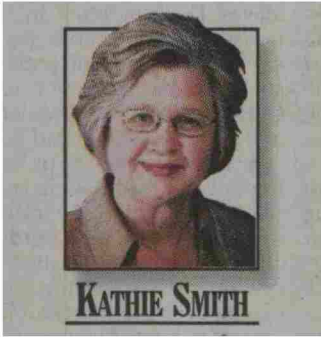


## Healthy foods are lifestyle choice



I just finished eating my brown-bag lunch. But sitting here in my office working on a column about dieting made me hungry.

I'm not kidding.

Fortunately, I could pull an apple out of my desk to tide me over. I took a little walk through the features department and found that someone had left a Lean Cuisine box on a counter-top. It was empty.

There must be a message in this.

Choosing a diet program is a lifestyle decision.



Betty Kelly Sargent of *The "i" diet*:

Biological instincts play a key role in what we eat, how we eat, when we eat, and how much we eat, according to author Susan B. Roberts with

*Use Your Instincts to Lose Weight — and Keep It Off — Without Feeling Hungry* (Workman, \$13.95). The five basic food instincts are hunger, availability, calorie density, familiarity, and variety.

This diet includes four ways to cut hunger, to retrain taste preferences, and how to cope with temptation. There's a Stage I that lasts two weeks, a six-week Stage II, and a Stage III maintenance plan.

Among the tips are limiting restaurant meals because of the large portions, higher calories, and less fiber than home-cooked meals. Beware of buffets.

Use small spoons to enjoy a smaller portion. Dig into a quarter-cup of ice cream with a big dessert spoon and you are done in a couple of bites. Using an old-fashioned spoon, you can take about 20 bites and make your dessert last longer.

Here's advice from registered dietitian Susan Burke Mach, author of *Making Weight Control Second Nature: Living Thin Naturally* (\$26.95) about selecting a diet program. Choose one that features foods you enjoy with adequate calories. Most women need a minimum of 1,300 to 1,400 calories and men about 1,600 calories. Avoid programs that require eating certain foods with other foods, such as having fruit after meals only. Don't choose a recipe-based plan if you don't have time to cook. Select a program that includes a variety of foods with high-fiber vegetables, whole grains, lean protein, and healthy monounsaturated fat. Pick a plan that fits your budget. Support helps keep you motivated. Once you reach your goal,

modify the program so you can maintain your weight goal.

For further help in determining which diet is best for you, consult the American Dietetic Association at [eatright.org/Public](http://eatright.org/Public) which lists Popular Diet Reviews on the left hand column. Among the books reviewed is *Deceptively Delicious: Simple Secrets to Get Your Kids Eating Good Food* by Jessica Seinfeld.

The newest feature on the [MyPyramid.gov](http://MyPyramid.gov) site is [myfoodapedia.gov/](http://myfoodapedia.gov/) where you can learn about calories and serving sizes for thousands of foods.

So much of dieting is emotional or psychological, it seems. Gerald Musante, founder of Structure House Weight Management in Durham, N.C., and author of *The Structure House Weight Loss Plan*, advises that you be the first to order at restaurants. Skip the cocktails, appetizers, and dessert. Always eat breakfast.

Control your portions. A half-cup serving of pasta or rice is the size of a computer mouse. A three-ounce portion of meat, poultry, or fish is the size of a cassette tape or a deck of cards.

Forgo alcohol, which is a major source of hidden calories. It stimulates the appetite. Sparkling water with a twist of lime can be an alternative.

Remember that good nutrition is a family affair.

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