

## Food/Mood Diary Assignment

Health 25

The purpose of this assignment is to increase your awareness of what you are eating and drinking daily, and to notice the connections between your eating patterns and how you feel physically and emotionally. The assignment includes charting what you eat and drink along with your behaviors and feelings at the time of eating, and a written reflection essay analyzing your chart.

The food chart has two sides - one for a **“typical”** day and one for an **“ideal”** day. For the “typical” day, choose a day like most of your days. This might be a school/work day, probably not a weekend day. Eat the way you ordinarily would on an average day like this, but write down all that you eat and drink for 24 hours. Fill in all the boxes. The calories column is optional; use it if you find it helpful.

Write down the estimated amount of each food and drink you consume. Include things such as butter or mayonnaise on bread, salad dressing, milk in coffee (regular, low-fat). Estimate when necessary for combination foods, casseroles, stir-fries, etc. Be as complete as possible, but don't expect this to be fully accurate; just do your best. Read labels. Add up the fat grams (esp. the sat/trans fats) and veggie/fruit servings and note this in the Total columns.

Use The Fat Counter: 7th Edition by Natow and Heslin available at the CCSF bookstore or other good fat counter or website ([www.mypyramidtracker.gov](http://www.mypyramidtracker.gov), [www.myfooddiary.com](http://www.myfooddiary.com), etc.) to analyze your fat intake. Be sure to note if the fat in your food is an unhealthy fat: trans fat (check the label for partially hydrogenated oil, hydrogenated vegetable oil, shortening) or a saturated fat (mainly in animal products - meat and dairy) and check the box accordingly, including the grams if possible. Remember that we need healthy fats: monounsaturated fats (like olive oil, canola or peanut oil, nuts and seeds, avocado) and polyunsaturated fats (like walnuts, sunflower, soybean, or flaxseed oil, fatty fish like wild salmon, trout, sardines.) Watch out for unhealthy high fructose corn syrup. Read the list of ingredients on the label.

Then attempt an “ideal” day, when you try to eat as healthily as possible, based on class readings, handouts, discussions, additional nutrition knowledge you have, or individual advice from your health care provider.

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On your “ideal” day, *try to eat a variety of whole foods, low in saturated and trans fats and with lots of colorful vegetables and fruits. Try to eat whole grains; wheat flour is not a whole grain.* Document the “ideal” day, as you have done with the “typical” day.

Try for 5-7 servings of vegetables & fruits (11 is ideal.) A serving size is about 1/2 cup of a vegetable or fruit, a cup of a leafy vegetable, a ¼ cup of dried fruit, or 6 ounces of juice.

After you have completed charting your “typical” and your “ideal” days, compare the 2 days. Write a 2 page typed paper on what you learned from doing the assignment. Include discussion on: how many servings and colors of fruits and vegetables you ate; types and amounts of healthy/unhealthy fats; how much water, soda or alcohol you drank; amount, variety and balance of foods; etc. What differences did you notice between the 2 days? Did you discover any connections between your nutrition and your moods? Your nutrition and your energy level? Did you skip meals? Eat on the run? Describe changes you would like to make in how you eat based on your experiences and observations from the assignment.

See class outline for the date this assignment is due. **Please staple together your paper and your chart.**

*If you have an eating disorder and have been advised or feel that charting food intake is not helpful for you, speak to your instructor to arrange for an alternative assignment.*