



Your Very Practical Guide to “Do it Better”

Have suggestions?
Email Heather at hwilkinson@necommunitycenter.org,
or leave a note in my box in the office.

Weekly Special Steps:

Sunday prior to game start:

1) Communicate your good and bad habits to your scorekeeper as well as your focus area

2) Submit your team name and members (team pictures and/or logos greatly appreciated!)

Day Before Food Day Off:

1) Weigh yourself on a scale you can use consistently. Knowing your weight change will help in making eating decisions, and will be a fun way to track one effect of your new healthy habits.

All Days:

1) Keep track of your points at end of the day

2) Contact a teammate, and the opposing team(s)

Mondays during the game:

Get your scores to your scorekeeper. Scorekeepers – get your team information to Heather by 5pm to earn your 10 point bonus!

So, you're ready to Do it Better?

That's great! Welcome to the best kind of wellness improvement: healthy competition! With Do it Better, you'll learn new ways to eat, the importance of getting enough sleep, the joys of being really hydrated, and the fun of working with your team to beat everyone else in the game (or at least go down fighting!).

We all come to this game needing something different. Maybe you have a chocolate habit you can't kick, or you just can't drag yourself off the couch and into the gym without some company. There are a lot of things we can all improve on, and it's just so much more fun and successful as a community.

Thank you for participating and we look forward to Doing it Better with you!

Teams

Everyone can use a little help from their friends and this game recognizes that! How much more fun is it to share meals with friends or work out with friends than it is on your own? Your team will help inspire you, help keep you focused, and make you feel more accountable to the rules. Teams can be made up of 2-6 people and can be friends, family, or even strangers. Just remember that you have to communicate with them daily and trust them to be an asset to your team! Each participant will pitch in \$10 to assist with administering the program. Some perks for new members who join because of Do it Better apply.

Rules with Point Values

- + Water (10pts for 2L/day)
- + Exercise (20min=20pts)
- + Sleep (7+ hrs=15pts)
- + Add Good Habit? (10pts)
- + Eliminate Bad Habit? (10pts)
- + Communication (5pts with a member of both your team and opposing team)
- Scale Abuse (-1pt/extra weight check - leave blank if none)
- Snack (-10pts **per unhealthy snack!**)
- Collusion (-20pts for conspiring to cheat)
- Alcohol (-25pts/drink – 1 drink can be had on the meal off)
- Habit change (-50pts)
- + "Goal Achieved" bonus (10 total points for earning 100% of available points in your focal area for the week (options are: eating and drinking, sleeping, exercise, and habits)
- + Scorekeeping bonus (10 points for reporting on time)
- + 5 point bonus for avoiding an unhealthy 100 calorie snack

PLEASE DECIDE WHO YOUR TEAM'S SCOREKEEPER WILL BE. SCORES MUST BE SUBMITTED TO HEATHER WILKINSON BY MONDAY AT 5PM EACH WEEK!!

Prizes

What's a game without prizes? Members of the winning team will win a fun prize that will be announced soon!

AND Each week the team with the greatest improvement from the prior week will get to choose from the prize box!

TIPS – Most of these are pieces of advice from the website www.gameondiet.com, which is what our game was originally modeled after:

Tip 1 - At every chance possible organize your exercise in the morning. It will get your blood flowing and raise your metabolism for the rest of the day. Sometimes it's a challenge to get motivated to work out after a long day at work, so knock it out before you start and enjoy the rest of your day.

Tip 2 - Always have a back-up plan for food, carry around with you some nuts, a cheese stick and a piece of fruit. Life gets busy sometimes and it's important to be prepared for these moments. It will keep your metabolism up and help you to get through that long unexpected meeting and avert the cravings that come with longer periods without food.

Tip 3 - When you know you need to catch up on sleep try to arrange to go to bed early rather than sleeping in. Our bodies adjust to a similar waking time and we can always be caught out in the morning when an early phone call or the neighbor's dog cuts short that planned sleep in.

Tip 4 - Call a team mate if you ever go off the wagon. Too many times I've heard of people blowing a whole days worth of points because they've lost points early on in the day. It's one of the most important lessons to learn in the game. To get back on the horse and not allow that slip up to sabotage your whole day. Your energy will get back on track and you'll be so much better for it.

Tip 5 - Calorie count one meal a day. It is a great way to teach yourself how much energy different foods actually have. There are always some surprises when you check out the calorie content of food. E.g. A large movie popcorn with no added butter is 1283 calories. That's more than half the daily intake of most of us and remember you can get free refills to bring it up the over a day's intake in one sitting.

Tip 6 - Choose your New and Old Habits wisely. This is a massive part of the not just the game but your life. I've seen people pick things like giving up caffeine during the game, not knowing that they would go through headaches, lethargy, moodiness as a consequence. Hence their experience of the game was less than desirable, so they immediately returned to their old way as soon as the game finished. If you do choose something like this, try cutting down rather than out first. And only pick something that you want to give up permanently rather than just for the game. Use the game as a kick start.

Tip 7 – Use a small plate, so you feel like you're eating more. A giant empty plate can be disheartening. Also, small plates are easier to wash.

Easy Resources:

Sleep Foundation: <http://www.sleepfoundation.org/>

Calorie Counter: <http://www.thegameondiet.com/tips/calculator>

Calorie Calculator: <http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp/search/>

An ongoing collection of resources can be found at www.necommunitycenter.org/community/outreach/doingbetter

List of FLABB (Fat loaded and Belly Bloating) Foods:

- Anything Fried
- High-fat/processed meat
- Anything with refined sugar (corn syrup, sugar, sucrose, etc.)
- Anything with white flour
- Butter
- Margarine (or Oleo, or other substitute butters)
- Whole-fat cheese in excess
- Cream
- Trans-fats!
- Dried fruit/fruit juice (high calorie and high sugar, just eat the fruit instead)
- Most condiments fall in this category (ketchup, mayo, BBQ sauce, etc.)
- Granola – high in fat and sugar – unless you make it yourself and know it doesn't have a ton of fat and sugar in it
- All soda and diet soda (soda CANNOT be your 100 calorie freebie for the day)
- Fast food
- Dried meats

Food Rules

The part you've been waiting for! What's for dinner? The goals of the food rules are to help with portioning and directing you to healthier foods. Using the guide below you'll be able to eat great food, 5 times a day, and get healthier as a result. It might sound a bit restrictive at first, but once you start doing it, it really becomes second nature!

- 5 meals per day, spaced 2-4 hours apart (if you go longer than 4 hours, it is not a sanctioned meal!)
- Each meal will have the equivalent of at least 1 serving of fruits or vegetables (don't eat just fruit!), 1-2 servings of starches/grains/carbohydrates, and 2-3 servings of protein or dairy
- You get 100 calories of anything you want over the course of the day, but not soda/diet soda. There is a 5 point/day bonus for choosing fruits and veggies rather than a FLAAB food
- You can eat fruits or veggies in moderation between meals. Moderation being 1 serving between meals. See the attached "Exchanges List" for specific amounts. You can have all the cucumbers and celery your heart desires.
- You get 1 meal off, where you can eat anything you want, but are advised to not binge on junk
- You get a whole day off where you can ignore all of these rules (but are still advised not to binge on junk)

Recommended Foods

Make your calories count with these nutritious foods:

- **Healthy carbohydrates.** During digestion, sugars (simple carbohydrates) and starches (complex carbohydrates) break down into blood glucose. Focus on the healthiest carbohydrates, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes (beans, peas and lentils) and low-fat dairy products. Try for naturally low-fat dairy products, like mozzarella, rather than processed foods.
- **Fiber-rich foods.** Dietary fiber includes all parts of plant foods that your body can't digest or absorb. Fiber can decrease the risk of heart disease and help control blood sugar levels. Foods high in fiber include vegetables, fruits, nuts, legumes (beans, peas and lentils), whole-wheat flour and wheat bran.
- **Heart-healthy fish.** Eat heart-healthy fish at least twice a week. Fish can be a good alternative to high-fat meats. Cod, tuna and halibut, for example, have less total fat, saturated fat and cholesterol than do meat and poultry. Fish such as salmon, mackerel and herring are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which promote heart health by lowering blood fats called triglycerides. However, avoid fried fish and fish with high levels of mercury, such as tilefish, some tuna, swordfish and king mackerel.
 - **Keep in mind when eating fish,** that many fish are being overharvested, or unsustainably harvested. To ensure that your choices benefit the ocean AND you, check out http://www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/cr_seafoodwatch/download.aspx and download a pocket guide for safe seafood (also on our resource list online)
- **'Good' fats.** Foods containing monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats — such as avocados, almonds, pecans, walnuts, olives, and canola, olive and peanut oils — can help lower your cholesterol levels. Eat them sparingly, however, as all fats are high in calories.

Foods To Avoid

Unhealthy choices increase your risk of heart disease and stroke by accelerating the development of clogged and hardened arteries. Foods containing the following can work against your goal of a heart-healthy diet.

- **Saturated fats.** High-fat dairy products and animal proteins such as beef, hot dogs, sausage and bacon contain saturated fats. Get no more than 7 percent of your daily calories from saturated fat.
- **Trans fats.** These types of fats are found in processed snacks, baked goods, shortening and stick margarines and should be avoided completely.
- **Cholesterol.** Sources of cholesterol include high-fat dairy products and high-fat animal proteins, egg yolks, shellfish, liver and other organ meats. Aim for no more than 200 milligrams (mg) of cholesterol a day.
- **Sodium.** Aim for less than 2,000 mg of sodium a day.

A Healthy Eating Plan:

- Emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and naturally low-fat milk and milk products
- Includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts
- Is low in saturated fats, *trans* fat, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars
- Controls portion sizes

Food Exchange List

You can use the American Dietetic Association food exchange lists to check out serving sizes for each group of foods and to see what other food choices are available for each group of foods. Here's a portion of that list, with all the healthiest foods!

Vegetables contain 25 calories and 5 grams of carbohydrate. One serving equals:

½ c cooked vegetables (carrots, broccoli, zucchini, cabbage, etc.)

1 c raw vegetables or salad greens

½ c vegetable juice

*If you are hungry, eat more fresh or steamed vegetables

Fruits contain 15 grams of carbohydrate and 60 calories. One serving equals:

1 small apple, banana, orange, nectarine

1 medium fresh peach

1 kiwi

½ grapefruit

1c fresh melon cubes

4 oz unsweetened juice

Starches contain 15 grams of carbohydrate and 80 calories per serving.

One serving equals:

1 slice Bread (whole grain, whole wheat, rye, pumpernickel)

¼ (1 oz.) Bagel (whole wheat, whole grain)

½ whole wheat hamburger bun

¾ c cold cereal

½ c brown rice cooked

½ c Barley or couscous, cooked

½ c legumes (dried beans, peas or lentils) cooked

½ c whole wheat pasta

½ c Bulgur, cooked

½ c Corn, sweet potato, or green peas

¾ oz whole wheat pretzels

3 c popcorn hot air popped or microwave (80% light)

Fat-free /low-fat milk contains 90 calories per serving.

One serving equals:

1 c milk, fat-free or 1% fat

¾ c yogurt, plain non-fat or low-fat

Very Lean Protein choices have 35 calories and 1 gram of fat per serving.

One serving equals:

- 1 oz. Turkey breast or chicken breast, skin removed
- 1oz. fish fillet (flounder, sole, scrod, cod, etc.)
- 1 oz canned tuna in water
- 1 oz shellfish (clams, lobster, scallop, shrimp)
- ¼ c cottage cheese, non-fat or low-fat
- 2 egg whites
- ¼ c egg substitute
- 1 oz. fat-free cheese
- ½ cup beans, cooked (black beans, kidney, chick peas or lentils): count as 1 starch/bread or 1 very lean protein

Lean Protein choices have 55 calories and 2–3 grams of fat per serving. Limit to 1-2 times per week. One serving equals:

- 1 oz. Chicken, dark meat, skin remove
- 1 oz. Salmon, swordfish, herring
- 1 oz. lean beef (flank steak, London broil, tenderloin, roast beef)
- 1 oz. Veal, roast or lean chop
- 1 oz. Lamb, roast or lean chop
- 1 oz. Pork, tenderloin or fresh ham
- 1 oz. Low-fat cheese (3g fat per ounce)
- 1 oz. Luncheon meats (≤3g fat/oz)
- ¼ c. 4.5% cottage chesses
- 2 med. Sardines

Medium-Fat Proteins have 75 calories and 5 grams of fat per serving. Choose infrequently One serving equals:**

One serving equals:

- 1 oz. Beef (any prime cut) corned beef, ground beef **
- 1 oz. Pork chop
- 1 oz. Whole egg (one med)
- 1 oz. Mozzarella cheese
- ¼ c Ricotta cheese
- 4 oz. Tofu

Fats contain 45 calories and 5 grams of fat per serving. (limit use/infrequent). One serving equals:**

- 1 tsp Oil (avocado, flaxseed, olive, peanut, etc.)
- 1tsp Butter ***
- 1 tsp mayonnaise ***
- 2 tbsp cream cheese ***
- 1/8th Avocado
- 8 large Black olives
- 10 large Green olives

Nuts and Seeds:

- 10 Almonds or Virginia peanuts
- 1 tbsp Chopped almonds or pecans
- 2 medium Brazil nuts or butternuts
- 5 Filberts or hickory nuts
- 4 halves Pecans or walnuts
- 20 Spanish peanuts or pistachios

*** These aren't the best fat choices, but in moderation, they aren't terrible for you. Try experimenting with new healthy fats though, like avocado oil, olive oil, hazelnut oil, flax seed oil, etc.

What constitutes a snack?

Anything you put in your mouth between meals that is not water in some form (more in a sec on that), celery, cucumbers, or fruits/veggies in moderation (See above). Eat a potato chip? That's a snack. Eat a candy bar? That's a snack. Don't snack. You lose 10 points for every unhealthy snack, no matter how small. The idea is to learn to not snack constantly, and to really think about what you're putting in your mouth and how often.

Water

You must drink 2 liters of water per day, except on your day off. You can drink more water, but it won't get you more points.

Disposable plastic water bottles are bad for you and bad for the planet. Please consider a BPA-free water bottle, or even a stainless steel one.

Benefits: improved skin, frequent reasons to get up from your desk, and you'll be less hungry.

Sleep:

Sleep is really important to your health. It improves focus, ability to learn, and overall mood. Everyone will be happier when you start getting the rest you need... especially you! The rule is that you need to be in bed, with the lights out, and your eyes closed 7 hours before you intend to wake up.

If you don't sleep all the way through the night, you won't be penalized, which is good for those of us with dogs with small bladders, our own small bladders, or babies.

Tips for sleeping: <http://www.sleepfoundation.org/>

Exercise:

You need to exercise at least 20 minutes per day, except on your day off. You can do more, but it won't get you more points. 30 minutes is highly recommended, but we know that you're busy, and we know that you can always squeeze in 20 minutes somewhere.

Exercise needs to get your heart rate and breathe up. It doesn't have to be fancy; a really good dance session in your living room will count, or energetically walking the dog, or a great play session with your kid/grandkid. Exercise is easy when it's fun!

For weight loss, try the High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) noted here:

<http://www.thegameondiet.com/tips/high-intensity-workout>

Working out with a buddy is more fun. If no one on your team can work out with you, contact Heather and she'll try to help you find a work out buddy.

Making water more exciting:

- Add lemon
- Add cucumber and/or mint (this is SO good!)
- Herbal tea counts as water – hot or cold is fine
- Add lime juice

Don't try to improve water by:

- Making it into coffee/green tea/black tea
- Adding sweeteners

Transformation or Good Habit/Bad Habit:

You get 10 points per day for eliminating a bad habit, and 10 points per day for practicing a new, healthy habit. Choose something concrete and measurable, so that you aren't questioning if you managed it or not. Also, don't choose something that you're already getting points for, e.g. sleep, exercise, etc. This might seem like an odd rule, but it really gives you something fun and personal to work on!

You need to declare your habit, and if you change it mid-game, you get a 50 point penalty.

Bad Habit Ideas:

- Self-deprecation
- Talking behind the backs of others
- Excessive Facebooking/web browsing/online gaming/television/etc.
- Bad language
- Driving, when walking or biking is an option
- Leaving messes everywhere you go
- Texting/talking while driving/biking
- Using disposable coffee cups/water bottles/plates
- Leaving every light in the house on
- Wasting food/water/electricity
- Starting Fights
- Ignoring phone calls/emails
- Tail-gating
- Judging others without knowing the whole story

Good Habit Ideas:

- Volunteer! I know someone who coordinates volunteers... good use of time and all... definitely small tasks that could be done from home every day... (volunteer@necommunitycenter.org or volunteermatch.org for other places)
- Read more – maybe even to your kid(s)
- Learn a foreign language
- Knit/crochet/craft/make stuff/practice something artistic
- Take guitar/piano/saxophone/ice-skating lessons
- Meditate daily
- Floss daily
- Clean your house/car/apartment/yard/dog
- Teach your dog/cat/turtle/chicken new tricks

Think big! Don't pick something you can't do, but challenge yourself to transform something meaningful. From experience, don't choose something subjective. It becomes really hard to determine if you earned your points! Remember, this has to be declared. **Don't forget to tell your scorekeeper your habits!**

Alcohol:

No alcohol, except on your day off and your meal off. One drink is allowed. Keep in mind that dark beer is really high calorie, as are a lot of mixed drinks!

If you drink when you aren't supposed to, that's a 25 point penalty for every extra drink. Alcohol seriously impacts your ability to burn calories, and it is pretty much all empty calories.

Coffee:

You can have black coffee. Nothing with cream, or sugar, or syrup, or froo-froo stuff. If you really need something in it, you CAN use some of your 100 calories of anything to add some cream to your coffee. You may not get your 5 bonus points depending on what you put in the coffee. If you choose to use sweetener, choose something natural like agave or honey rather than refined sugar or artificial sweeteners.

Soda:

No.

Okay, you can have it on your day off and/or your meal off, but you probably shouldn't. It's pretty bad for you. The sugar, the disposable can/bottle, the chemicals, the acid, the disposable bottles/cans... it is highly recommended to skip the soda and diet sodas.

Day OFF:

You get one day off from everything – food, exercise, good habits, everything. You can choose to do it all in one day, or you can spread it out, e.g. Monday is my exercise free day, Tuesday is my sleep rule free day, etc.

In addition to this, you get one additional meal off, that can last no more than 1.5 hours, and you can have one alcoholic drink. Red wine can be good for your heart, so try to be smart about your drink choice if you decide to indulge.

Every day you get 100 calories of anything you want (5 point bonus for the 100 calories not being FLABB foods).

The day/meal off is to 1) make you feel less deprived and 2) to confuse your metabolism, so that it stays active and you don't hit a plateau. That said, just because you can go crazy, doesn't mean you should go buy out the ice cream section and eat a few pizzas. If you're not on my team, feel free to do that, though ☺.

Focus Area:

At the start of the game, tell your scorekeeper what you're primary goal will be a) Food/water, b) Exercise, c) Sleep, d) Transformation (good habit and bad habit). The idea is to allow you a place to feel extra successful, because success breed success.

You will receive a 10 bonus points for earning 100% of your points in that area each week. Remember, the purpose is improving your lifestyle, so don't just pick the one you know you'll get 100% on, pick the one that you really want to work on improving!

Random Hints and Nuances:

Your 100 calories doesn't have to be tied to a meal. You can have it between meals and it won't be a snack.

Licking your finger to see if what you made tastes decent isn't a snack. Eating bits out of the pan IS snacking.

Can't eat your whole meal every time? Allow an hour for each meal and if you end up not wanting it all, refrigerate it/stash it for later. It's okay not to eat the whole meal, as long as it is because you are full, not because you don't want to eat your veggies.