

## **KEEPING YOUR FOOD JOURNAL**

Your first goal is to become aware of what you eat on a regular basis. This is done by the use of a food journal/dairy.

The purpose of the food journal is to heighten your awareness of your eating habits. This self-monitoring tool is to help you develop an internal awareness of what you are eating. It also makes you aware of your eating style. It is not indented to make you feel guilty. You have no reason to feel guilty. No one is perfect. The journal is a learning tool.

The food dairy is similar to a personal diary, but rather than recording the day's events, you will write down everything you eat and drink. Keeping a written record can clear up many nutritional mysteries. After keeping a journal some people discover that some miss whole food groups may be missing from your diet. Or you may discover eating patterns that may be emotional in nature. Every food group serves a purpose...and that is to provide vital nutrients the body needs to function properly.

By writing down what you eat for a period of time we can locate any problem areas you might have or areas you may need to improve on. We can then work on any undesirable eating patterns or eating habits that may stop you from reaching your desired goals

### **JOURNAL INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Obtain a notebook to record your information. This may be any type of notebook i.e. wire bound etc.
2. Date the page of use.
3. Divide each day into sections-breakfast, lunch, dinner, and between-meal snacks. I just write down meal 1, meal 2, meal 3 etc.

What to record:

- Record the time you ate the meal, snack etc.
- What and how much you eat (a cup, approx. 2 tbsp of salad dressing, a piece of chicken about the size of my palm etc.,) "you need to be specific, not vague."
- Include snacks, taste or "nibbles" if it goes into your mouth it should be written here.
- Record the environment the food was consumed in i.e. name of restaurant, cookout, while watching TV.
- Record the mood you were in if it was outside for the regular meal." I was bored", if you were hungry? Was your stomach growling, if I felt a little down on this day etc.
- Write it down as soon as possible. PLEASE DON'T CHEAT; THE ONLY PERSON YOU CHEAT IS YOURSELF.

KEEP THIS FOOD/MOOD JOURNAL THREE DAYS. Write down everything you consume. AGAIN, IF IT GOES INTO YOUR MOUTH WRITE IT DOWN.

Recording this information for at least a week will open your eyes to a lot of potential problem areas that may be, or is slowing down your progress to reaching your goals. If you don't have any problems, we won't worry about it.

Once you have the diary filled out week we'll review it. We will be checking to see if you are getting too much or too little of certain items? You can then use this information to make appropriate food choices so you can achieve your desired goals.