

COVID CRUD

Tackling Not-So-Healthy Habits Adopted During the Pandemic



ROUGE MEAL ROUTINE

Quarantines, lockdowns and working from home are just a few causes of our disjointed routines since March 2020. Along with shifting schedules came shifting food patterns. Skipping breakfast, grazing all day and eating later are now commonplace. This imbalanced intake can slow metabolism, decrease productivity, prompt cravings and lead to mismanaged blood sugar. Prioritize kicking your day off and fueling right!

- Ideally, the day starts with a balanced breakfast, followed by nutrient-dense, balanced meals or snacks every 3 - 5 hours thereafter.
- Resist scrolling social media or emails first thing after waking.
- Choose a high fiber, protein-rich meal before enjoying a cup of joe.
- Prep foods in advance, whether you're working on site or working from home. Try overnight oats, a premade frittata or an easy Greek yogurt parfait with berries and nuts as quick breakfast solutions.
- Snack on produce + protein if you need a pick-me-up.

WEIGHT GAIN

Changes in our daily habits lead to changes in our well-being. Whether due to increased stress, extra snacks, decreased activity or interrupted sleep, 40% - 60% of adults report gaining weight during the pandemic. To get "back on track" assess your daily routine and aim to adopt habits that support a healthy weight on a consistent basis. Losing weight isn't about eating as few calories as possible, nor is it about following a crash diet. Start by incorporating tried-and-true healthy habits to support a healthy weight.

- Eat a balanced breakfast
- Hydrate throughout each day
- Enjoy fruits and vegetables at every meal
- Move every day
- Cook at home





STRESS EATING

Boredom and stress have led many to extra snacks throughout the day. Stress can impact the appetite, and the more constant accessibility of food with more time spent at home can mean turning to extra snacks for comfort. Snacking inherently is not an unhealthy habit, but falling into mindless eating patterns can lead to ignoring hunger cues, consuming more processed foods, and unintentionally consuming extra calories.

- **Assess how you're dealing with the stressors of each day.**
- **Try breath work or meditation, journaling, a walk outdoors or a call to a friend.**
- **Commit to a supportive and fueling food pattern throughout the day.**

ADDITIONAL ALCOHOL

Though Americans may have retreated from bars during the pandemic, studies report drinking has increased by as much as 14%. While the occasional beverage can fit into a healthy lifestyle, overdoing it will harm your overall health. Alcohol consumption can compromise the immune system, add nutrient-poor calories, and contribute to inflammation.

- **Imbibe in moderation: 1 alcoholic drink for women, 2 for men.**
- **Choose beverages without added sugar.**
- **Practice portion control and keep a regular meal and hydration pattern.**
- **If stress relief is what you seek, ensure to employ a variety of strategies like time outdoors, journaling, stretching and prioritizing sleep.**

