



MEAL PLANNING & EATING CHALLENGES POST CONCUSSION

As a survivor or caregiver of a survivor you may have heard about what to eat to keep symptoms at bay. Different food combinations work on a individual level.

What most tend to miss is the meal planning aspect. Trying to plan out when to eat with medication interference, mood changes, and appetite fluctuations can be a challenge.

Like most aspects in the brain injury community, survivors tend to deal with every situation imaginable. From eating too much, to rarely eating enough to function. So this mini guide is here to help you pick and choose what may work for you.

I believe how and when we eat can affect us almost as much as what we eat if not more. So take a look through this mini guide to get some ideas and hopefully get on the right track!



EATING & MEDICATION PLANNING



TIPS FOR NOT EATING ENOUGH



TIPS FOR NONSTOP EATING

"i eat too much"

"i can't eat"



**Concussion
Connect**
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EATING & MEDICATION

Depending on how many medications and vitamins you take you may have noticed that they have recommendations on when to take them in relation to food. Use this sorting method to help you organize your medications and food.

	BEFORE	DURING	AFTER
MORNING			
AFTERNOON			
NIGHT			

We don't have a printable version of this as the space needed may vary greatly! Simply find a piece of paper and draw it out yourself. Then take a picture, favorite it in your phone, and keep it with you!

BEFORE

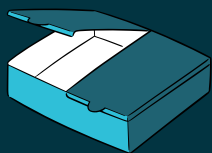
Before eating (you may need to make notes if it's immediately before eating or an hour or two)

DURING

Take these with food

AFTER

After eating (you may need to make notes if it's right after eating or an hour or two)



Use small day time and night time pill containers to help keep organized.

If you are finding you are experiencing symptom flare ups after eating make sure you check out our "SYMPTOM TRACKER" under downloads on Concussion Connect.



CAN'T EAT

Between medications, symptoms, and emotional distress eating may seem like a chore. Here are a few quick tips that may help you!

- Having trouble keeping food down? Smoothies can be a great alternative to help make sure you're receiving proper nutrition and prevent from increased symptoms. (Consider adding protein powder if you are not eating throughout the day)
- Keep small snacks around you at all times and try having small handfuls throughout the day. Things like seeds, granola, and nuts can help us get on track to eating regularly again.
- Talk to your doctor about the medication or supplements you are on. Some have very strong side effects like lack of appetite and can affect your recovery.

EATING TOO MUCH

The life changes after a concussion can certainly cause excessive eating. There are many causes like being bored at home all day, stress, emotional eating. Here are a few quick tips that may help you!

- Cut meals in half. If you're at home all day and find you just eat nonstop an uncomplicated situation is eating meals twice. This may seem like you'd eat more but if you're getting second helpings usually or are eating snacks inbetween very large meals then this can be a better alternative. Plus brains love frequent food intake!

If you eat two eggs for breakfast and toast, eat one then eat the second in an hour. Of course energy levels matter too so consider what you're choosing to eat. Dinner is often simple to split into two small meals.

- The bowl rule. Simple yet helpful. If you are heavy on snacking, especially unhealthy snacks limit yourself to a bowl sized amount. A soup bowl size or small cracker bowl is usually the best size. Instead of eating out of the bag this helps us realize how much we're eating and also encourages healthy eating.

If you are still hungry after the bowl is finished don't fill it back up with the same thing. Encourage yourself to now eat a healthy option such as fruit, veggies, or acknowledge you're hungry and eat a proper meal.

- Keeping healthy snacks available. If you're constantly eating unhealthy options then do your best to limit these purchases when grocery shopping. Even in the car, keeping things like granola bars or snack packs to prevent from purchasing fast food until you get home can really help!



TROUBLE COOKING?

Check out "The Post Concussion Cookbook" find on Amazon!



FLARE UPS!

If you are experiencing flare ups between meals or connect symptoms with being hungry try splitting meals into two or shrinking meal sizes and adding snacks throughout the day.

"It takes time to get it right"