

Including Treats in Your Routine

Treats can easily be included in any eating pattern.

They can bring us joy by making us feel a certain way and can foster connections to certain events or people in our lives.

Treats are not “bad”. They are foods which may have less nutritional value but treats fuel our mind and soul! Creating a healthy boundary around treats and allowing them to be a choice and not a compulsion is one way we can include them in our eating habits. If consumption of treats is something you would like to work on, try using this worksheet.

Step 1: What is a treat for you?

- Describe what “treat” means to you:

- How many treats are you currently having each day? OR each week?
- Are you happy with the number of treats you are currently eating? Circle: YES or NO.
 - If your answer is YES, continue to enjoy your current treat routine! If you are comfortable with where you are at, do not feel obligated to change.
 - If your answer is NO, consider that you do not need to feel obligated to change, but we can always improve if we genuinely feel that we can.

What is the reason you want to change your treat intake?

Step 2: Set Goals

- How many treats would you like to enjoy each day (or each week)?
- What type of treats? Why did you choose this type of treat?

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Step 3: Think About the Rest of your Routine

Think about how treats can fit in with the rest of the healthy foods in your routine to help you feel satisfied, energized, and happy. There is room for both! Sometimes it just takes a little time to figure out how to fit treats into your routine, and that's totally normal.

Step 4: Choosing a Treat:

- Try to buy your treats in single serving portions. When your brain sees you've finished the serving, you will feel more satisfied.
- Make your treat a 10/10 for flavour and fulfillment. Compare mom's gooey homemade chocolate chip cookies to a store-bought version that might not be as tasty.
- Let your senses guide you when selecting a treat. This may help you choose one that will provide more satisfaction.

Step 5: Enjoying a Treat:

- Savour the smell, texture, and flavour of your chosen item. Pay attention to how you feel before, during, and after eating your chosen treat food. This mindful presence can help you to understand and define what a worthwhile treat is for you!
- Enjoy your treat with no distractions.
- After a few bites, have a drink of water and ask yourself if you want to continue. If not, give yourself permission to have the rest later.
- Enjoy your treat after a well-balanced meal or snack. This may help you feel satisfied with a small portion. If you eat treats on an empty stomach, you likely won't be satisfied with just one serving.
- Remember: Treating yourself does not always have to be food-based! A treat could be a massage, a bath, time to read an enjoyable book or time with a friend.

Analogy: Think About Building a House!

1. Foundation: first to be put down, critical for house's shape and sturdiness. This equals your overall balanced diet.
2. Windows, doors, accessories: added to the house later, add elements of excitement and style. These equal your treats and extras. The amount and type of windows, doors, and accessories (treats and extras) is completely up to the homeowner!

