

ATTENTIVE EATING

Information sheet



What is attentive eating?

Attentive Eating means to eat in a way that ensures you are aware of what you are eating and what you have eaten during the day. Being aware of the food you've been eating can help you feel less hungry during the day and opt for healthier food choices. Lots of research suggests that eating attentively should help you control the amount of food you eat, which will help with weight loss.



How does this app work?

The phone app is designed in such a way that it easily helps you become aware of what you've been eating. All the features are important in making sure you pay attention to food being eaten, don't forget about previous food eaten and use this information throughout the day when deciding what and how much you want to eat.

When you first open the app, notice that there are four functions at the bottom of the screen: The gallery, the 'snap' function, the profile section, and the audio clip.

The first function, and the first screen you see every time you open the app, is the gallery. At the beginning of each day the gallery starts out as a blank green screen, but as you start recording your food and drink, this will be filled with the photographs you take. You should aim to review the gallery when you are deciding about what to eat for a meal or snack, in order to remind yourself of what you have eaten today already so far. Swipe left and right to scroll through the gallery. Notice the symbols at the bottom of the picture

that show whether you finished the meal and how you felt. The app will send you a reminder 30 minutes before a mealtime to remind you to review the gallery before your next meal (you can change the timing of this reminder).

The second function in the app is the 'snap' function, it says 'new entry' at the top of the screen. After you have reviewed the gallery, you can go to the snap function to take a photograph of the food/drink you are about to eat. First select what meal-type you are about to record: breakfast, lunch, dinner, snack, other or drink. Then select "take a picture" to take a picture of the item. You can also use an existing photo that is already on your phone, or write a description of the item. Always try to take a photo, and use the other options when taking a photo is not possible. Once you've taken a photo, accept it (by tapping the tick that appears) or tap the cross to retake the photo. The app will then ask if there are more courses to follow, this option is explained in the FAQ section. If there are no more courses within that meal, tap "no" and the screen will display a message stating that you have started the diary entry. You can now consume the meal/drink.

While you are eating, listen to the audio clip found within the fourth function of the app (the one on the far right at the bottom of the screen). This is a short clip that encourages you to pay attention to different aspects of your meal, such as the tastes and textures. The more you listen to the clip while eating, the better.

When you have finished eating, return to the snap function to answer some questions about the meal. These will ask whether you finished the meal and how you feel. Answering these questions will complete the entry, and the recorded item(s) will now appear in your gallery. The app will send you a reminder 30 minutes after you started recording the meal to remind you to do the post-meal questions.



How does this app work?

The third function in the app is the **Profile section**. Here you can customise the mealtime settings to suit your schedule and the timing of the pre- and post-meal reminders. You can also look at the achievements you have obtained for the day so far. You can get star achievements by viewing the gallery before recording a meal, listening to the audio clip after you've taken a photograph and completing an entry for breakfast, lunch and dinner (completing an entry means taking a photograph of the meal and answering the post-meal questions). If you earn all 8 star achievements in a day, you will unlock the daily badge! Try to earn as many stars as you can every day, and try to get the daily badge as often as possible. In the profile section you can also choose whether the app can send the usage data only over Wi-Fi or not, and you can also clear images from the app if you run out of space on your phone.

F A Q s

What should I record?

Try to record all food and drink, although you do not have to record water.

How should I use the app if my meal consists of multiple courses?

After you have taken a photograph of the first course, the app will ask you if there are more courses to follow. Tapping "yes" will allow you to take another photograph. After selecting "yes", you should eat your first course (either listen to the audio clip, or put your phone away while you eat). When you have your second course, open your phone again and take a photo of this course. If there is a third course, again select "yes" when the app asks if there are more courses and repeat the process. When you have taken a photograph of your final course, select "no" when the app asks if there are more courses. This will complete the photographing section of the entry and when you finish eating your final course you will be ready to answer the post-meal questions. The multiple courses option can be used whenever there is more than one course or plate to a meal, for example if you have a dessert after a meal or when eating at a restaurant. Try to record all courses within a meal as a single meal, instead of recording multiple separate diary entries. For example, if you have a starter, main course and dessert, record this all under a single dinner, instead of recording multiple separate dinners. If you forget to do this, then just record remaining courses as a separate entry

What if I forgot to log a meal?

The app works best when meals are recorded when you are about to eat so that you can take a photograph of everything you are about to eat. However, if you forget to record something, you can still record it by writing a description of the food/drink and answering the post-meal questions based on what you remember.

What if my battery runs out while I'm out?

Don't worry, try to charge your phone as soon as possible. When you are able to use your phone again, if it is the same day as when your phone ran out of battery then you can enter previous meals using the "Write a description" option in the "snap/new entry" function. You can answer the post-meal questions immediately after taking the photograph, try to remember how much you ate and how you felt when answering these questions. Carry on using the app as normal after this. If you are only able to use your phone again the next day, then do not try to record food/drinks from the previous day, just start fresh and record food/drinks for that new day.

Can I eat attentively in other ways?

Yes! Although your new phone app will help you eat more attentively, you can also follow these attentive eating principles that will help you feel fuller and make eating less easier. See below for more information and handy tips.

Can I eat attentively in other ways?

Yes! Although your new phone app will help you eat more attentively, you can also follow these attentive eating principles which will help you eat less and feel fuller. See overleaf for more information and handy tips.



Try to eat away from distraction as often as possible

Explanation: Eating whilst being distracted has been shown to cause mindless overeating.

People who eat whilst distracted eat more and feel less satisfied after eating.

Tip: Try and eat away from distraction as often as possible, avoid eating in front of the TV, computer or whilst listening to the radio or reading. Try not to use your mobile phone while you are eating.



Pay attention as you eat

Explanation: Taking some time during eating to notice what you are eating, how filling it is and what it looks like can reduce how much food you will want to eat later in the day and manage feelings of hunger. Paying attention to food and taking time to eat are both factors that we know help with weight management.

Tip: Before and during eating make a conscious effort to notice how much food you are eating, what it looks like, how it tastes and your feelings of fullness afterwards. Don't forget to take your time when eating too.



Keep track of food eaten

Explanation: It can be easy to lose track of food eaten. Keeping track of food being eaten during eating reduces overeating.

Tip: Keep visual reminders of how much food you've eaten. Don't throw away chocolate or sweet wrappers until you've finished eating or use different plates if you have multiple servings, so you have an idea of exactly how much you've eaten.



Thinking about what you've eaten

Explanation: Before deciding what and how much to eat at a snack or meal, thinking back over everything you've eaten that day has been shown to reduce how much food a person decides to eat. *Tip: Before choosing or eating your lunch, evening meal or a snack try and think about all the other food and drink you have had today.*