

Overcoming Roadblocks to Healthy Eating

Sometimes it's hard to make smart food choices. Here are some suggestions from *Go4Life* to help you overcome barriers to healthy eating.

Does food taste different? Your sense of taste or smell can change with age. Medication side effects and other things also can affect these senses. Try using lemon juice, vinegar, or herbs to boost the flavor. Ask your doctor whether your medications affect taste and about food and drug interactions.

Do you have problems chewing food? People who have problems with their teeth or dentures often avoid eating meat, fruits, or vegetables and might miss out on important nutrients. If you're having trouble chewing, see your dentist to check for problems. If you wear dentures, ask your dentist to check how they fit.

Is it sometimes hard to swallow food? If food gets stuck in your throat, less saliva in your mouth might be the culprit. Drinking plenty of liquids with your meal might help. Talk to your doctor about the problem.

Are you just not hungry? Try being more active. In addition to the other benefits of exercise, it may make you hungrier. Lack of appetite sometimes is a side effect of medication—your doctor might be able to suggest a different drug. If food just isn't appealing, vary the shape, color, and texture. Look for a new vegetable, fruit, or seafood you haven't tried before.

Are you tired of cooking or eating alone? Try cooking with a friend to make a meal you can enjoy together. Look into eating at a nearby senior center, community center, or religious facility. You'll enjoy a free or low-cost meal and have some company while you eat.



Quick Tip

For more ideas on healthy eating, read *What's on Your Plate? Smart Food Choices for Healthy Aging*.
www.nia.nih.gov/health

VISIT

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