



How Much Food Do I Need?

Follow these steps to calculate your “**calorie budget**” for the day:

1. Estimate your Resting Metabolic Rate (RMR): **body weight (in pounds) x 10** = the approximate number of calories you need just to grow hair, pump blood, breathe, and, you know, be alive.
2. Calculate:
 - o **20-40% of the RMR** if you are having a sedentary day (all classes and computer coding, not much walking around).
 - o **40-60% of the RMR** if you are having a moderately active day (a lot of walking around campus, working on a physical project)
 - o **60-80% of the RMR** if you are having a very active day
3. Calculate: any calories you will burn with **intentional exercise** today – practices, meets, pickup games, gym workouts, jogging, etc. There are many activity calculators online, including: www.caloriesperhour.com
4. Add up your answers to **1, 2, and 3** to determine today’s total calorie requirement:

$$\text{RMR} + \% + \text{Exercise} = \text{Daily Calorie Budget}$$

Divide your calorie budget over the course of the day:

- o Some people prefer **3 meals a day**
- o Some people prefer **3 meals and 2 snacks a day**
- o Some people prefer **5 small meals**

Choose the option that suits you best. If you are used to mostly late-night eating, it can be hard to get used to spreading your food out, but **timing is important**. Spreading out your meals will keep your metabolism high, give you sustained energy, and improve concentration and stamina. Also, if you skimp early in the day, it’s much easier to overeat later. Eat some of your favorite foods regularly, to avoid feeling deprived.

If you want more information on nutrition for performance, read:

- o ***“Game Plan for Good Nutrition”***

If you want more information about what to eat before and after exercising, read:

- o ***“Prepare and Repair: Snacks for Games and Practices”***

If you are looking to bulk up and gain weight, read:

- o ***“Bulking Up Healthfully”***

If you are looking to lose weight or “make weight” for your sport, read:

- o ***“Lose the Weight, Keep the Energy”***

If you want more information about emotional eating, read:

- o ***“Overcoming Emotional Overeating”***

Adapted from *Get with the Program* by Bob Greene

Questions about this topic? Contact Julie Banda at the Center for Health Promotion and Wellness

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