

Los Angeles Times

June 9, 2008

Weight loss: The thin line between a 1,600- and 3,000-calorie day

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Most people who maintain a substantial weight loss work to keep their calories low -- between 1,200 and 1,700 a day for women, and 1,800 to 2,200 for men (depending on factors such as metabolism and amounts of exercise). That's far fewer calories than the amount consumed by most people who have never lost a great deal of weight.

So what does a 1,600-calorie diet look like compared to what can be a typical day's worth of food? The differences are dramatic, and point out how little things can add up -- fatty salad dressing, butter, a handful of candy, sugary sodas. By not keeping an eye on extra fat and calories, total calories for one day can easily reach almost 3,000 -- all of which probably won't be burned off, resulting in added pounds. (Calorie figures were taken from CalorieKing.com, which offers an online food database of nutritional information for more than 50,000 American generic and brand-name foods.)

Online resources for calorie counts of various foods:

[CalorieKing](http://CalorieKing.com)

