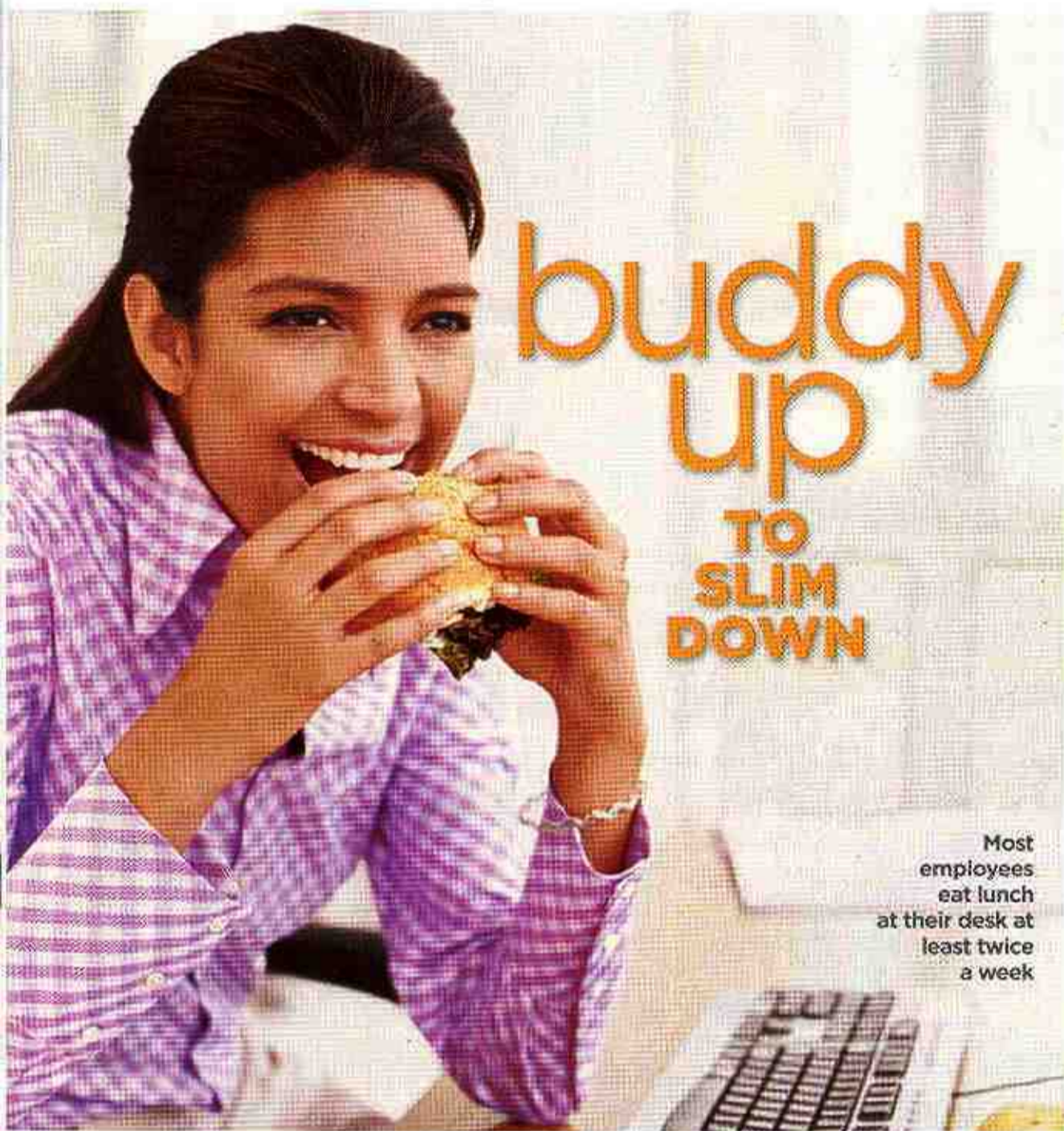


THIS MONTH'S GOAL

beat office bulge

More than 70 percent of women say their job undermines their healthy eating goals. Minimize your bottom line with these tips. BY WINNIE YU SCHERER



Most employees eat lunch at their desk at least twice a week

THE LUNCH YOU SHOULD BE EATING

Breakfast may be the most important meal, but lunch comes in a close second. "What you eat can determine how much energy you'll have for the rest of the day and whether you'll overdo it at dinner," says Marisa Moore, R.D., a spokeswoman for the American Dietetic Association. These suggestions will keep you satisfied no matter what you have on your agenda.

1 You're hitting the gym at noon Have a 100- to 150-calorie snack, like a cup of lowfat yogurt, an hour before your workout. Afterward, refuel with a green salad topped with lean meat, such as grilled chicken or tuna. "The fiber in the vegetables fills you up, while the protein keeps fatigue at bay," says Moore. "Also make sure to rehydrate with at least one cup of water."

2 You don't have time to fit in a real meal Give yourself permission to graze—healthfully. "Stock your desk with nutritious 200-calorie mini-meals and have one every three to four hours to fend off hunger," says Moore. Good picks: a packet of oatmeal topped with seven walnut halves (194 calories) or a cup of applesauce and a quarter cup of raisins (213 calories).

3 Your post-work plans include beers and burgers If you have a splurge in store, you may be tempted to skimp on lunch to save calories. But that approach will only lead to a binge. "Instead, have a midday meal of a cup of vegetable soup and half a sandwich, like turkey and avocado on whole wheat," says Moore. "Then eat the other half around 3 or 4 p.m. so you won't be ravenous at the restaurant."

➤ You know how projects get finished faster when you work as a team? Well, the same principle applies to your waistline. Brown University researchers found that people who started a weight-loss plan with a friend shed more pounds than those who went it alone. "The office is an ideal place to find a diet partner," says Indira Paharia, Psy.D., a psychologist with Regence BlueCross BlueShield in Portland, Oregon. Follow her rules for on-the-job success.

DO enlist your equals Pairing up with subordinates or your boss could result in awkward self-disclosures, says Paharia.

DON'T forget you're at work Limit most weight-loss conversations to lunch hour so it doesn't make other co-workers feel excluded.

DO keep it friendly Focus on goals, like taking the stairs instead of the elevator, rather than on who's shedding the most pounds.

NIX YOUR 3 WORST HABITS

When you think back on your workday, that second slice of birthday cake you ate probably stands out as your most glaring dietary slip-up. "But it's the little mistakes in your routine that pack on the most pounds," says Atlanta nutritionist Marisa Moore, R.D. See which behaviors may be thwarting your goals—and how to fix them.

OLD HABIT You bring a whole week's worth of healthy snacks to the office, but they're all gone by Wednesday.

NEW HABIT Divvy up your treats in portion-controlled bags at home and grab one every morning as you head out the door. Or pick up a box of 100-calorie snack packs and take one to work with you every day; they may be more expensive than snacks bought in bulk, but they're a worthwhile investment in your health.

OLD HABIT You grab a hot dog a few times a week because it's cheap and fast.

NEW HABIT Scout out these nutritious fast-food choices: a baked potato and chili (460 calories, 7 grams of fat) from

Wendy's; a Fresco Steak Burrito Supreme (330 calories, 8 grams of fat) from Taco Bell; and a Premium Grilled Chicken Classic Sandwich (420 calories, 10 grams of fat) from McDonald's.

OLD HABIT One of your lunchtime staples is the premade chef's salad—loaded with extras—from the deli.

NEW HABIT Even if you hold half the dressing, this meat-and-cheese bomb can weigh in at nearly 900 calories and 70 grams of fat. Instead of opting for the premade salad, belly up to the salad bar and pile on the greens, vegetables, beans, and lean protein. "Just go easy on calorie-dense toppings," says Moore, "like cheese, croutons, and full-fat dressing."

the smart employee's guide to snacking

"Eating between meals can fight off fatigue and hunger," says Tara Gidus, R.D., a nutrition coach at the Human Performance Institute in Orlando, Florida. "But too often, stress or convenience dictates what we reach for, resulting in high-calorie choices." Here, her rundown of waistline-friendly picks.

IN THE VENDING MACHINE		AT THE CONVENIENCE STORE		FROM THE COFFEE CART	
SunChips	Quaker Chewy Granola Bar	dried apricots	roasted pistachios	almond biscotti	nonfat latte
140 calories 6 grams of fat per ½-ounce serving	100 calories 3 grams of fat	106 calories <1 gram of fat per half cup	158 calories 13 grams of fat for about 50 nuts	145 calories 6 grams of fat	100 calories 0 grams of fat per 12-ounce cup
Each bag has a third less fat than regular potato chips, plus 2 grams of fiber.	This whole-grain treat will satisfy your sweet tooth for about 8 grams of sugar.	Satisfyingly chewy, these fruits contain plenty of vision-boosting vitamins.	Having to shell them prevents you from gobbling them down too quickly.	Choose this over a blueberry muffin and you'll save at least 300 calories.	This frothy drink contains 10 grams of protein and a third of your daily calcium quota.