



**Eating
Recovery
Center**



**Pathlight
Mood &
Anxiety
Center**

ERC At Home Meal Expectations

Welcome to the Virtual Intensive Outpatient Program. Eating balanced meals and snacks regularly throughout the day is the foundation for normalizing hunger and fullness signaling, stabilizing your metabolism, and reducing food preoccupation. During your child's initial assessment with a dietitian, you will receive a meal plan specifically tailored to your child's nutritional needs that aims to help with the following goals:

- ✓ Establish an organized eating pattern
- ✓ Protect against restricting, bingeing, purging behaviors
- ✓ Reduce obsessive thoughts about food
- ✓ Increase self-confidence regarding food choices
- ✓ Reduce guilt, shame, fear surrounding food choices

We understand that you may have questions around what to provide your child to eat during their first group. Please provide a meal that includes grains, proteins, produce, fats and a dessert. This includes items such as a cookie, brownie, candy. Your child's dietitian will provide you with more guidance regarding portions throughout your child's treatment. The following are example meals:

- ✓ Turkey sandwich with cheese, avocado, lettuce, and a chocolate chip cookie
- ✓ Two tacos with beans, cheese, chopped veggies, and Ice cream
- ✓ Frozen chicken tenders, French fries, green beans, and a few squares of chocolate
- ✓ Noodles with chicken, rice, veggies, peanut sauce, and Oreos

Please aim for your child to eat three meals and two - three snacks daily until you meet with their dietitian. We recognize this may be a drastic shift from your child's current eating patterns, and we want to support you through such challenges.



Child & Adolescent VIOP Meal Format

While in VIOP, you and your child will participate in three meal groups per week during VIOP groups. ERC follows a family-based therapy informed approach, where we want to empower and support you, as a caregiver, to best support your child at meals. As a result, we ask that at least one caregiver or parent is present at each meal in VIOP groups.

Each VIOP group is structured in the following order: check-in, skill/process group, supported meal, skill/process group, check-out. We ask that your child is in a private space for the check-in, skill/process groups, and check-out. Prior to their break your child will participate in a brief meal check in/process group. Fifteen minutes prior to mealtime, your child will be given a 15-minute break. During this time, your child will mute themselves and turn off their cameras. We ask that your child uses the restroom during this time, as we discourage using the restroom after the meal to prevent them from engaging in eating disorder behaviors. This is also the time for your child to move to a common eating area (kitchen, dining room, etc.) with you. Please have the meal ready for your child to eat by the end of the 15-minute break.

Once your child's meal is ready, please take a before picture of your child's meal on Recovery Record. The dietitian or therapist running the meal will check the meal to make sure it is balanced and follows your child's meal plan. The dietitian or therapist will provide feedback via Recovery Record if anything needs to be added or changed to the meal. If the meal looks good, the dietitian or therapist will give you a thumbs up.

When the break time is over, the staff member running the meal will ask your child to turn on their video. At this time, you, as the caregiver at the meal, should be sitting next to or across from your child outside of the camera view. Your child should be on camera during the full mealtime with their microphone off. We encourage you to have a normal family meal conversation.

The meal will last ~30 minutes. Once your child is finished with the meal, please take an after-meal picture in Recovery Record. At the end of the meal, the staff member will also remind you to take this picture if you have not already.



Once meal is over, your child will be directed to return to a private space for the rest of group. Your child will need to stay on the camera as they are moving to the private space. Again, we ask that your child does not use the bathroom until after group is over (~1 hour after the end of the meal).

Once in a private space, your child will participate in a brief meal check-out/process group. This provides your child time to reflect on what went well, what didn't go well, and what skills they used or could have used to help them through the challenges.

If you have any questions about the meal format in VIOP groups, Recovery Record, or your child's meal plan, please reach out to your child's dietitian for support.