

5.6 to Meals a DAY

By *Jeremy Albelda*

Throw away that preconceived notion that three square meals a day is the best dietary prototype when it comes to eating. As Americans, we usually like to think of how we do things as best, but just take a look around at the world's waistlines and you'll see that our eating patterns are not ideal. Having lived in Spain and Argentina for extended periods of time, I was left perplexed to why people stayed so skinny in cultures punctuated by hanging salted pig legs and fried bread pockets stuffed with meats and cheeses. These people's success lays in the fact that they move. People in foreign cities may not be as avid gym members, but they walk many miles a day. This paired with an eating pattern allotting for portion control and more frequent meals keeps their metabolism constantly moving and more balanced.

Try splitting your total caloric intake for the day between five to six meals instead of your usual three. By doing so you will help thwart those extreme hunger urges that force you to grab the closest thing to eat, usually being an unhealthy snack that will add empty calories to your diet. By eating every two to three hours, you will help keep your blood sugar levels balanced and stop you from overeating. Another benefit to eating more often is that you have a much better opportunity to take in all the nutrients and RDA's (recommended daily allowance) of carbs, proteins, and fats. A basic guideline that will work for most people minus athletes and the obese is a daily caloric intake of 20-30 percent fats, 50-65 percent carbohydrates, and 20-25 percent protein. Try to eat as varied as possible taking in lots of fruits and vegetables that have many bodily benefits from getting rid of pimples to improving vision. When eating more often, you will even burn a few extra calories by keeping your digestive tract in motion all day long!



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