



SWEET SURRENDER

It is not easy to resist the temptation of downing the great variety of delicious food, such as the scrumptious laksa, the chocolate brownie, the mouthwatering prata and the soothingly sweet sugarcane drink. Henry Lew, psychologist, National Healthcare Group Polyclinics, shares some ideas by diabetes patients who have successfully managed their diet and discusses some researched strategies that have been successfully implemented.

Every day and each time we take a meal, we have to be careful about what we eat. It is a constant challenge we have to overcome daily. We need to control our diet by being mindful of not only the kind but the quantity of food to take. Fortunately, there are some safeguards to help us control our dietary choices.

Instead of Thinking, Start Doing

It is difficult to give up our favourite food. The more we try not to think about them, the more we feel the urge to eat. This is because the very act of not thinking about the food is in fact an act of thinking about the food itself. This engenders an increased urge to eat that particular food. So banish it from your mind and focus on doing something else. Go for a walk or a run, watch television, talk to someone or just do anything to keep your mind off food.

Mrs Tan confesses, "I do feel the urge to drink orange juice every morning for breakfast but the moment I think about it, I just ask myself what I should do next. Then I would just finish up my breakfast and proceed to the first household chore on my to-do list. While I am at it, the temptation does come to mind, but after a while the thought and urge will vanish."

Have Coaches Around You

Share with your friends, your family and colleagues about your diabetes and the reason for the change in your dietary patterns. When they are aware of your condition, they may help by not gorging down your favourite food in front of you or offering you food that you should avoid.

Richard says, "I explained the reason for my controlled diet to my business clients and they were quite receptive and understanding. Previously, I thought that rejecting their food offers or opting for healthier food would offend them. In hindsight, I was using them as an excuse not to change my eating habits."

In some instances, you can enlist the help of those around you to monitor your new dietary regime. Says Mdm Hasli, "My granddaughter actually keeps a close watch on what I eat after she learned about my doctor and dietitian's advice to change my diet."

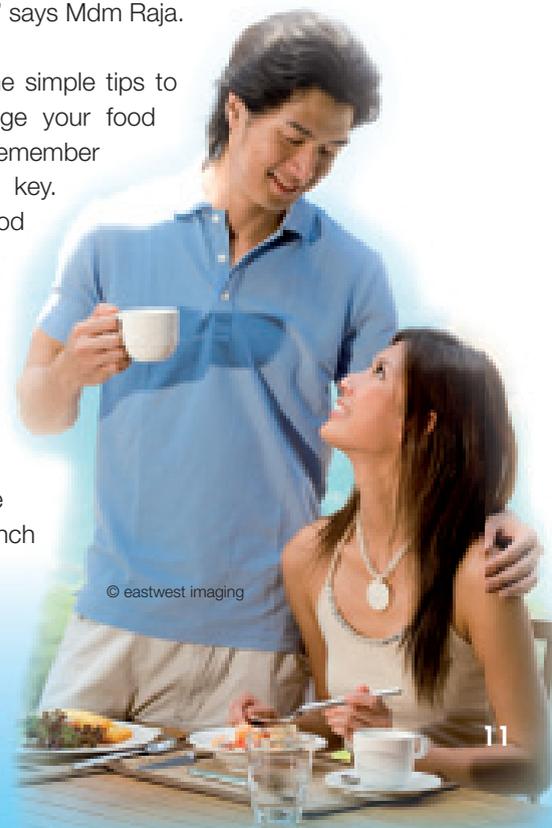
Plan Ahead

It helps to plan ahead to resist the temptation of over-eating. This will protect you from being "caught off-guard" and from slipping back into your old eating habits.

"Just before I go to a buffet, I will remind myself to take a smaller plate to restrict the amount of food I put on it," says Mr Lee.

"After a big dinner celebration at home, I usually offer left-over food to my guests to take home or make sure that the food I serve them is not lying around after they leave because I tend to munch on them," says Mdm Raja.

These are just some simple tips to help you to manage your food intake. Always remember that persistence is key. Lastly, a piece of good news: research has shown that if you are able to successfully resist crunching on that chocolate bar, you will be able to resist the temptation to munch everything.



© eastwest imaging