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JOEL FUHRMAN, MD

Eat more often, gain weight

It is well known that in recent years, restaurant portion sizes have steadily increased, and many single meals at fast food outlets and restaurants pack in enough calories for an entire day. Overall in the United States, we are surrounded by calorie-dense food all the time.

Today, we eat more and more often than we did 20 or 30 years ago. We eat constantly. Calorie-dense, nutrient-poor snacks are everywhere. And many of our beverages contain enough calories to be meals in themselves.

However, "eat smaller, more frequent meals" is common weight loss advice — supposedly, if we eat more often to "keep blood sugar stable," we will avoid overeating. But does this really work? Is it sound advice for reducing caloric intake overall? The research says no — eating more frequently actually appears to promote weight gain.

Since the 1970s, overweight and obesity rates in the United States have skyrocketed.

Also since then, the average number of eating occasions

(meals and snacks) increased from 3.5/day to 5/day, and the average number of calories consumed each day rose from 1,803 to 2,374.

Calorie intake in the United States has been increasing by an average of 28 calories per day per year since 1977. Researchers have examined three potential drivers of increased calorie intake: portion size, number of eating occasions, and calorie density of meals.

Although portion sizes were responsible for much of the caloric increase up to 1991, by far, the greater number of eating occasions was the strongest driver of increased calorie intake, accounting for 22 of the 28 calories per day per year increase the researchers observed since 1977.

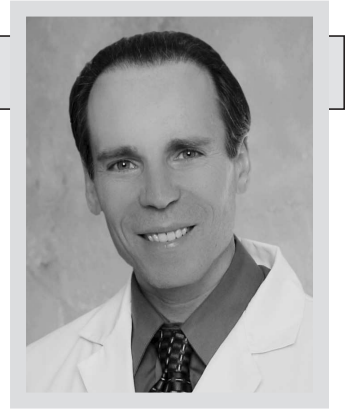
Snacking for most people is a reaction to what I call toxic hunger. Most people snack between meals to stop uncomfortable withdrawal symptoms from the unhealthy foods that they eat. The average number of eating occasions has increased as our diet has become more toxic, producing

more cravings and withdrawal symptoms. Unhealthy food indeed does have these addictive qualities.

To maintain a healthy weight we need to eat fewer total calories; eating primarily nutrient-dense (rather than calorie-dense) foods and eating fewer times per day both will help to achieve this goal. Foods with a low calorie-density (high nutrient-density) like greens, other vegetables, and fruits are associated with reduced total calorie intake, higher nutritional quality, and lower body weight.

Conversely, foods with a high energy-density are associated with greater calorie intake. Also, contrary to the conventional wisdom, the majority of studies have not found any weight-loss or calorie-reduction benefit to eating more frequently. Consuming a snack has been found not to cause a compensatory decrease in calorie consumption at the next meal.

Ultimately, snacking most often results in increased daily caloric intake. Furthermore, most studies have shown that there is no weight loss advan-



tage to dividing a diet of the same number of calories into a greater number of meals.

Eat only when you are truly hungry. For most people following a healthful diet, this will not be more than three times a day. The key factor for weight loss is improving the quality of your diet.

Scientific research has demonstrated that eating healthy food brings a greater level of satiety, and significantly reduces or eliminates the uncomfortable symptoms of toxic hunger, leading to greater meal satisfaction, reduced calorie intake, and attainment of a healthy weight.

Dr. Fuhrman is a No. 1 New York Times best-selling author and a family physician. Visit his website at DrFuhrman.com or contact him at newsquestions@drfuhrman.com.

Rotary contributes to help 'End Polio'

The Florence Rotary Club recently presented Rotary's District Governor John Bushnell and his wife, Lea, with a check for \$4,000. This is the sixth year the Florence club has made this donation from money raised at the "Cool at the Coast" golf tournament.

In that time, Rotary International's End Polio Now campaign has implemented vaccination campaigns that have helped to eliminate polio



COURTESY PHOTO

Florence Rotarians present a check to Rotary International's End Polio Now campaign. From left: Rotary District Governor John Bushnell with wife Lea Bushnell; "Cool at the Coast" golf tournament Co-Chairs Craig Sanders and Deb Lamb, and Rotary president Crystal Farnsworth.

in all but two countries in the world: Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Nigeria has recently been polio-free for a year, and it is expected that the entire African continent may be declared polio-free by the end of 2016.

For many years, the govern-

ment of Pakistan has resisted all attempts to vaccinate its children, including attacking and killing some volunteers who were part of vaccination teams. However, within the last few months, government officials have reversed their position and are now allowing

vaccinations to proceed. "We are proud to have our club be a contributor to this global initiative," said Florence Rotary Club president Crystal Farnsworth. "Florence Rotarians act locally, but we think globally as well."

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