

6 secrets of happy Eaters - Tehran Times

Health Desk

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Diets? Who needs 'em? Not these women. Happy eaters relish food, stress less about their bodies and still stay slim. Here are 6 secrets you can steal from them.

1. Happy Eaters Go on Fewer Diets

According to a survey of 4,000 women that SELF conducted with Cynthia M. Bulik, Ph.D., director of the eating disorders program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, happy eaters are much less likely to have started dieting before age 20. "If you start early, dieting can become a lifestyle," says Bulik. Julie Waldrop, 40, the owner of an eBay store in Crestwood, Kentucky, is 5 feet 6 inches and makes choices daily to maintain her 130 pounds. "I plan to have protein, veggies and fruit at meals. I avoid anything fried; I have irritable bowel syndrome, and junk food makes it worse," she says. "I don't know if it's a diet, or just healthy living."

2. Happy Eaters have breakfast, lunch and dinner

Lisa Dolan, a 44-year-old mother of five from Cazenovia, New York, organizes three moderate meals a day for her entire brood. "I take a few extra steps: TV off, music on, the table set," says Dolan, who is 5 feet 2 inches and weighs 114 pounds. "We sit down instead of standing at the kitchen counter. I take my time—I've actually gone on yoga retreats where I wasn't allowed to talk while I was eating." The rest of the day, Dolan says, "I don't focus on food too much. I enjoy it, but I don't ritualize it."

3. Happy Eaters use a scale, but not daily

"Patients tell me, 'Getting on the scale how my day will go,'" says Ellen Astrachan-Fletcher, Ph.D., director of the eating disorders clinic at the University of Illinois in Chicago. "That's a lot of power for one little number." Happy Eaters, she says, know that weight fluctuates daily and that weighing each morning doesn't give you an accurate measure.

4. Happy Eaters splurge with no regrets

When happy eaters do treat themselves, they don't beat themselves up. "If I want a bag of

chips, I'll have it. I don't deny myself," Dolan says. "Everyone needs Dairy Queen once in a while, right?" Waldrop reasons. Eve Metlis, a 33-year-old real estate agent from Orlando, Florida, builds splurges into her regular meal plans. Metlis is 5 foot 4 and weighs 140 pounds—a number she's proud of, as she lost 70 pounds to get there. "I might take a forkful of icing," she says. And she knows when going whole hog is the happy choice. "On holidays like Thanksgiving, I indulge. I can enjoy it because it's about being with my family," she says.

5. Happy Eaters know women come in all sizes

Danielle Trentacosti, 32, is 5 foot 7 and a size 0 and freely admits she has a blessed metabolism. "I thank my mother for that," says the stay-at-home mom in Toms River, New Jersey. Food and body image are not her issues—except to the extent that other women single her out. "I was at the beach with my friends, and someone hopped up to take a photo," Trentacosti recalls. "All the women scrambled to move away from me, saying they didn't want to be next to the 'skinny mom.' I was embarrassed and uncomfortable. I would never comment on what other women weigh or eat."

6. Happy Eaters exercise without anxiety

For happy eaters, "exercise is a means to have a healthy body and cope with stress. It doesn't define them," says Graham Thomas, Ph.D., assistant professor of behavioral medicine at Brown University Medical School in Providence, Rhode Island, and coinvestigator for the National Weight Control Registry. Happy eaters "listen to their body and rest when they need to," says Gregory Florez, CEO of FitAdvisor.com, a corporate health-coaching service in Salt Lake City and spokesman for the American Council on Exercise. "Give your body time to recover and your next workout will be of a higher quality."

(Source: SELF Magazine)