

# YOUR CARE POLMED

March 2021



It is time to keep  
a food diary



Poor eating habits can cause us to eat foods that neither help nor boost our health. Mindless eating causes you to eat food without paying attention to how much you're eating or its nutritional value. This can lead to overeating, weight gain and even malnutrition.

The right foods can help to protect and improve our health. The good news is that **starting a food diary** can help to counter mindless eating.



*"A food diary can be a daunting prospect at first, but while you may be hesitant to look at your habits this closely, it is a vital step to switching from a mindset of dieting to a focus on a lifestyle change,"* explains registered dietitian Monique Piderit.

## HOW DO I START A FOOD DIARY?

### YOU CAN EITHER:

Take a picture of everything that you eat



Write down what you eat



Use an app to track your meals

## WHAT SHOULD YOU INCLUDE IN A FOOD DIARY?

Below is an example of a food diary that you can use to track your eating habits. It's best to monitor your eating habits over a period of two weeks so that you can properly assess your eating habits.



### My Food Diary

#### Monday, March 2021

Meal type	Time	Food and how it was prepared	Portion size	Thoughts /Feelings
Breakfast	09:00 am	High-fibre breakfast cereal	One bowl	Eating but distracted by work
Snack	10:30 am	Plain medium fat smooth yoghurt	Two (200g)	A little peckish
Snack	12:00 pm	Tuna sandwich	2 slices of brown bread and a spoonful of tuna	Focused more on the meal than work
Lunch	02:00 pm	Noodles cooked using the office microwave	1 packet of noodles (80g)	Not the tastiest but enough to keep me full for the rest of the day
Supper	07:00 pm	Pap with okra and fish	One serving of pap One serving of okra One serving of fish	Satiated



**ANALYSIS:** Maybe I should try to eat a bigger breakfast or find more filling snacks?  
Is eating at my desk making me hungrier?

A food diary is the perfect snapshot into your eating habits. When you understand daily eating patterns, by tracking over time, you will be able to focus on how to improve your health through the power of your plate.

#### References

- <https://obssr.od.nih.gov/mindless-eating-eat-think/>
- <https://www.nchpad.org/1693/6799/Mindful-vs-Mindless-Eating>
- <https://nutrition.org/the-benefits-of-food-journaling/>
- <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/why-keep-a-food-diary-2019013115855>
- [https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/diabetes/nutrition/fooddiary\\_el.pdf](https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/diabetes/nutrition/fooddiary_el.pdf)