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How often should I eat? The answer may surprise you

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SPECIAL CORPORATE WELLNESS OFFER

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WHAT IS THIS VIDEO ALL ABOUT?

HOW OFTEN SHOULD I EAT?

Over the years I have decided in our practice there are two main types of eaters; gorgers (similar to wolves) and grazers (similar to cows).

The gorgers are like wolves and “wolf down their food.” They enjoy larger meals, being full and not having to worry about snacking often. The grazers on the other hand are happiest when munching on snacks and little bits of food often throughout the day.



Are you more similar to a grazer or a gorgor? Which one do you think is the healthiest approach? The answer might surprise you. While most people would say grazing is better, there are advantages to both styles of eating.

Advantages of grazing are you have constant stream of energy flowing. It may also prevent you from overeating. If you are a grazer that is OK, but be cautious you don't end up overeating by the end of the day. Constant grazers have a hard time determining if they are hungry and full which can lead to weight issues. I want you to think about if you are snacking for the right reason. We are a culture obsessed with snacking. We have many clients in our practice that every hour grab something to eat. For example, yogurt at 9am, granola bar at 10am, banana at 11am. Often when I ask them if they are hungry, they are unsure but thought they “should” be eating.

Have you ever heard the expression “snacking will spoil your supper?” Our grandparents likely didn't eat snacks. They ate 3 square meals with few snacks... in essence they ate like a gorgor

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(bigger meals less often). If you are a gorging that is OK; in some cases we have clients in our practice that can't manage to decrease the size of their meals to allow room for snacks. They end up eating both and actually gain weight. If you are more of a gorging be cautious you aren't waiting too long and ending up in a state of what I call "homicidal hunger." This is a state where if someone gets between you and the fridge they may lose their life. What do you think the chocoholic dietitian is looking for at 6pm if I ate lunch at noon, and didn't make time to have a snack? Certainly not carrot sticks... I'm looking for any kind of chocolate.

The best answer regarding the debate of how often you should eat is to think about being somewhere between a gorging and a grazer, which is a "go-getter" that eats every 3-5 hours. This may mean that you may eat anywhere between three, four, five or six times per day.

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Andrea Holwegner, known as the Chocoholic Dietitian, is founder and president of Health Stand Nutrition Consulting Inc., a member of the Canadian Association of Professional Speakers and a media expert for the Dietitians of Canada. For nutrition counselling information

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