



## LESSON PLAN - 3

### Tasting Your Calories:

**Nutrition Tip:** Moving Away from the TV While Eating

**Physical Activity Tip:** Buying Shoes

**Behavior Tip:** Selecting the Eating Spot

**Handouts:** (download from [www.scalebackalabama.com](http://www.scalebackalabama.com))

- Many kids are eating too much in front of TV,  
[www.usatoday.com/news/health/2001-02-14-kid-diet.htm.pdf](http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2001-02-14-kid-diet.htm.pdf) (Handout 2)

**Additional items needed for the class:** None

**Class:**

Nutrition Tip – Moving Away from the TV While Eating

There are several concerns with eating snacks and meals in front of the television. A big concern is that individuals become so involved in the television program they fail to notice what or how much they are eating. This is especially true when eating snacks out of a bag or container. How many times have you started with a full bag of chips and at the end of the TV show are surprised that the chips are almost all gone?

A response about eating in front of the TV may be, "But I serve my plate and don't go back for seconds." On the surface that sounds fine, but what may actually happen in the long run is not tasting the food – not noticing the flavors, colors, or textures. When the TV receives all your attention, you are less likely to be satisfied at the end of the meal. You may be full, but not satisfied and therefore snack to try to fill that void.

Another common, yet subtle, result occurs when you sit in the same chair or end of the couch when eating and watching TV. That simple act can subconsciously train your mind that you eat when you are in that spot. When that happens, you may notice "getting the munchies" when you watch TV at other times.

A drawback to eating in front of the television is the family interaction is reduced. Mealtimes are often the only time during the day when the entire family can sit down together and talk. It is a great time for children and teens to learn good eating habits because they have the chance to see others eating a variety of foods and are thus more likely to try them. It is where they will learn good eating manners, and it is a place where they will get reinforcement that they are an important part of the family. Children can learn social skills at the table! The benefit for parents may even greater.

### Lesson Plan 3 (continued)

important. Table time with children can help parents know what is going on, what happened during the day, what challenges their children faced and how they are progressing in decision-making skills ... all in addition to seeing what foods they are eating! (*Handout 1*)

The good news is that by sitting at the table every time you eat (snacks included), you can address the concerns listed above. Sitting at the table and eating slowly, allows you to really taste the food and notice the different aspects of the food. This leads to more satisfaction at the end of the meal. When you eat at one place, you retrain your mind and may even see the desire for snacking decrease. Some people feel it is not worth the trouble to go to the table to eat and miss the movie, which might actually decrease the snacking!

Eating as a family unit at the table has many benefits. When parents and children eat together, they are more likely to enjoy a healthy variety of foods, and are also more likely to talk together and that makes such a difference to kids' health and happiness. (*Handout 2*)

#### Physical Activity Tip – Shoe-Buying Tips

The following are tips to consider when buying a good pair of shoes for physical activity.

- Support: The back of the shoe should be firm to help control heel motion.
- Cushioning: Shoes should have plenty of cushioning, especially in the heel.
- Performance: Shoes should be lightweight and durable and be made of material like nylon mesh that will allow sweat to evaporate.
- Fit: Shop late in the day, when your feet are the biggest. Wear the same type of socks you will wear when exercising. Make sure the toe box is big enough to wiggle your toes and is one thumbnail longer than your longest toe. Feel inside shoes for seams or ridges. Check the shoes to see if they bend easily at the widest part. Walk briskly around the store to check for cushioning and comfort. Make sure the shoes feel good on your feet.

#### Behavior Tip – Designating one eating and drinking place

Where you eat and what you do while you eat can be very important. Eating in the car, eating at the desk while doing paper work, eating while watching television or reading, eating while stretched out in the bed, etc. can take your attention away from the food. When doing something else while you eat, you get all the calories, but only part of the pleasure. In other words, these calories are wasted, not tasted. This week, select a place to sit while eating and drinking. Preferably, at the table, but if you do not have a kitchen or dining room table, or cannot get to it because of all the "stuff" on it, select a quiet place to eat. Every time you eat, go to that place. Do not mix eating with other activities. If this sounds awkward or hard to imagine, it is a sign that you associate eating with other activities. This week, even if you are grabbing a cracker or a drink, go to that one designated area and sit down to eat and drink!