

Nutrition Hacks for Busy Providers

By Andrea Hausel, MPH, RD, CDN & Rachel Seaman, MD

We hope you'll share your nutrition tips with us to help create a living document full of tips from your peers.

To get you started, the UHA Provider Wellness team shared our favorite nutrition hacks.

Andrea:

My hacks are old-school and intuitive:

- 1) Use smaller plates - a dinner plate should be 8.5 - 9" diameter. (The average American now uses an 11-12" plate - that holds a lot more food and calories.)
- 2) If you drink wine, use smaller glasses. I know, red wine "should" be poured in a large glass to let the aromas emerge, but how many people pour 5 oz in it? I recently picked up fairly standard red wine glass and it was 31 oz. You'll drink less with a smaller glass, since visually it looks fuller.
- 3) Make at least half of lunch and dinner vegetables to fill up on fiber and get a huge dose of vitamins
- 4) Keep a few emergency snacks on hand - raw almonds, pistachios and pumpkin seeds are good choices
- 5) Bulk prepare foods that are time consuming to cook -- lentils, vegetable soups, steel cut oats and dried beans.
- 6) Make healthy drinks delicious -- fruit infused water, seltzer with lime, or sugar-free lemonade (juice of 6 lemons, 6 cups of water and 30 fresh mint leaves)
- 7) When grocery shopping, stay mostly around the perimeter of the supermarket where fresh foods are stocked.
- 8) For families: Involve kids in school lunch preparation. I often cook extra dinner which becomes the next day's lunch. Even toddlers can use [kids' knives](#) to help cut up peppers, cucumbers, and melons. [These animal shapes](#) are another fun way to encourage kids to help prepare (and eat) fruits and vegetables at a young age.

Rachel:

- 1) Make healthy dinner preparation easier by ordering from [Sun Basket](#)
- 2) Buy pre-packaged salads and fruit from the supermarket and bring my lunch to work
- 3) Eat protein in the morning to feel full
- 4) Order salad- good default in most cases
- 5) To avoid a certain food, try to visualize it as something that disgusts you (eg think of doo doo when you see chocolate)

- 6) Plan on a healthy 3 pm snack, when cortisol levels drop, to prevent a 4-5 pm sugar craving
- 7) Get good sleep to keep leptin levels low
- 8) When trying to diet, go for low hanging fruit first. If you have two glasses of wine every night, decrease to one. Those are just empty calories. If you eat bread every day, cut out bread.
- 9) Notice emotional correlations. If you see a consistent trigger, utilize habit change to replace the snacking or over-eating with a new habit (eg push-ups, singing loudly so everyone can hear or meditation)
- 10) Be aware of the biology driving stress eating - stress causes us to crave a little dopamine escape. Don't rely on discipline - pack stress reducing habits into your life to prevent that situation. Once we get that dopamine hit, we want another hit to remain satisfied.

Bryan: Coming Soon...

Mickey: Coming Soon...