12 Smart Ways to Right-Size Your Portions

There’s no need to give up your favorite foods to manage your weight or improve your health. The biggest nutrition problem in America is not WHAT we eat, but HOW MUCH we eat. The key to healthful and delicious eating is to downsize your portions at breakfast, lunch, dinner and especially snack time. Here are a dozen quick and easy ways to eat less and enjoy more taste and nutrition in every bite.

1. **Listen to your body’s cues**: Your internal signals of hunger and satisfaction can help you eat right, if you listen to them.

2. **Prepare less food for meals**: Large quantities of food make people eat more. If you want leftovers, put them out of sight and out of mind.

3. **Start with a small serving**: Small servings may be exactly what you want and you can always have more if you are still hungry.

4. **Use small dishes and glasses**: It really works. Smaller plates and taller, thinner glasses make you think that you are getting more with less.

5. **Slow down the pace of eating**: Eating slowly enhances enjoyment of food and beverages and gives your brain time to register fullness.

6. **Eat half, wait 20 minutes**: When you wait (and listen to internal cues), you can be satisfied with smaller than usual portions.

7. **Never eat out of the bag**: When you eat out of bags, boxes or cartons, you usually eat more. Take a small portion and then put the bag away.

8. **Think before you order**: Many meals out are two to four times larger than you need. Make a plan before you order.

9. **Always go for the small size**: At fast-food restaurants, order small or regular items (drinks, burgers and fries) or choose a child-size meal.

10. **Share, share, share**: Sharing meals when eating out is a great way to save money and calories too.

11. **Eat half, take half home**: Ask your server to put half your meal into a “to-go” container in the kitchen or to bring a box to the table.

12. **Eat regular meals and snacks**: When you plan regular meals and snacks, it’s easier to be satisfied with smaller portions each time.