



## Food Log

### Is keeping a food log worth the time and trouble?

You bet!! Studies show that using a food log increases a person's chance of being successful with dietary changes. It will make you much more mindful of the calories in your diet. You will learn just how many (or how few) calories certain foods contain. (Be ready to be amazed!) You'll also learn how all the calories add up throughout the day so you can see if you stayed within your total daily allotment. All this will help you attain a healthier, lower calorie bottom line.



### How to use a Food Log:

- Make several copies of the form on the next page. Start each new day on a new page.
- Carry the page with you all day.
- Write down every bit of food and beverage that goes into your mouth -- even snacks -- for the entire day. Do it immediately after you eat.
- Record each food (or separate ingredient for mixed dishes such as sandwiches, salads, etc.) on a separate line.
- Fully describe everything you eat and drink in detail (e.g., chicken thigh, skin not eaten; decaffeinated coffee; low-calorie French dressing; low-fat mayonnaise; whole milk; preparation methods such as baked, fried, etc.). Include anything that you add to your food at the table. For example, baked potato with 1 Tbs. butter; coffee with 1 tsp. sugar.
- Record exact amounts of food and beverages. If possible, weigh and measure your foods.
- Leave one or two blank lines after each meal or snack.
- If additional space is needed for the same day, continue on another page.
- List what you are thinking, feeling (e.g., bored, angry, lonely) and your hunger level (very hungry to stuffed) at the time you eat each food or meal.
- Look up the calorie content for the quantity of each food you ate in a calorie reference guide (find in any bookstore or go online to [www.calorieking.com](http://www.calorieking.com)).

### At the end of the day:

1. Add up the number of calories you ate for the day. Is the amount higher, lower, or about the same as your recommended calorie intake goal? Go to [www.StandUpandEat.org](http://www.StandUpandEat.org) to get a daily calorie estimate that is right for you.
2. Circle the three foods that are highest in calories. Think of strategies for reducing the calories contributed by these foods. Can you eat less, substitute a lower fat/lower sugar version, or replace it with a lower calorie, healthier food?
3. Review your feelings/thoughts/hunger notes. Did you eat only when you were hungry? Did certain emotions trigger you to eat when you were not hungry?

***See how much you can learn from keeping a food log?!***

