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NUTRITION IN ACTION

Troubleshooting common concerns for the first responder

Scenario #1

On slow shifts, I find myself mindlessly snacking, usually on nutrient-poor options sitting around the station.

1. Plan ahead
2. Out of sight, out of mind
3. All foods fit!



- *Eat regular meals*
- *Remember: protein + fiber = lasting fullness*
- *Prepare snacks ahead*

HEALTHY FATS

Knocks out inflammation



FRUIT

Energy + hydration



PROTEIN

Repair and rebuild



VEGETABLES

Durability

HYDRATING BEVERAGES

Maximum performance



WHOLE GRAINS

Energy (or go fuel)

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The Hunger Scale



HOW MUCH SHOULD I EAT?

BALANCED SNACKING



PROTEIN + PRODUCE COMBOS

Banana + nut butter

Trail mix

Fruit + yogurt

Boiled egg on a small salad



+ CARBOHYDRATES FOR EXTRA ENERGY

- Put on whole grain bread for a sandwich
- Add your favorite whole grain cereal to the mix
- Sprinkle granola on top
- Throw the salad in a whole grain wrap



CHECK YOUR ENVIRONMENT

- **Enjoy a treat, put the rest away**
- **Eat regularly, avoid extreme hunger**
- **Pay attention to body cues**
- **Cure that boredom!**
 - Clean/organize
 - Workout
 - Catch up on other work tasks
 - Cue yourself to make a nourishing meal
- **Just because it's there doesn't mean you have to eat it**



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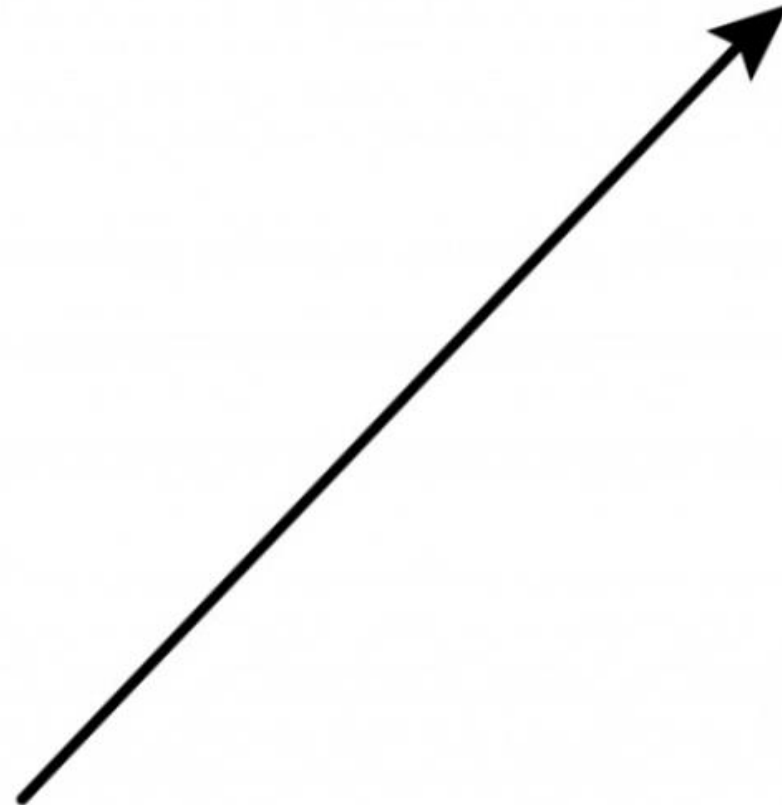
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*One meal/snack
doesn't hold all
the power*

*Make a plan to
do better next
time*

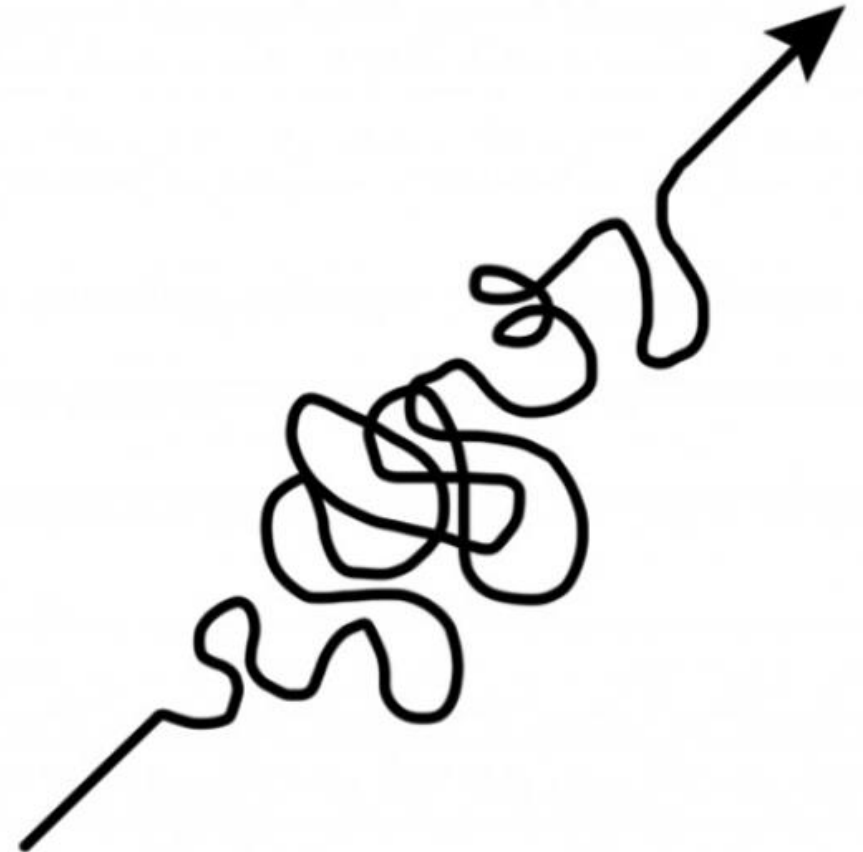
*Extremes are
unsustainable*

SUCCESS



what people think
it looks like

SUCCESS



what it really
looks like

Scenario #2

I never know when my next meal will be, so I eat very quickly. This happens even when I'm not on shift.

1. Protect your baseline
2. Practice mindful eating
3. Create pauses in your meal

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PROTECT YOUR BASELINE



MEALS

Balanced with
multiple food groups



HYDRATION

Hydrating
beverages



MOVEMENT

For fitness or fun



REST

8 – 10 hours
of sleep + mental
refresh

PLANNING + AWARENESS

Keep your body well-fed

- Extreme hunger leads to urgent eating
- Plan snacks (keep on the truck or on your person)

Remember the purpose of fast eating

- Do you need to eat quickly when not on shift?
- What do you stand to gain by slowing down a mealtime?



PRACTICE MINDFUL EATING



Use your senses

- Taste
- Appearance
- Smell
- Textures
- Shapes



Focus on experience

- Eat for pleasure
- Notice body sensations throughout
- Engage with others
- Minimize distractions



Practice gratitude

- Say a blessing
- Appreciate the act of eating
- Pause in gratitude mid-meal

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SLOW IT DOWN

*Create pauses in your meal
to force a slower pace*

**Put down utensils
Drink between bites
Chew thoroughly
Breathe deep**

**Set a timer
Smaller bites
High-fiber foods
Ask for accountability**

Scenario #3

I might get a call first thing in the morning, disrupting my breakfast and my entire day.

1. Protect your baseline
2. Travel snacks
3. Get back on track



FUELING ON THE GO



TAKE ANYWHERE-----

- Granola bars
- Nut butter packet
- Trail mix
- Whole grain cereal
- Shelf-stable milk
- Bananas, apples or oranges
- Protein power bites



PLAN & PREP-----

- Mixed nuts
- Cheese sticks
- Roasted chickpeas
- Veggie sticks
- Jerky
- Whey protein powder
- Pretzels
- Keep a cooler with veggies, hummus, yogurt and cheese
- Nut butter packet
- Fruit
- Tuna or chicken pouches



CONTROL THE CONTROLLABLES



HAVE A PLAN

Keep bars, shelf-stable shakes or overnight oats ready to go



KEEP PERSPECTIVE

One day doesn't command your health. The long-term pattern is what counts!



GET BACK ON TRACK

Focus on nutrient density and balance as soon as you're able



Scenario #4

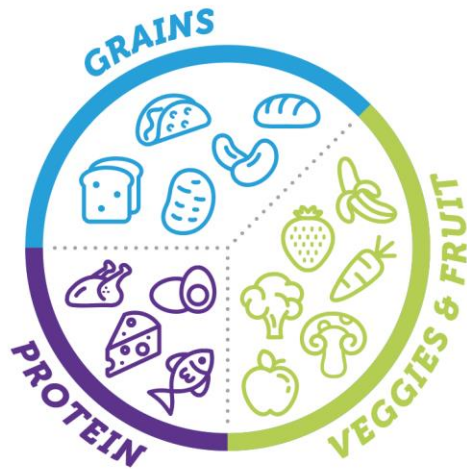
I don't have the energy to cook and do dishes.

1. Ready-made meals
2. Keep it simple
3. Create future opportunities



Simple + mess-free meals

- Can of bean or lentil soup + bread/roll
- Ready-made microwavable pouch meals
- Salad kit + chicken
- Tuna sandwich + fruit + chips
- One-pot pasta (boil pasta, drain, add sauce) + canned veggies
- Frozen burrito or tamale + salad kit
- Supermarket deli meal: protein + two sides (one with color)
- Crockpot or Instant Pot roast + potatoes/carrots
- Quesadilla + canned veggies
- Frozen meal (make sure it has color!)



Create future opportunities



PREP

Batch cooking, pre-portioned meals, stocking the freezer/pantry

TAKE ADVANTAGE

When you do have time/energy, make the meal nutritious and balanced

ASK FOR HELP

Lean on others to help you take care of yourself

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SUMMARY