

the school-run, then you're busy and so you'll find sticking to a plan a lot easier.

"In contrast, sitting at home in front of the TV is a recipe for disaster — you need to be conscious of what you're eating and why.

"There is a rule in my house," Siobhan also explains. "There is absolutely no eating on the couch. In fact, the only thing that's allowed in your hand when you're watching television is a cup of tea. Everything else is off limits."

The reason I've put on weight recently is at least pretty clear-cut: I've been lazy, I've been indulgent, and I've been full of excuses. My daughter is 19-months-old and her toddlerhood demands have left me pretty exhausted. And exhaustion, as I've discovered, only ever leads me to the biscuit tin.

"If you're tired and run-down, your body is more inclined to crave something sweet or fatty. But everyone needs to know how to whip up really quick, nutritious meals," advises Siobhan. "Everyone should have a stash of vegetables in the freezer. Eggs are versatile and an omelette takes minutes. It's a great idea too to make a little bit extra food that you know can be frozen until next week. Soup can be made in advance and heated up in the evening.

"But ultimately, we could all make excuses — you just have to prioritise your health."

For years, I've been a dairy-shy vegetarian. It should be a recipe for vitality, but let's not forget

that chips, bread, crisps, pasta and noodles (things I love, incidentally) are all vegan-friendly foods.

About six years ago, deciding that my vegetarianism should come with a couple of liberal terms and conditions, I took up fish again.

I don't think of myself as being a particularly picky eater — I eat eggs and fish, just no meat and no dairy — but in vogue eating plans like the meat-heavy Atkins, Dukan and Paleo have rarely catered for my dietary preferences.

"Finding the right diet for you is all about finding food you like and the meals that you could see yourself eating long-term," says Siobhan. "Everyone has their own preferences; their likes and dislikes when it comes to food. You need to listen to your body, ensure you're getting a good balance of carbohydrates, good fats and protein, and ensure you're avoiding processed sugars."

And for latent overeaters like me, she has some tips: "Use a side-plate rather than a regular dinner-plate. Don't try to make your day-to-day meals too delicious — keep them quick and easy. And don't go back for seconds because you don't need it."

Starting tomorrow, Siobhan is asking us together to commit to

four weeks of healthy, clean eating so that we can really look and feel amazing by the time Christmas Day comes around. I know that this year, I don't want to be bursting out of my festive attire by lunchtime, and I don't want to be diving behind the couch when someone takes out a camera. So between now and Christmas Eve,

I'll be tucking into three meals a day, plus two snacks as well as completing fast fat-burning workouts in our own living rooms.

I already have my eye on the ultimate party season little black dress — and am determined to wear it in a size 10 by the end of next month.

"This programme is not a quick-fix" warns Siobhan, "we're going to encourage you to eat more and to eat more regularly — because women in particular are prone to starving themselves during the day so they can have a blow-out every evening — but we're also going to become better at putting the fork down when we're full.

"We're creating something maintainable that you'll continue with indefinitely."

So it's goodbye to takeaways and wine, and hello to clean eating and exercise. For all of us together, our Little Black Dress diet overhaul is about to begin.



THE FOOD RULES

1 Three balanced meals a day and two snacks. Aim to eat every three hours.

2 The most important rule is prepare, prepare, prepare. If you are to eat three well-balanced meals and two snacks daily, you will need to be very organised and have your meals prepared in advance. I cook every Sunday and Wednesday — soups, stews, chilli and loads of chicken breasts.

3 Each meal must have a healthy protein, fat and carbohydrate source. Lean meats like turkey, chicken and fish are good sources of protein. Eggs are one of the best foods you can eat. Good carbohydrates are sweet potato, butternut squash, pearl barley or brown rice. Go easy on the carbs, 2 tbsp is a good rule. Good fats are olive oil, coconut oil, avocado, nuts and nut butters. See panel for meal options.

4 Once a week, you can have a cheat meal. Not a cheat day, a cheat meal. Make life easy on yourself and have it on a Sunday evening. Cheat meals on a Friday tend to turn into cheat weekends. You can have whatever you want but make sure that you also have your balanced meal.

5 If you like fruit, stick to berries or a green apple. Portion size is a handful.

6 Drink 2-3 litres of water a day.



SIOBHAN'S MEAL PLAN OPTIONS

Breakfast (6 options):

- Scrambled egg with avocado + 1 slice wholemeal toast
- Oats with coconut milk and cinnamon
- Smoked Salmon + 1 slice Rye Bread
- Omelette 2eggs with Spinach +Feta
- 2 Pancakes (to fit in palm of hand)
- 2eggs, 2tbsp Coconut oil, 5tbsp Almond milk (unsweetened), 1 1/2 banana, 1/2 tsp vanilla extract, 2tbsp Coconut Flour, 1/4 tsp baking powder, 1tsp cinnamon + berries

Snacks (5 options):

- 2 Oatcakes with Nut Butter
- Handful Nuts + Berries
- Protein Shake
- Fruit + Greek Yoghurt
- Carrot sticks +Hummus

Lunch (5 options):

- Wholemeal Pita, Chicken + Salad
- Salad with Prawns + Avocado
- Turkey (with minced turkey, peppers, onion, tomato) + guacamole Burger
- Salmon Cakes (with almond flour, salmon, 2 eggs, paprika, coriander, celery chopped)
- Veggie Option: Roasted Veg, Seeds + 1/2 avocado with Omelette

Dinner (6 options):

- Salmon fillet with Sweet Potato + side salad
- Grilled Chicken breast with Wholemeal Wrap + home made salsa + salad
- Mackerel with Greens
- Veg Option: Chickpeas + lentils stew
- Chickpeas + Red lentils, chopped tomatoes, garlic, onion + Veg
- Diced Chicken with Brown Rice, Veg with pine nuts



Seven day plan:

- TODAY:** get your food ready
- TUESDAY:** Tabata exercises page 14
- WEDNESDAY:** Cardio - interval sprints (run for 30 sec-

- onds, walk for 90 x 10), vigorous walk or other cardio activity
- THURSDAY:** Tabata
- FRIDAY:** Cardio
- SATURDAY:** Tabata
- SUNDAY:** Rest day and cheat meal

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