

eat lunch because...

You'll be more alert

A lunch break gives your brain time out from the cognitive and emotional demands of your work. "Mental concentration is similar to a muscle. It becomes fatigued after sustained use and needs a rest period to recover," says John Trougakos, assistant professor of organisational behaviour at the University of Toronto.

You'll have more energy

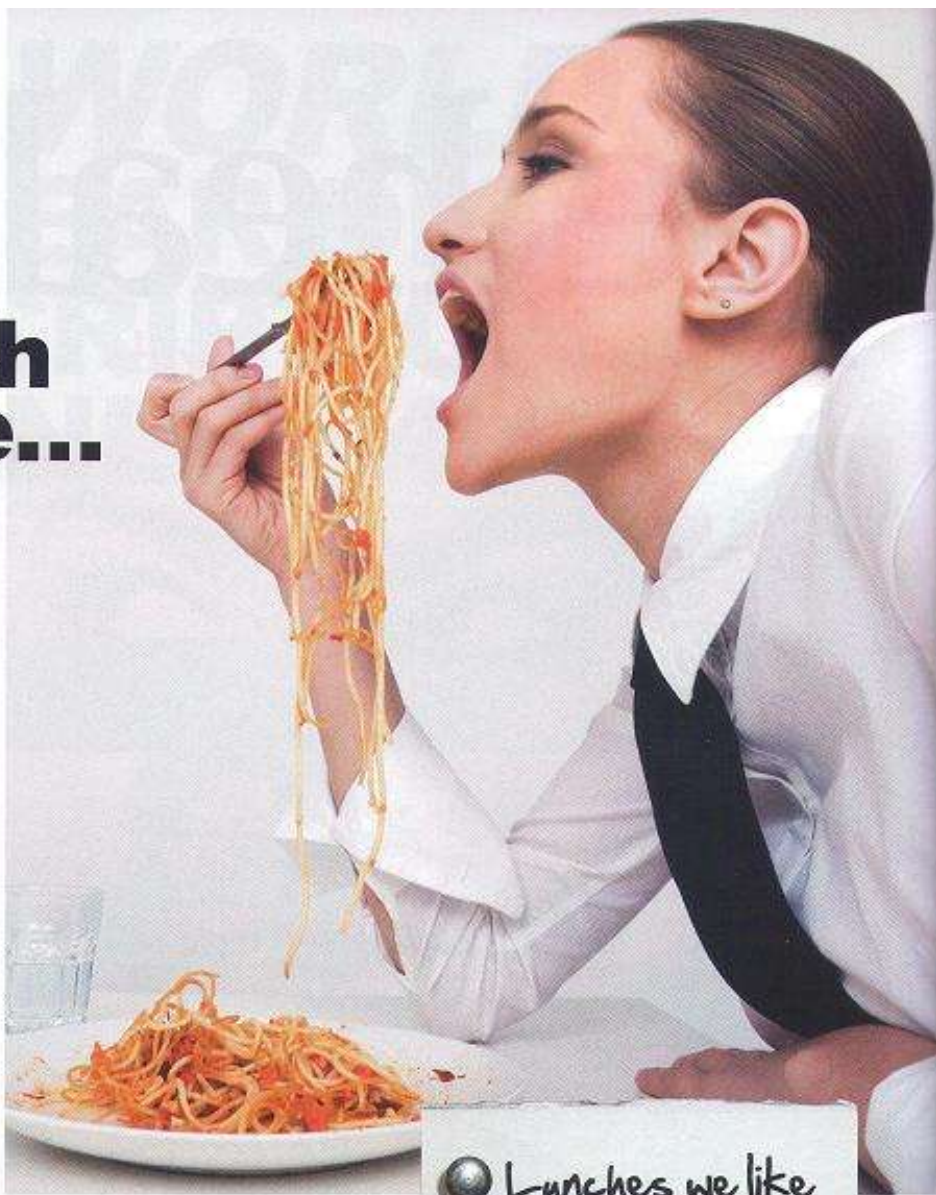
"Not eating can lower your blood sugar levels, making you feel weak, faint and tired," says Stephen DeBoer, a dietitian at the Mayo Clinic in the US. Lunch is also likely to be your last meal before you hit the gym after work. "The longer and more intense your workout is, the more important that last meal is for keeping your energy levels up."

You'll eat less at dinner

Skipping a meal can trigger cravings for high-calorie foods and bigger quantities, as a 2012 Imperial College London study found. In the two-day study, 21 men and women around the age of 25 were shown photos of food, ranging from chocolates and pizza to fish and vegetables, and had to rate how appealing the foods were. On one day, they had to fast; on the other, they were given a snack a few hours beforehand. "When they were

hungry, they rated the high-calorie foods as more appealing," says Dr Tony Goldstone, author of the study. Participants were then given a meal afterwards on both days. It turns out that they ate 20 per cent more on the day they had fasted compared to the day they had eaten.

Expert sources: Jaclyn Reutens, clinical dietitian; www.sciencedaily.com; www.guardian.co.uk



Lunches we like

For a quick, healthy bite

Grab a jumbo sandwich from Swissbake. Our fave is the flavourful smoked chicken breast on multigrain bread with loads of fresh veggies packed in between.

For convenient delivery

Order from Thai To Go and get your lunch delivered to your office. We like the traditional Thai chicken salad and glass noodle salad with seafood.

Don't make "fat talk"

Make disparaging remarks about eating, exercise or your body, and you'll be frowned upon by your peers, a recent study by the University of Notre Dame in the US has found.

In the study, university-aged women rated both thin and overweight women who

engaged in "fat talk" less likeable. Those rated most likeable were overweight women who made positive statements about their bodies.

So ladies, if you want to be well-liked among your lunch crowd, drop the "fat-talk" and start loving your body for what it is. **F&F**