

# NEWLYWED NUTRITION

Post-wedding weight gain is a common concern among couples. Here, a healthy approach.



**I**t was a light-bulb moment for New Jersey-based Mandy Unanski Enright, RDN. “I loved seeing how great my clients looked on their big day, but there were a few who came back several months later complaining about post-wedding weight gain.” Thus, her website Nutritionuptials.com was born. The goal: “Helping couples stay healthy past the ‘I do,’” Enright says. Here, she shares some wellness wisdom.

**Q** • **What are the best ways to get back on track, food-wise, after the wedding?**

**A** • Planning really is the key when it comes to a healthy lifestyle. Just like no bride is going to wing it on her wedding day, you need to plan for healthy eating and exercise as well. I always encourage my clients to plan their meals for the week, and use that plan as the basis for their shopping list.

**Q** • **And what are some common misconceptions?**

**A** • People think that healthy eating is expensive. But when you do the math, a homemade meal will always be less expensive than going out to eat. Convenience foods (pre-cut or prewashed fruits and veggies) inevitably cost more, which causes you to assess what your time is worth. For me personally, my time is not worth washing and spinning a head of lettuce until it’s bone dry; I always buy the prewashed lettuce because it’s so much easier. But I buy just about all of my fruits and veggies in their whole form due to cost.

**Q** • **What are the biggest obstacles to healthy eating?**

**A** • The food-service industry preys on immediate gratification and convenience, which often leads to poor choices. If you can plan accordingly, you will have healthy food in your home most of the time and make better choices. Have

one or two go-to meals in your arsenal that you know can be made under 30 minutes. Use your freezer to store some back-up meals that can be heated when needed (but not frozen pre-made meals, those are scary calorie bombs). Or have a place where you can pick up relatively healthy meals—local delis or supermarkets offer healthy to-go meal options—just be mindful of the portion sizes.

**Q** • **What about eating at restaurants? Any strategies?**

**A** • My husband and I usually go out to eat two times a week. Typically we’ll share either an appetizer or a dessert, very rarely both. And often we’ll coordinate our entrées, which means we’re that couple exchanging dishes across the table halfway through a meal. And we both aim to take enough food home with us to make another meal, which helps on nights when we know we’re working late.

## ENRIGHT’S GROUND RULES

- **DO NOT FIXATE ON NUMBERS.**

“I have so many people who count every single calorie and they drive themselves insane. Or they get on the scale and actually punish themselves by not eating if it’s a number they don’t like. That is not a healthy relationship with food or yourself.”

- **PLATE FOOD BEFORE SERVING.**

“I grew up in a traditional Italian household where every meal had large serving platters placed in front of us. Seeing the additional food as you’re eating makes it more tempting to go back for more. Plating the food

not only helps with portion control, but also allows me to account for leftovers that can go toward another meal.”

- **STICK TO ONE PLATE.**

“Fill half of it with veggies (and/or fruit), ¼ with a lean protein, and ¼ with a hearty whole grain. Make sure there is a variety of nutrient-dense food at your meals. It’s more important to have a healthy complete meal rather than worry how many calories are on that plate.”

- **FORGET “GOOD” AND “BAD”**

“There are no good or bad foods, only

food. And all foods fit a healthy eating plan—it just comes down to moderation.”

- **MAKE THE TREATS SPECIAL.**

“My husband and I love ice cream. But to me, it’s more worthwhile to get in the car and drive to the homemade ice cream parlor versus going in my freezer and scooping out some store brand. By having to go out of my way to get a treat, it makes me assess how badly I really want it (as opposed to just being bored). I get my scoop in a kiddie cup, and I’m happy with the small serving I get to enjoy.” ■