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Making the Transition

A New Beginning

This week marks the beginning of your gradual transition from the OPTIFAST products to self-prepared foods. Gradually reintroducing self-prepared foods gives your body and mind the time needed to adjust to eating self prepared foods. It's important to look at this process not as the end of your diet, but rather as a beginning of your new lifestyle.

Easy Does It...

The complete transition period to self-prepared foods typically lasts six weeks. It can take longer depending on the level of calories you will be eating during the long term management phase, and also the types of challenges you may encounter as you return to self-prepared foods. The transition period can be a challenging and even frightening time; rest assured that it is perfectly natural to be concerned about losing control and overeating when you are once again faced with making food choices. The transition plan is designed to help you deal with these challenges. In addition, the program staff are experienced in guiding you through the process to assure your success.

Keep in mind that you do not need to transition completely away from all OPTIFAST product use. These products are still available to you and may be included as a regular part of your long term management meal plan. In fact, numerous research studies have shown that people who continue to use some meal replacements to manage their weight keep off more weight than those who do not use them.

Body Changes

During the first few weeks of active weight loss, your body underwent some significant physiological changes related to the major change in your diet. You lost a lot of water weight because you greatly decreased your carbohydrate intake. Your gastrointestinal tract significantly reduced production of digestive juices because you were eating small amounts of an easily digested nutrition product.

tools for success

- Understand the importance of gradually transitioning to eating and handling food.
- Learn to measure foods to help control caloric intake.
- Learn how to use the Exchange System to plan meals.
- Understand the importance of continuing to use a daily food and activity diary.
- Recognize and deal with situations or people, including yourself, that may sabotage your efforts.

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As you add self-prepared foods to your diet, your body will undergo additional changes. You will gain some water weight as your carbohydrate intake increases. You should continue to lose about a pound a week during transition because you will still be losing body fat. (Note: you may lose less during the first week of transition.) Your body will gradually increase the quantity of digestive juices it produces.

Follow your transition meal plan exactly to:

- Minimize water retention.
- Avoid gastrointestinal discomfort by giving your digestive system the chance to adjust to processing a greater quantity and variety of foods.

Remember this is not the time for food related celebrations. Those will come later, in moderation, as part of your meal plan.

Changing Your Mindset

Up to this point in your program, you have rarely had to think about what to eat. In essence, you've taken a vacation from food. You can't spend the rest of your life on vacation, however, avoiding all food choices. Transition is an opportunity to learn to eat in moderation by combining new food management skills with new emotional management skills.

Use the transition phase as an opportunity to learn and practice new food management skills, such as using the Exchange System, using lower calorie cooking techniques, leaving food on your plate, and eating in designated places (e.g., kitchen, break room, etc.) . Over time, these new behaviors will become second nature.

You need time to emotionally adjust to your new relationship with food. During this program, you have learned methods of coping with negative emotions, but you have not had the opportunity to actually practice your new coping skills when faced with food choices. As you return to self-prepared meals, you may find you are tempted to once again use food as a coping mechanism or source of entertainment. Recognize that such feelings are natural. It will take time to put food in its proper place in your new way of thinking. The OPTIFAST transition protocol is designed to deal with this.

easing into food choices

Continue to use the principles of stimuli narrowing in the transition phase by limiting the number of food choices made each day. This will help you feel less anxious and allow you to practice your new eating behaviors.

Transitioning Skills

Narrowing Your Food Choices

Limiting your exposure to food and food related cues, as you've done while consuming OPTIFAST full meal replacements, is known as stimuli narrowing. Extending this technique into transition can help you feel less anxious about making appropriate food choices and can help foster self control that may prevent overeating episodes. The gradual reintroduction of self-prepared foods during the transition process uses the concept of stimuli narrowing to help you slowly adjust to dealing with a variety of foods. Following are tips for putting stimuli narrowing into action:

Measure portion sizes to enhance weight management success. "Guesstimating" serving sizes is an easy way to let 200, or even 2000 extra calories sneak into your diet each day. A food scale, a measuring cup, and the naked eye can help you get the job done. Use measuring devices until you get a good idea of

Food Exchange Groups

Exchange List	Carbohydrate (g)	Protein (g)	Fat (g)	Calories
Starch	15	3	trace	80
Meat & Meat Substitutes				
Lean	0	7	3	55
Medium-fat	0	7	5	75
High-fat	0	7	8	100
Plant-based proteins	varies	7	varies	varies
Vegetable	5	2	0	25
Fruit	15	0	0	60
Milk				
Skim	12	8	trace	90
Low-fat	12	8	5	120
Whole	12	8	8	150
Fat	0	0	5	45

The Exchange Lists are the basis of a meal planning system designed by a committee of the American Diabetes Association and The American Dietetic Association. While designed primarily for people with diabetes and others who must follow special diets, the Exchange Lists are based on principles of good nutrition that apply to everyone. Choose Your Foods: Exchange Lists for Diabetics® 2008 American Diabetes Association, Inc., The American Dietetic Association.

Understanding The Exchanges

Review the following menu and the exchanges. Healthier food alternatives are listed to the right (based on portion sizes, lower fat foods, higher fiber options or less sodium).

Key	S	Starch	Fr	Fruit
	M	Meat or meat substitute	Mk	Milk
	V	Vegetable	F	Fat

	Sample example		Better Alternative
2 S	2 slices white bread	2 S	2 slices wheat bread
1 M	1/4 c tuna in oil	1 M	1/4 c tuna in water
2 F	2 tsp mayo	1 F	1 tsp mayo
2 Fr	30 grapes	1 Fr	1 c strawberries

	Breakfast example		Better Alternative
4 S	1 large bagel	1 S	1 mini whole wheat bagel
2 Fr	1 cup orange juice	1 Fr	1 fresh orange
1 Mk	1 c whole milk	1 Mk	1 c skim or 1% milk
2 F	2 tbsp cream cheese	1 F	2 tsp peanut butter

	Lunch example		Better Alternative
1 F	1 high fat beef hot dog	1 F	1 lean hot dog
2 S	1 bun	1 S	1 whole wheat bun
1 S	1 oz corn chips	1 Fr	1 fresh orange
2 S	1 c potato salad	1 S	1/3 c baked beans
2 S	1 brownie	1 S	1/2 c fat free frozen yogurt

	Dinner example		Better Alternative
8 M	8 oz rib-eye steak	4 M	4 oz lean beef tenderloin
1S 2F	1/2 c au gratin potatoes	1 S	1/2 c small baked potato
1V 2F	1/2 c broccoli with cheese sauce	1 V	1/2 cup steamed broccoli with lemon
1 F	1 tsp margarine	1 F	1 tsp olive oil

	Snack example		Better Alternative
3 C	3 oz potato chips	1 Fr	1 c mixed fruit slices

Planning Meals With Exchanges

The Food Exchange system provides a handy way to ensure a balanced diet while still maintaining an appropriate caloric intake. The Exchange System is also helpful in meal planning.

Using the exchange breakdown for each meal, select foods or OPTIFAST products that meet the meals' exchange requirements.

1300 Calorie Plan

Breakfast	Daily Menu 1	Daily Menu 2
1 S		
1 M (lean)		
1 Fr		
1 Mk (skim)		
1 F		
Lunch	Daily Menu 1	Daily Menu 2
2 S		
2 M (lean)		
1 V		
1 Mk (skim)		
1 F		
Dinner	Daily Menu 1	Daily Menu 2
2 S		
3 M (lean)		
2 V		
1 Mk (skim)		
1 F		
Snack	Daily Menu 1	Daily Menu 2
1 Fr		

1800 Calorie Plan

Breakfast	Daily Menu 1	Daily Menu 2
1 S		
2 M (lean)		
1 Fr		
1 Mk (skim)		
1 F		
Lunch	Daily Menu 1	Daily Menu 2
2 S		
3 M (lean)		
1 V		
1 Mk (skim)		
2 F		
Dinner	Daily Menu 1	Daily Menu 2
2 S		
6 M (lean)		
2 V		
1 Mk (skim)		
2 F		
Snack	Daily Menu 1	Daily Menu 2
1 Fr		
1 M (lean)		

Long Term Goals

Using your goal-setting knowledge and skills, write down your goals for long-term weight and health management in the space provided.

Indicate what resources, if any, you will use and what action steps you will take to achieve your goals.

Goal	Resource	Action Step

what portion sizes of specific foods look like. The eyeball test can be used to measure low calorie foods such as fruits and vegetables. However, it's important to learn the suggested serving size of such foods, as calories can vary considerably. For example, a large banana (120-160 calories) has nearly twice the calories of a small one (60-80 calories). Be sure that you know the difference. A helpful resource for learning more about estimating portions is on the National Heart Lung and Blood Institute's website at <http://hp2010.nhlbi.nih.net/portion/keep.htm>.

Set aside time to plan and prepare your food. Busy schedules and hectic lifestyles pose one of the biggest challenges to eating healthfully. Knowing this in advance and committing to plan ahead is crucial to your success. This includes menu planning for the week, grocery shopping to assure you have healthy foods on hand, packing lunches and snacks for work or errands, and mentally rehearsing what you will order in a restaurant can go a long way towards long term weight management.

Stick to a routine diet. A diet that is nutritionally balanced but has limited variety will reduce your exposure to food cues. The one place you may want to include more variety is in your choices of vegetables and fruits. These foods are low in calories and high in nutrition and support the goal of managing a lower body weight. It may be important to limit the choices in the starch group to help you avoid exceeding the number of choices allowed in your plan. Plan to increase the variety as you become comfortable with increased choices.

Eat foods that are pleasant but not overly appealing in taste and appearance. People tend to eat more of highly attractive and/or tasty foods. Of course you won't be stuck eating bland foods for the rest of your life, however, the foods you eat everyday need to be nutritious and satisfying without being overly appealing.

Eat foods that are easy to prepare and clean up. Involve supportive members of your family in food preparation and clean up. The less you are exposed to food, the fewer eating cues you will encounter. Using some of the OPTIFAST products in your daily diet can help you achieve this goal.

Plan Special Occasion Meals. Stimuli narrowing can help you feel more in control of your daily eating habits. Occasionally, you will want to enjoy some of your favorite higher calorie foods and you can, as long as you plan them into your weekly meal plan. The **Special Occasion Dining** module provides examples of special occasion eating. The success that you feel from moderating your eating can keep you motivated to continue managing your weight effectively.

Use the Food Exchange System

The Exchange System is an easy-to-use yet sophisticated weight management tool. Foods are grouped according to similarities in nutrient values. No one food group provides all the nutrients essential for good health. Thus, foods from each of the food groups should be included in your diet each day. A Registered Dietitian can help you identify the calorie level that is right for you.

Ask your staff dietitian for additional information on the Exchange lists or review the lists on the National Heart Lung and Blood Institute's website at http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/lose_wt/fd_exch.htm. Notice that portion sizes vary slightly for foods on the same list in order to make them nutritionally equivalent. Be sure to weigh or measure the foods so you do not get too much or too little when selecting a single exchange amount.

Use A Daily Food Diary

The National Weight Control Registry has found that successful weight managers use food and activity diaries to monitor their intake and physical activity. Now that you are beginning the transition to self-prepared foods, it's very important that you take the time to fill out the Daily Diary accurately and completely. Record your exchanges on the Daily Meal Record to ensure you are following your prescribed meal plan. This can enhance the chances of successfully managing your weight.

Develop a Success Sustaining Kit

Being prepared and planning ahead will help you successfully manage your weight long-term. A good way to deal with the inevitable challenges that creep up when using self-prepared foods is to develop a "Success Sustaining Kit". The contents of this kit will vary