

---

## ***Food Journaling for Weight Loss***

The pen is mightier than the sword – or in this case, the fork. A study that appears in the August 2008 issue of the American Journal of Preventive Medicine found that dieters who kept daily food diaries were more successful at weight loss. The study included nearly 1700 Kaiser Permanente participants who agreed to exercise and adopt a healthy diet. The participants who agreed to keep track of what they consumed dropped more than **twice as much weight** as those that didn't record their every bite.

Keeping a food journal allows dieters to see where extra calories come from, and also to recognize the hidden calories in the foods that they regularly eat. Dieters can also recognize when they're eating merely because of boredom or stress. In the Kaiser Permanente study, the prospect of having to write down bad food choices became an excellent motivator for making a different, healthier choice.

Food journaling isn't difficult. Initially, looking up calories may seem time-consuming. However, most people regularly eat only about 30 or 40 different things, so with a little practice, they learn quickly how many calories are in the foods they are eating. Also, there are some tools that may be helpful.

- Numerous websites offer free food journaling applications. A couple of popular free sites are [thedailyplate.com](http://thedailyplate.com) and [my-calorie-counter.com](http://my-calorie-counter.com). There are also a number of sites that require small monthly fees and offer additional benefits. One example is [MyFoodDiary.com](http://MyFoodDiary.com). All of these sites offer the ability to search through massive food databases and keep track of your daily food intake online.
- Several pre-printed books are available that allow you to manually track your food intake and calories. Several books and websites exist to help you determine the number of calories in the foods you eat. One free database is provided by the NIH, and it can be found at [www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp/search/](http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp/search/).
- You can also make your own food journal with a notebook and a pen. Keeping track manually has the benefit of allowing you to write foods down throughout the day.

Remember, the better you are at journaling, the better results you will have. For example, if you eat potatoes at dinner, make sure you track all of the toppings – butter, sour cream, etc. If you have a homemade sauce, track the ingredients of the sauce. Happy journaling!

---

*look, feel, be better!*

KATIE MITAL PERSONAL FITNESS

phone: 541.306.8545 • [Katie@KMPersonalFitness.com](mailto:Katie@KMPersonalFitness.com) • [KMPersonalFitness.com](http://KMPersonalFitness.com)

---