

A Dieter Who Cheats

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As soon as the word COVID-19 pandemic strikes, the common gesture enforced by the government is a lockdown. One of the infamous coping mechanisms adapted by the majority of Malaysian citizens is eating. Home confinement inflicted by the mandatory lockdown might have prompted the perpetual access of food availability which consecutively turned into overeating. 81% of participants reported by the study done-

by Ramalho. et al., (2021) are overeating during lockdown.

The above situation warrants for effective weight loss strategies increasingly fervent, as overeating has been strongly associated with weight gain. Exercise may seem like a perfect answer; however, outdoor activity restriction imposed by the lockdown makes incorporating exercise as a solution slightly defective.



Diet can be a simpler way to navigate into this predicament. As simple as it may sound, to persevere a long successful diet, strategies can always be defeated by self-sabotaging, as being housebound creates a frequent boredom which can be easily filled by eating.

As such, we cheat. Cheating within a diet plan allows us to hit the pause button and gives us the permission to temporarily break our scheduled diet strategy.

When we talk about cheating strategy, typically you can employ either cheat meal or cheat day. What are the differences between the two? Cheat-

meal is referring to a single meal that deviates from your original planned diet pattern, while cheat day calls out for free food choices for an entire day.

The theory behind diet cheating strategy is, by allowing yourself to indulge in foods that are not allowed in your diet act as a motivator for you to stick to your planned diet. A study published under International Journal of Obesity, investigated upon body's 'famine reaction' to continue dieting and its impact on weight loss in men with obesity reported that the participants were recruited into two groups of 16 weeks diet which cut calorie intake by one third. One group maintained the diet continuously for 16 weeks while another group maintained the diet for two weeks and broke from the diet for two weeks. This study reported that those in the intermittent diet group gained little weight despite losing more weight when the trial finished. The above study corroborates the phrase saying work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. So, don't be like Jack, strategize wisely, choose to be a cheater and be a dieter who cheats.



References

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