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Ways to make  
your restaurant  
experience  
healthier

By Joe Condora of Primal Example

When it comes to healthy lifestyle habits, eating away from home often is not recommended. Many restaurants use the cheapest ingredients possible and charge the highest price possible. But in reality, eating at a restaurant is more than solely eating.

**It's an experience.**

Whether you are going out to eat with family, friends, business associates, a date, or anyone else, restaurant eating is a cultural experience that doesn't necessarily require you to completely damper your health progress.

Don't let eating at a restaurant stress you out too much.

We have been there. You can't truly enjoy the experience when you are overly worried about the food.

**Remember: Stress is the #1 factor that determines health**

Stress quite literally changes what your body does with the food that you eat. Stress can raise blood sugar, contribute to the storage of belly fat, and wreak havoc on your hormones.

Ideally, we would like to know every single ingredient that goes into our bodies. Unfortunately, that's unrealistic in our modern way of living. And that's okay.

The best course of action we can take is to understand where hidden ingredients lie in restaurant foods and develop strategies to best avoid them and overcome some of the negative health consequences they cause.

Let this guide help you make the best possible choices and relieve you of the guilt of eating at a restaurant.

# #1 AVOID THE OILS

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## **The #1 food that we have all of our clients avoid is vegetables oils.**

Canola, soybean, sunflower, safflower.

Vegetable oils are extremely inflammatory. While they are marketed as heart healthy, they are anything but. Vegetable oils are extremely sensitive. When they are exposed to high temperatures or excessive light, they get damaged, changing their chemical structure and ultimately changing how they function in your body. When these fats become damaged in this way, they cause free radicals in your body. Free radicals = inflammation. Think of a free radical as a lover that has lost their spouse. A free radical is an atom that has lost its pair. When it loses its pair, it basically scavenges your body, looking around for its mate. This process causes inflammation.

Inflammation is the root cause of virtually all disease. Obviously, it would be best to avoid excess free radical production and inflammation.

One way we can do this is by avoiding vegetable oils.

Vegetable oils can give you brain fog, zap your energy and contribute to joint pain.

A tell-tale sign for me when vegetable oils sneak into my diet is a unique pain in my left shoulder. I assume that I have an old, untreated injury that becomes irritated due to the inflammation caused by consuming vegetable oils.

Pay attention to your body. Do any of your joints get achy after a meal? Does your mind feel foggy?

Most restaurants use vegetable oils because they are cheap and marketed as healthy.

### **How to avoid large amounts of these oils**

- Order a salad with pure balsamic vinegar dressing (not vinaigrette)
- Order steak cooked on an open flame grill
- Order an egg omelet (request for it to be cooked in butter)
- Ask for your meat to not be marinated

### **What if you can't avoid them?**

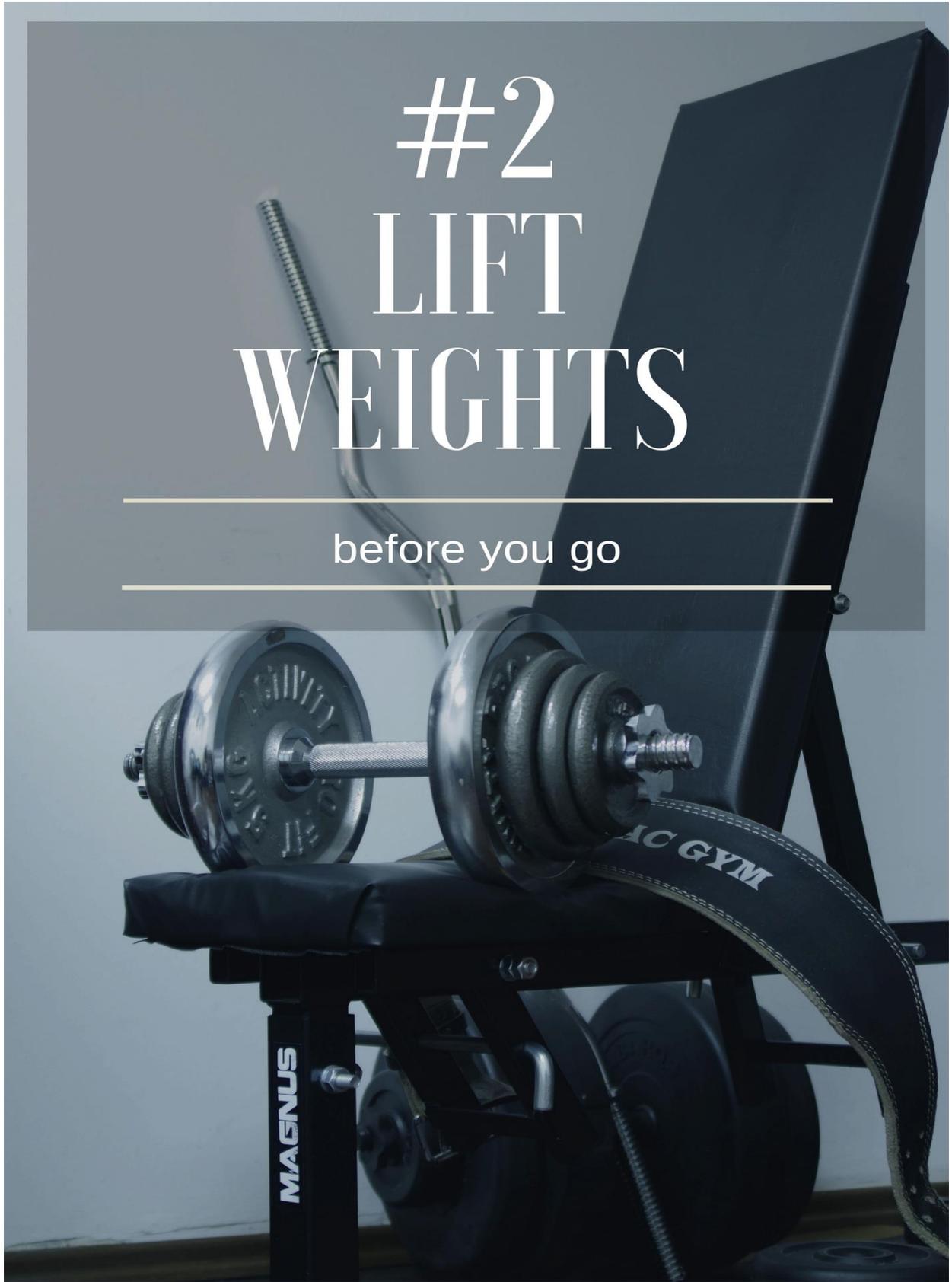
In the event that you can't avoid vegetable oils, be prepared to take anti-inflammatory supplements before or after the meal. Supplements like turmeric, ginger, spirulina, and resveratrol should help mitigate some of the inflammatory damage of the meal.

# #2 LIFT WEIGHTS

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before you go

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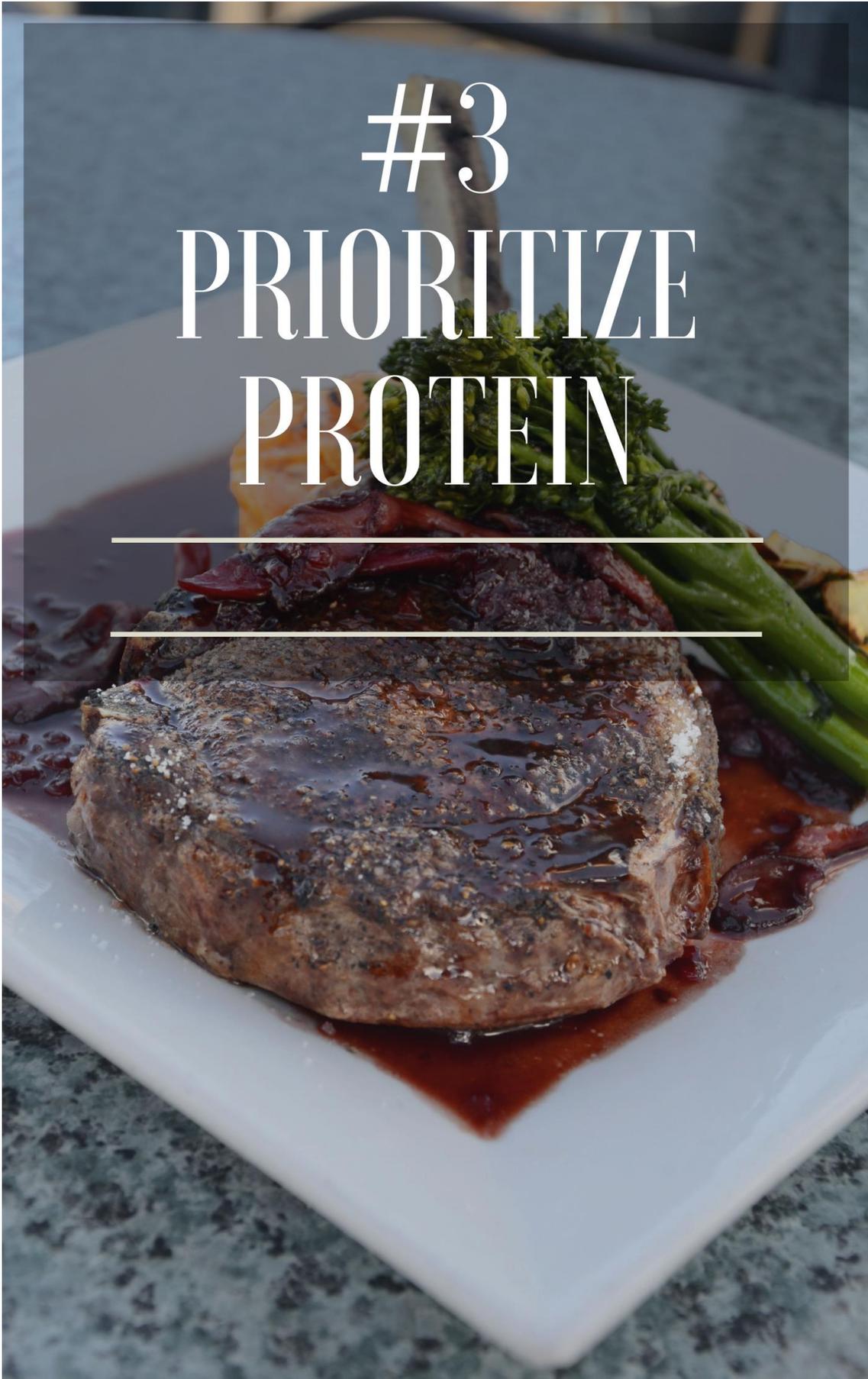
**Another way to alleviate some of the issues of eating away from home is to lift weights before you go out to eat.**

Engaging in exercise prior to eating a potentially unhealthy meal sends a message to yourself to remember your health, leaving you less likely to eat something you know is bad for you.

Creating healthy habits is the key to living a healthy lifestyle. Lifting weights before eating at a restaurant flips a switch in your mind that makes you more cognizant of your health status. Therefore, you will be more likely to “control” what you eat and not go overboard at the restaurant. For many of us, when we do something good, we don’t want to break the momentum.

Another reason to lift weights before you go out to eat is because it will prepare your body to be fed, setting your body up to utilize the food that you eat for repair and fuel rather than be stored as fat. When you lift weights, you become more insulin sensitive, essentially meaning that your body will be better able to metabolize an unhealthy, carb-heavy meal. If you lift weights before an unhealthy meal, your body will be better able to shuttle nutrients into your cells instead of storing them as fat.

The final reason to lift weights before you go to a restaurant is because, let’s be honest, you aren’t going to want to go to the gym afterwards. Get it out of the way beforehand that way you can enjoy your meal guilt-free and focus on what truly matters, making meaningful connections and socializing with whoever you are having dinner with



#3  
PRIORITIZE  
PROTEIN

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**The reason we should prioritize protein is because protein is the most satiating macronutrient from a hormonal standpoint.**

Hormones are what controls our hunger, so nurturing them is our best way to control our cravings and ultimately our weight.

When we eat, our body secretes the hormone leptin, which is known as “the satiety hormone”. In other words, foods that cause us to release more leptin make us more full and less likely to overeat.

Research shows that protein causes the biggest secretion of leptin, making us most full – followed by fat and lastly by carbohydrates. Remembering this tidbit of information can come in handy when you are out at a restaurant. Prioritize protein, feel free to add some fat to your dish (some butter on top of your steamed veggies), and keep your carbohydrates limited (say no to the bread, rice, and dessert).

**Most restaurants have a plethora of protein options to choose from: baked chicken, steak, salmon, etc.**

Focus the meal around your choice of protein and have a side of steamed veggies.

# #4 AVOID ALCOHOL

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while eating

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**To be honest, I enjoy alcohol .... a lot.**

In fact, we don't tell our clients that they must avoid alcohol. However, eating and drinking alcohol at the same time is a bad idea. This is because alcohol is what's known as "first to burn", meaning that our bodies stop everything they are doing to metabolize the alcohol and get rid of it.

This is because alcohol is toxic to our liver. So our infinitely intelligent bodies deal with the immediate threat first: the toxin. During this process, other metabolic processes are put on the backburner

This means that if we eat and drink at the same time, our bodies will burn the alcohol first and store the food as fat, to be burned at a later time. However, that time never comes for most of us and we simply end up packing on the pounds and wondering how we let ourselves get to the point we are at.

Another issue with eating while drinking alcohol is that alcohol can interfere with your body's ability to properly manage its blood sugar. Additionally, alcohol is known to stimulate appetite and contribute to overeating.

Instead of drinking alcohol with dinner, wait until you get home from dinner and settle down before you pour yourself a glass of wine.

Let the food metabolize a little bit first before you wrap up the evening with a night-cap and some Netflix if you so choose.

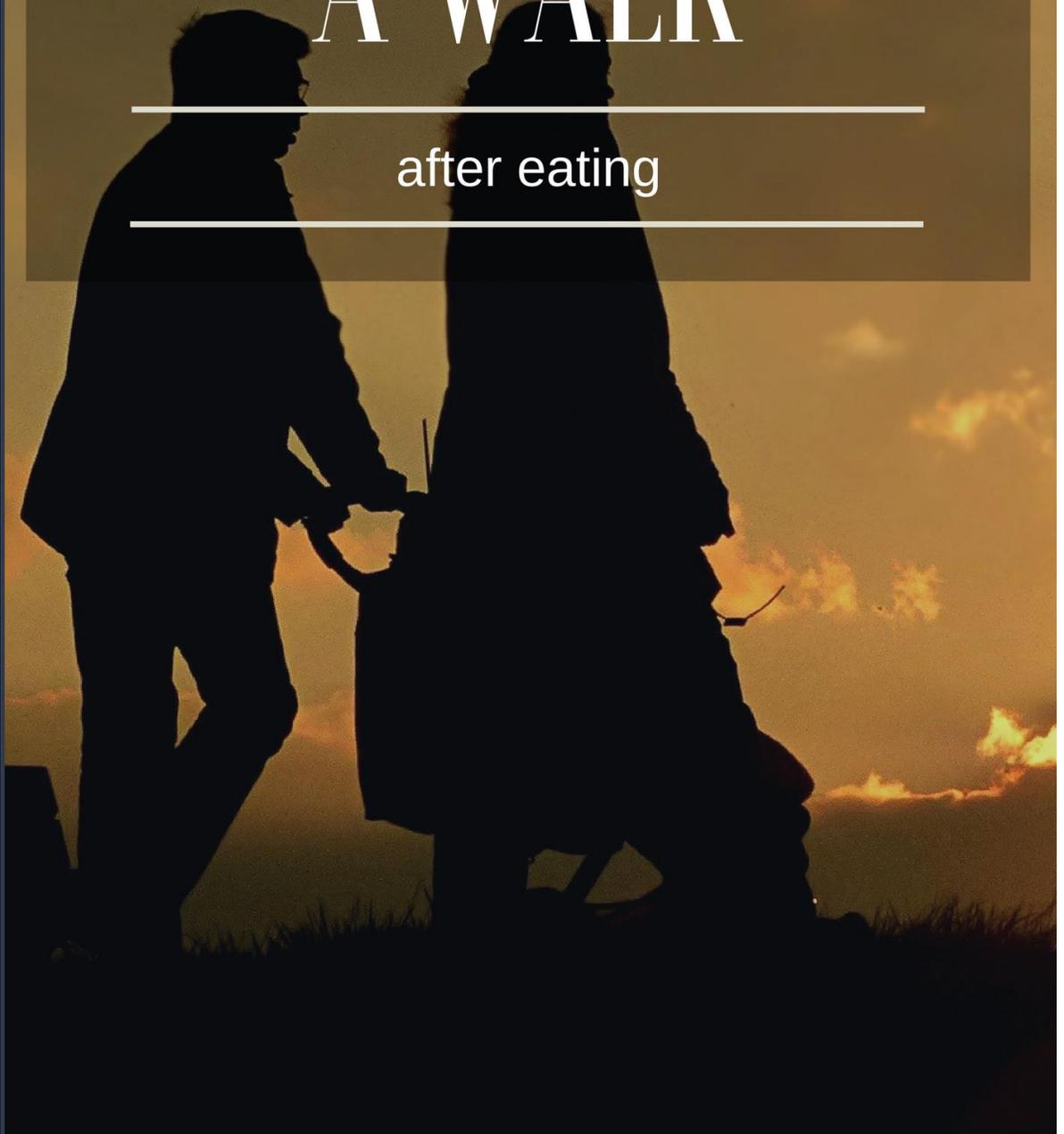
If you do drink, drink responsibly.

# #5 GO FOR A WALK

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after eating

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**One reason to go for a walk after eating a potentially unhealthy meal is because walking blunts blood sugar spikes.**

If you had a carb-heavy meal, you will likely have elevated blood sugar and have an energy crash about an hour after eating. One way to bypass this is by enjoying a walk post-meal.

**Studies show that walking after meals may be a preventative strategy against diabetes**

**Here's how it works:**

When we eat a meal with any significant amount of carbohydrates, our blood sugar rises. In response to the blood sugar rise, insulin rises to help lower your blood sugar because elevated blood sugar is dangerous. Many of us rely on insulin far too much, which can contribute to a condition known as insulin resistance which has been linked to Alzheimer's, obesity, and many other conditions including various cancers. To help our bodies deal with the blood sugar spike we endure after eating meals, taking a walk has proven to be an effective strategy.

A 2017 study published in the *Diabetology & Metabolic Syndrome* journal showed that 15 minutes of walking briskly at a moderate intensity after a meal was hugely beneficial for blood sugar control in type 2 diabetics.

Another reason to go for a walk post-meal is to bond with your loved ones. If you just enjoyed a meal with your family, a date, or friends, encourage them to go for a walk with you and continue the conversation you were having over dinner.

Not only will you be bonding with them you'll be setting up a post-dinner healthy habit and creating healthy habit cycles is crucial to success

Put down the phones and go for a 10 – 20 minutes walking after meals, you'll be surprised by the positive impact it makes on your life.

## Thanks for reading!

We hope that this guide aids your health and wellness journey. For additional support, contact us on social media. We would love to hear from you!

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