

PART 3

Eat better every day

- ✿ **Month 2 goal** Create a positive relationship with food.
- ✿ **Payoff** A smaller number on the scale, less angst over what to eat or avoid

In Month 1, you learned skills to jump-start your healthy eating. Stick with them now as you **develop tactics that will help you combat obstacles** (dessert trays, late nights) and stay the course. We're confident you'll end the month wiser, leaner and happier about all things food-related. So step up to the plate and show the world you mean business when it comes to devising an eating plan that works for your body and your life.



Happy meals
Keep a food diary and enter to win prizes at www.self.com/challenge.

WEEK 1

Recruit a friend

If you haven't yet enticed a buddy to join the Challenge (send an e-card to one at www.self.com/challenge), here's an incentive: A study in the *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* showed that **people who dieted with a friend lost 33 percent more weight than those who went it alone**. A buddy can also keep you focused, says nutrition expert **Lisa Young, Ph.D.**, at New York University in New York City. Find like-minded noshers at SelfDietClub.com.

WEEK 2

Don't be swayed

This week's assignment is to battle your inner pushover and stand up to those who would thwart you. **If a pal proposes the diner for lunch, suggest a healthier spot**, says Janis Jibrin, R.D., a SELF contributor in Washington, D.C. Don't be afraid to ask for dressing on the side or veggies instead of fries. Finally, keep your refusal to food pushers short and firm: "No, thank you, I'm trying to eat better." Then change the subject or otherwise signal that the answer is final.

WEEK 3

Plan ahead

Avoid the work-late Skittles raid by doing some strategizing. Dieters who used meal plans and shopping lists (another SelfDietClub.com bonus) lost 30 percent more weight than those who only received eating advice, reports the *International Journal of Obesity*. **Plan all meals and snacks on the Sunday before** Week 3 begins, and shop for healthy ingredients and nibbles in advance. Also follow the advice from Weeks 1 and 2.

WEEK 4

Make eating fun

Ever thought "Carbs are evil," "I'm bad for eating a Krispy Kreme breakfast" or the like? "This thinking isn't healthy," Young says. "Guilt about food often leads to overeating." If your meals and snacks are prefaced by "I can't" or "I shouldn't," your eating plan is in need of some positive-affirmation therapy. **This week, give yourself a guilt-free night**. Create a fun eating experience—no regrets allowed. Follow the tips in Weeks 1, 2 and 3, as well.



RECIPE OF THE MONTH Easy fish tacos

FOR THE SALSA: 1 mango; 2 plum tomatoes; 1/4 cup chopped cilantro; 1 lime; 1 onion

FOR THE FILLING: 1 lb halibut (or other flaky whitefish); 2 tbsp canola oil; 1 tbsp lime juice; 1/2 tsp chili powder; 1 cup shredded green cabbage; four 6-inch whole-wheat tortillas; 4 oz nonfat sour cream; 1 can (16 oz) lowfat refried beans

For the salsa: Dice mango, tomatoes and onion; mix with cilantro and juice from the lime. For the tacos: Preheat grill. Cut fish into 4 pieces. Whisk together oil, lime juice, chili powder. Brush mixture onto both sides of each fillet; season with salt and pepper. Grill 3 to 4 minutes on each side until cooked through. Fill each tortilla with 1 fillet, flaked into pieces, and 1/4 cup each cabbage and salsa; top with 2 tbsp sour cream. Serve with 1/2 cup beans. Serves 4. Nutritional analysis per serving: 441 calories, 11 g fat (2 g saturated fat), 58 g carbohydrates, 34 g protein, 11 g fiber