

How many meals a day?

How many meals a day should you eat to lose weight?

Who knows? How long is a piece of string? How many fleas on a Bearded Collie? Believe me, a little bit of research and you'll discover you have a far better chance of being barked at by a cat than finding the answer to this question. This seemingly easy poser has a myriad of answers, each sounding more convincing than the other.

So what is the correct answer? It ranges from Breakfast like a king, lunch like a prince and supper like a pauper to 4 -7 small snacks a day, with an array of combinations in between. By far the most depressing suggestion is a notion by some super hero that 1 meal a day is sufficient for us mortal beings.

The logic behind the frequent but smaller meals is that it burns calories more frequently, which supposedly *stimulates your metabolism and so doing promotes weight loss*. While it might sound all warm and fuzzy it is alas, based totally on hearsay and is, alas again, as speculative and untrue as the old wives tale that eating late at night makes you gain weight.

Other than medical reasons, obesity is the result of an incorrect diet and not *when* you eat the food. A burger and French fries does not change its composition depending on the time of day. Whether eaten at midnight or 6 in the evening, junk foods are a nutritional 911 that's bad for the system – full stop.

The truth of the matter is that most of us 'fatties' tend to overindulge at night while watching TV or lying in bed reading a good book, and so the big myth was perpetuated. So here's some good advice. You want to feed your face at night? Then eat less during the day, as long as your total intake is the same.

Lest you think I'm blowing smoke take a look at [this study](#). Two groups of pleasantly plump people were given the exact same calorie deficient diet for 8 weeks. The only difference was group 1 had 3 meals a day while group 2 spread their daily portion over 6 meals. *The end result after 8 weeks?* – Nix, nought, zilch and zipo. There was no significant difference in weight loss, nor any change in

anyone's metabolism. Very confusing for ignoramuses like us who now have to question the wisdom of the so-called taught and trained nutritional scholars who feed us with the unsubstantiated drivel.

This frequent smaller meals fallacy is probably also based on the general mistaken belief that metabolism is simply the speed at which your body burns calories. If that is your understanding, boot it out of touch, scrap it from your mind and 'digest' the following (excuse the pun) info in very easy to understand English on the fallacy of 'how many meals a day':

1. Your body needs energy to perform its functions, even while we're sleeping. Breathing and blood circulation are but only 2 of the many chores we so take for granted and which our bodies perform without any assistance from us. The energy we expend at the gym building our macho torsos forms part of this.
2. The make-up of food as we know and see it is far too bulky to be passed into the bloodstream. So the digestive system breaks up the food we eat into **simpler forms of molecules** that are more easily absorbed and carried throughout the body. This is the phase of Metabolism when **energy is freed** and is known as Catabolism.
3. In phase 2 the **energy is captured** and then used to drive the **simple molecules** to build up the body. This is known as the **Anabolism**.

And there you have it. Catabolism + Anabolism = Metabolism, slightly more complicated than the '*speed at which your body burns calories*' as we've always been told. Nothing here to support the theory that 'frequent meals a day' promotes weight loss. Just for interest, it is in the Anabolism phase that steroids are used to artificially stimulate muscle growth, hence the name '*Anabolic Steroids*'

So, there you have it, the truth on 'how many meals a day'. Eating plenty small meals a day is not the miracle cure for weight loss, but when all is said and done the choice is still yours. Losing weight is tough enough without the irritation of how many times a day.

So do whatever creams your twinkie – as long as you succeed.

'till next time, but until then your comments are welcomed.

Steve

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