



Portion Sizes & Tips to Balancing a Healthy Weight

A “HANDY” GUIDE TO PORTION SIZES

When plating your meal, first give yourself a serving of non-starchy vegetables about the size of your hand when it is open. Then, add a protein (fish, meat, or beans) that is about the size of your palm. Finally, add a portion of whole grains or starchy vegetables about the size of your fist and finish with a piece of fruit.

HEALTHY EATING TIPS

USE SMALLER PLATES AND BOWLS. By switching out a 12-inch dinner plate with one that is 8-9 inches, you will be more likely to feel fuller with less food, especially if you tend to eat until your plate is empty.

USE THE VOLUMETRIC EATING PRINCIPLE. Start your meal off with a big salad, or a bowl of broth based soup loaded with non-starchy vegetables or even a glass of low sodium tomato juice. You will begin to feel full and eat less of your main meal. More fiber, water, and volume in the diet is the key as you swap calorie dense foods for low-calorie nutrient dense ones. Voila! Better weight control is yours.

ENJOY TREATS FROM TIME TO TIME. There are many “big” taste foods (desserts, chips, fries) that give pleasure. We don’t recommend forbidding these; rather put “fun” foods or celebratory foods in your diet without guilt. Just eat a small amount of them (about 10% of your diet) and better yet, consider choices that are made with nutrient-dense fruits and vegetables such as healthy fruit crisps, baked sweet potato fries, pumpkin muffins, blue corn tortilla chips, dark chocolate, and whole fruit pops.

TURN OFF THE TV. When you eat in front of the TV, your mind is distracted away from enjoying your meal. Since your body may not notice the signs that you are full, you may still feel hungry after you eat. This in turn, may cause you to overeat or reach for unhealthy snacks to feel fuller.

SLOW DOWN. Savoring each bite of food helps you enjoy the taste of the meal. Try slowing down while you eat, and see how long you can savor the taste of each bite before taking another. This may open your eyes to new flavors, and also gives your brain time to recognize when your stomach is full.

SET UP YOUR ENVIRONMENT TO SUCCEED. Keep pre-cut veggies readily available in your refrigerator. Studies show people eat 230% more veggies! At meal times, pre-plate your food and put any extra food in the fridge. You won’t be tempted to refill your plate if that big serving platter is out of your sight. Do keep the salad or veggies on the table in case anyone wants seconds!