

What's Your Eating Average?

Dr. John H. Sklare



For a lot of people who were engaged in weight loss prior to this coronavirus outbreak, these have been difficult times indeed. Not having regular visits with your weight loss professional, having your regular daily routine turned on its head and being confined to your home creates a situation that holds the potential for weight loss disaster. So I have a suggestion for those of you who would like to find a bit of weight loss success at the end of this confinement period in which we all currently find ourselves.

As you know, sporting events of all types have also been put on hold. As a matter of fact, I overheard a couple of friends of mine lamenting the postponement of baseball's opening day recently. Their discussion then turned to the topic of batting averages. As I listened to them talk, I had an idea, with a baseball twist, that I hope all of you weight loss warriors will find very useful. So, in the spirit of baseball's opening day postponement and my never ending desire to cover all the bases (sorry), I offer you the following food for thought.

By definition, a batting average is a statistic that reveals how good of a hitter you are. The formula for determining your batting average is simple. You take the number of hits you get and divide that number by how many times at bat you've had. So a hitter who comes to the plate 10 times and gets 3 hits is said to be a 300 hitter or have a batting average of 300. Or the batter who comes to the plate 13 times and also gets 3 hits has a batting average of 231. It's just a simple mathematical calculation. By the way, for those of you who don't know, 300 is considered a very good batting average. So, in the spirit of baseball, I offer the following suggestion to those of you seeking weight loss and healthier lives. It's intended to provide you with something healthy to focus on as we wait for the all clear from the authorities to return to our normal lives. Here's my thought.

Imagine that every time you make an eating decision that you are like a batter standing at home plate. If you eat something healthy, you record a hit. If you eat something unhealthy, you record an out. Keep a written record of your *times at the plate* so that you can calculate and keep track of your eating average. For example, if you have 8 eating decisions to make in a day and you choose healthy foods 5 of those times, you're eating average for that day is 625 (5 divided by 8 = .625). I should also mention that the highest you can score is 1,000. This makes every eating occasion a more mindful experience. It's the same concept as in baseball. To the ballplayer, every single time at bat is of great value so full attention is given to each opportunity.

The reason is that this moment is literally the only time the ballplayer has the opportunity to improve their batting average. You have that same opportunity to improve your eating average every time you make an eating decision. Every time you eat something, record it as a hit or an out. You should then calculate your average score each day and then also calculate and record your weekly average as well. And then you should post your results in a place that you will see them often. Perhaps in the kitchen somewhere is a good idea. The goal is to strive to improve your eating average with every eating experience and try to get as close to 1,000 as you can. You could even involve a friend and have a little friendly competition for the best eating average every day or every week. If you strip away the silly baseball analogy here, what I'm offering you is a simple yet powerful awareness activity designed to make you more mindful of those moments of truth that make or break a diet.

Keeping an eating average will make you more mindful of that critical moment when the decision to eat is made. It will put a spotlight on the importance of each opportunity that you have every day to improve the way that you eat and, as a result, manage your weight. The battle for your health is truly fought in that one moment when the decision to eat is made. If you can manage that moment, you've found the key to weight loss success. It's literally the only time the opportunity for life altering healthy change truly presents itself to you. So if you're looking for a way to become a more mindful eater and really want to use this shelter-at-home time wisely, why not give this activity a try. It just might improve your ability to keep your eye on the weight loss ball whether it's a home game, as it is now, or an away game, as it will eventually become. So I ask you - are you ready to improve your current eating average? If so, step up to the plate, make your next eating decision a healthy one and record your first hit!

Wishing You Great Health!

Dr. John H. Sklare