Source: Used with permission. American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR) *Nutrition Wise*-Feb 2004
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Q: Should I keep a food record to help me change my eating habits?

A: An eating log is a great idea. Studies show that keeping track of behaviors makes a real difference in changing them. Some people realize they overeat or lack balance in their food choices, but remain unsure when, why, and how much they eat. Experts often recommend that people trying to lose weight record what they eat all day long, noting the time, portion sizes, location (for example, restaurant or home, at the kitchen table or on the sofa in front of the TV), how hungry they are on a 1 to 10 scale and whatever thoughts or emotions they have. All these notes yield crucial information about specific problem areas and give hints about what to change. Some people, however, already know what behavior they want to change and why. For them, a simpler record of what they eat in what portion sizes may be enough to chart their progress. A person could even find it effective to record eating related only to a particular behavior she or he is trying to change, like evening snacks or sodas. This kind of log can keep track of successes, like how many fruits and vegetables were eaten during the day, and foster a positive can-do attitude.

For more information on eating behaviors contact your local **Health and Wellness Center (HAWC)** or **Dietitian** or visit the **SYFYW community website** at **http://airforcemedicine.afms.mil/shapeyourfuture**.

Shape Your Future… Your Weigh!™