

The Importance of Lunch Hour

By Jill Sherman

What has happened to our society? Having regular meals and mealtimes is a thing of the past, yet it is one of the most important things you can do for your health. It used to be that people actually stopped working to eat lunch. Now, not only do they work through lunch, they eat an energy bar or drink a protein shake instead of eating real food for lunch.

Did you know that eating regular meals would regulate all of your body's cycles-physical, emotional and mental? Mealtimes are not arbitrary but rather are governed by the sun's movement. The sun has 3 extreme positions, sunrise, sunset and high noon. These are the times when we should eat our meals and the time in between is for activity. The starting times for our meals are: breakfast, 5:00 a.m. – 7:00 a.m. (8:00 a.m. at the latest), lunch, 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. and dinner, 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. These times are when the body has its most active digestion and when it can digest food the most thoroughly.

Meals regulate your metabolism. The earlier you eat your meals, the faster your metabolism will be. It is especially important to eat lunch by 1:00 p.m. because your blood sugar starts to drop at noon and the later you eat, the harder it will be to bring it up. That's why around 3 or 3:30 p.m. you are running for your café latte and candy bars. With the increase of hypoglycemia and diabetes in this county, it is more important than ever to eat regular meals at the same time each day within 15 minutes. Not only will it help you regulate your blood sugar but it will also help regulate your digestion, bowels and menstrual cycles.

So getting back to the lunch hour. If you take 20 minutes for lunch and that means without working or driving and eating in the car or reading a paper or book, you will feel more relaxed and calm and better able to handle the hectic pace of your afternoon. If you have employees, encourage them to go to lunch out of the office and they will be more productive and efficient when they return! If you want to be active and accomplish a lot in the afternoon, do not eat a rich or heavy lunch and finish eating by 1:00 p.m.

Even if you are not watching what you eat, sitting down to regular meals at regular times will help you become healthier. Now, think about when you ate your meals this week. Were they close to any of the times listed above? It is better to eat at regular times instead of only when you are hungry. When you start eating meals at regular times, you will then be hungry for your meals.

So be good to yourself and let's do lunch!

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Published in the Southern Business Journal