



3-Day Food Diary



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Benefits of a 3-Day Food Diary Before Meeting a Dietitian

Keeping a 3-day food diary before your first appointment with a dietitian provides several important advantages:

- **Accurate baseline assessment:** A food diary gives your dietitian real data about your current eating patterns rather than relying on memory, which is often less reliable.
- **Identifies habits and patterns:** Recording everything you eat and drink for three days helps reveal eating patterns you might not notice—like snacking frequency, portion sizes, or emotional eating triggers.
- **Shows nutritional gaps:** Your diary can highlight areas where you might be missing key nutrients or consuming too much of certain food groups.
- **Personalizes your plan:** With detailed information about your current diet, lifestyle, and preferences, your dietitian can create recommendations specifically tailored to your needs rather than generic advice.
- **Increases awareness:** The act of recording itself often makes you more mindful about food choices, serving as a helpful first step toward any desired changes.
- **Saves time during consultation:** Having this information prepared allows your dietitian to spend less time gathering basic information and more time developing strategies and answering your questions.

A comprehensive 3-day record typically includes not just what you ate, but when, where, how much, and even your hunger level and mood—all valuable context for your dietitian to provide the most effective guidance.





Food Diary Instructions

Purpose

This food diary will help provide with an accurate picture of your eating patterns, preferences, and habits. Complete this diary for three consecutive days (ideally including one weekend day) before your appointment.

What to Record

For EACH eating or drinking occasion, record:

Time: Note when you consumed the food or beverage

Location: Where you ate

- e.g., home kitchen, car, restaurant, office desk)

Hunger Level: Rate your hunger before eating (1-5 scale)

- 1: Not hungry at all
- 2: Slightly hungry
- 3: Moderately hungry
- 4: Very hungry
- 5: Extremely hungry/ravenous

Mood: How you were feeling when eating

- e.g., happy, stressed, bored, anxious, tired)

Food/Beverage: List EVERYTHING consumed

- Be specific (e.g., "whole wheat bread" not just "bread")
- Include brands when relevant
- Note cooking methods (baked, fried, steamed, etc.)
- Include condiments and toppings (butter, ketchup, cream, etc.)

Quantity: How much you consumed

- Use household measurements (cups, tablespoons, teaspoons)
- Estimate portion sizes (palm-sized, golf ball-sized, etc.)
- Include weights if known (ounces, grams)
- For packaged items, note serving size from packaging

Water and All Beverages: Record all liquid intake

- Include water, coffee, tea, soda, alcohol, juice, milk, etc.
- Note cup/glass size or fluid ounces

Thank you for taking the time to record your daily eating habits.

Once you've recorded at least 3 consecutive days of all you eat and drink, please send your food diary to me at:

wendy@wendylorddietician.co.za

Food Diary - Day 1

Day:

Date:

Breakfast

Time:
Mood:
Where:
Hunger:

Lunch

Time:
Mood:
Where:
Hunger:

Supper

Time:
Mood:
Where:
Hunger:

Snacks Time | Mood | Where | Hunger

Drinks Time | Mood | Where | Hunger

Food Diary - Day 2

Day:

Date:

Breakfast

Time:
Mood:
Where:
Hunger:

Lunch

Time:
Mood:
Where:
Hunger:

Supper

Time:
Mood:
Where:
Hunger:

Snacks Time | Mood | Where | Hunger

Drinks Time | Mood | Where | Hunger

Food Diary - Day 3

Day:

Date:

Breakfast

Time:
Mood:
Where:
Hunger:

Lunch

Time:
Mood:
Where:
Hunger:

Supper

Time:
Mood:
Where:
Hunger:

Snacks Time | Mood | Where | Hunger

Drinks Time | Mood | Where | Hunger

Food Diary - Day 4

Day:

Date:

Breakfast

Time:
Mood:
Where:
Hunger:

Lunch

Time:
Mood:
Where:
Hunger:

Supper

Time:
Mood:
Where:
Hunger:

Snacks Time | Mood | Where | Hunger

Drinks Time | Mood | Where | Hunger

Food Diary - Day 5

Day:

Date:

Breakfast

Time:
Mood:
Where:
Hunger:

Lunch

Time:
Mood:
Where:
Hunger:

Supper

Time:
Mood:
Where:
Hunger:

Snacks Time | Mood | Where | Hunger

Drinks Time | Mood | Where | Hunger