You're feeling snack-ish.

Uh oh—we all know this one! When you feel a snack attack coming on, you can prevent yourself from going overboard by eating low-calorie foods that satisfy the need to eat without doing damage to your diet. Try crunchy foods that allow you to chew and mimic the sensation of eating more indulgently than you are. Suggested snacks might be apple slices, celery, carrots or pickles (just make sure to watch the sodium).

See healthy recipes on page 12.



2 You're clearing your plate, despite being full.

Have you ever wondered how French women stay so thin? The rumor is that they don't eat to get full, but rather they eat until they feel content. Start with small portions and be sure to drink lots of water. Dining out can be tricky because restaurant portions are oftentimes much larger than we actually need. You might consider sharing a portion with another person or taking leftovers home for a different mealtime.



5 You're surrounding yourself with unhealthy influences.

Keeping junk food around the house is just begging for a binge fest you are sure to regret once your willpower has given way. The old out-of-sight, out-of-mind adage says it best.



7 You're drinking your calories.

You may have excellent eating habits, but you can still derail your diet with bad beverage habits. Some people find water boring and turn to coffee, energy drinks and soda. Many of these drinks contain lots of sugar that can pack on the pounds. Make your water more exciting by flavoring it with a hint of your favorite citrus fruit. Staying properly hydrated with water will also help to keep you from overeating since dehydration can be mistaken for hunger.

4 Your workouts are unbalanced.

You need a combo of both cardio and strength training to maintain a trim and toned physique. Cardio alone will burn fat, but you'll actually burn more fat by having extra muscle. Strength training also helps build bone density for strong bones.

Learn more about exercise and its benefits on page 18.

