

## INTRO

Hi, I'm Ines. Today I'm going to talk about our eating habits which are changing rapidly. I have chosen this topic, because 7 months ago, I decided to change my nutrition. In this process I was achieving more and more new information about the characteristics and the importance of each nutrient and I was interested to hear more about all this. So I decided to share this knowledge with you, because I'm sure that very few actually realise how much impact food has on the quality of human life.

I'll first explain what's happening with our eating habits today, then I'll tell you something about the modern lifestyle and compare it to the one a half century ago. I'll also point out some facts about people's health over the world and also in Slovenia. In the end I'll present what should be the actual balanced diet.

### What's happening with our eating habits today?

Today we consume ready-to-eat, microwavable, drive-through, take-out meals, desktop and dashboard dining; backseat breakfasts; and eating out have become also popular. That's all about getting ourselves and our families fed as rapidly and healthfully as possible. But we must ask ourselves how healthy is this food?

Modern food has attractive appearance and taste, but it's unbalanced, very rich in calories and high in fat and also in sugar. Portion sizes are becoming larger. Many people don't know that food is one of the reasons for the emergence of modern diseases, especially cardiovascular disease, obesity, diabetes. Also others, which are more common are nutrition related, like fatigue, mood swings, headaches, digestive problems, restless sleeping, loss of concentration, depression etc.

Those eating habits are changing because of the **modern lifestyle**. Everyone is in a hurry today. Two-parent working families are the norm rather than the exception.

Kids are overscheduled with activities. As a result of all the busyness, cooking and eating at home have become less of a priority for many families. Yet maintaining the family unit can be accomplished with little planning.

Just forty or fifty years ago, women took charge of the cooking responsibilities in most households. Many women did not work outside the home, and they devoted much of their time to planning, shopping, and feeding their families. It was not uncommon for meals to take three to five hours each day on average to prepare. Families gathered at regular dinner hours, ate together, shared stories about their days, and even helped to clean up. On top of all this, there were no microwave ovens, toaster ovens or pre-packaged one-dish dinners.

Over the years, women have entered the workplace in record numbers; many children spend their days in day care or engaged in extracurricular activities. Working hours have changed. People start work at 8 or 9 a.m. and finish around 3 or 4 p.m., so the lunch break is in between. Some take advantage of it, others prefer not to, saying that they can go home sooner. However, cause can be that they're always tired after lunch (not depending on the season), so they rather skip it and eat late in the afternoon or evening, when they come home. It's a habit that can run to obesity. We can say that we transformed lunch into a snack and dinner has become lunch. We eat too much for lunch, and the consequence is sleepiness. Due to the excessive amount of food we cannot sleep well, the stomach is overloaded, and various problems begin. We spend the night moving on the bed, not sleeping and wake up more tired in the morning as we went to bed. And of course, just enough sleepy to be able to immediately lie down back and fell asleep.

Another cause for imbalance is the lack of time and also willingness to engage in any type of exercise. Children prefer to eat more and are less active. They love to consume sugar-

sweetened drinks, which may increase the risk for obesity.

They also take fewer meals at home, which means less fruits and vegetables, more fried food and soft drinks and more saturated fat. That's the reason for terrifying facts I'm going to tell you now. Body mass index<sup>1</sup> is increasing. The predominance of obesity has increased the most drastically in pupils aged 8 years, from 0.0% in 1983 to 9.6% in 2003. Also, the proportion of overweight and obesity has increased 3 times: boys from 6.21% to 17.78% and girls from 6.37% to 18.48%.

Now let me tell you some **facts about Slovenes** in general as far as health is concerned in the relation to food. A million Slovenians have high blood pressure, 1.4 million have high cholesterol, a million of them have high blood sugar, 1.2 million Slovenes have excessive or increased body weight. Only 600,000 people are enough physically active and a million Slovenians eat unhealthy.

A research made by World Health Organization says that more than 1,6 billion adults are overweight, and 400 million obese.

They predict that by 2015 approximately 2,3 billion adults will be overweight and 700 million obese. I think that comments are not needed here.

Americans, who are usually considered as a model for many things, will also benefit in this case, but as a negative example, since most eat only two or three times daily. The food they eat it is usually worthless. So it's no wonder that more than a third of Americans are obese. The other two thirds are constantly 'on a diet', which is in the U.S. some kind of fashion.

In Europe, the French are famous as the concept of good chefs, and restaurant owners. But whether their food is really as healthy as it is good? If you look at cookbooks of masters of French cuisine, you'll see that almost every recipe for a dish begins with the sentence: in two or three buckets of dissolved butter fry ... Then followed by a sweet or sour cream and cheese at the end of compulsory.

Currently there are many various theories of nutrition. Domestic experts advocate the most fundamental characteristics of the Mediterranean diet. This model is recommended by the World Health Organization. Unfortunately, general rules present an obstacle to many people on the way to the original thinking and decision based on personal experience and observations. Each of us lives, acts and thinks based on experience, so everyone needs its own style of eating. Needs vary depending on the load, the development periods, unexplained discomfort or illness, but the basic elements of healthy eating throughout their lives remain the same for all people. When we meet these foundations, we can build our own style of eating and healthy living.

The principles of a healthy diet do not respond solely to the question of what man eats.

Equally important is how much, how and when, or often, even why he eats.

It's better to have 4 to 6 meals per day. Regeneration is excellent, you have a lot of energy throughout the day and there is no accumulation of fat.

We often forget that we have to feed and provide enough food for the effective functioning of ourselves. And when we don't function as we want, we begin to take pills and different substances, or searching the causes elsewhere.

A balanced healthy diet contains healthy carbohydrates, proteins and fats.

Carbohydrates are source of energy for our body. We can call them fuel; until there is enough

fuel we can move but when the fuel runs out, the body cannot function because of exhaustion and muscle cramps. It's like a car without petrol. It's better to consume complex carbohydrates, because they give you energy for longer time. Those are for example wholemeal pasta, whole grain bread, legumes, brown and black rice, oatmeal etc. The next important part of one meal are proteins. We need to consume those 9 proteins which body cannot produce. That's why our meals have to include milk, yogurt, cottage cheese, eggs, meat, fish and so on.

Fats should present 15 to 30 % of all kilocalories consumed through day. The best are unsaturated fats, which are in olive oil, olives, peanut butter, avocados, nuts. But we must avoid animal fats, whole milk, whole milk yogurt and all the dishes roasted in oil.

Fibres are also important for Normal intestinal function, lowering the blood cholesterol and a smaller rise in blood sugar after feeding. You can find them in legumes, cereals, vegetables, fruits and nuts.

Above all, we need to avoid larger amounts of fat and sugar in particular foods. Many people think that sweets give us energy, which is partly true, but it last only for short period of time. So it's better to eat carbohydrates if you need energy.

In particular, we need to avoid foods that have a high glycemic index. Such foods rapidly raise level of blood sugar, but also quickly reduce it, causing fatigue.

Last but not least is water. It has no energy value, it occupies the largest part of the body, is the most important part of the diet and it regulates body temperature. A person should drink 1 liter of water per 25 kilos of his weight. So next time you have headaches, feel tiredness, poor concentration or irritability drink water and it will become your habit.