

Portion Control Strategies

Brian Kenney

If you are at all like me, you eat what you see and when you see a lot of food you keep desiring to eat it. This is why buffets and all you can eat places are a nightmare in the making for me. I am a big eater and always thought I could keep getting away with that philosophy. That has all changed and I have had to learn some tough lessons on portion control and I would like to share a few of those strategies with you. Many of these are fairly easy to implement and you will see some quick results. The main idea with portion control is that smaller portions lead to less caloric intake in a given instant and this helps maintain a healthier lifestyle, while keeping your digestive system happy.

- 1- Instead of larger dishes that we typically see in restaurants and most homes, try smaller dishes as an alternative. The basic premise here is that when your plate is smaller and less fits onto it, you will only eat what is on the plate. This really works well and you will teach yourself over time to only prepare what can fit on a little plate. This will become a habit and will help tremendously with portion control.
- 2- Spread your meals out over the course of the day and go from 3 larger meals to 5-6 smaller ones. Your body can digest the food easier and it is not such a large amount at one time. This keeps the stove stoked and allows for economic fuel consumption in the body. Number one and number two go hand in hand as strategies.
- 3- Portion control forces you to believe in the paradigm shift process. A paradigm is a way of thinking and many of us do not think WIN-WIN. We look at food as a losing battle when we are told we have to reduce this and slow down on that. To make yourself believe in WIN-Win thinking you need to meet yourself halfway on portions. You can have your favorite things and eat some of your cravings and the foods you cannot say no to, just don't eat so much of it. Once you acclimate yourself to this new way of thinking (the paradigm shift occurs) then you will develop it into a habit. Once it is a habit you will be able to go to a party or get together and grab only one appetizer and you will only make one trip through the food line.

- 4- Go small and avoid the super size, mega this and extra that options. Keep it simple and keep it small is the choice that needs to be made. Say NO to the extras and bells and whistles with your meals. This strategy really comes into play at fast food and sit-down restaurants.
- 5- Say *ADIOS* to the buffet. This is the ultimate in self-control but if you really want to say goodbye to over portioning, you need to say goodbye and *adios* to the buffet line.
- 6- Correlate portions to an object to get a visual reference. A 3 oz. piece of meat for example, is equal to a deck of playing cards. A single cup (1 cup) of potatoes or rice looks like a tennis ball. If you eat a steak it should be about the size of your fist to be considered a portion controlled main dish. My old way of thinking was that if it was the size of my head, it was a good steak and a manly meal. I think otherwise now.

Hopefully some of these strategies will help you with your fitness journey and you might be so ambitious that you will try to use them over the holidays when you are getting peer pressure from your friends and family members to pile it on and go up for that 2nd or 3rd plate from the buffet line. These strategies have helped me and it is a slow process, but well worth the investment.

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References:

Portion Control Secrets

Jennifer R Scott

www.weightlossabout.com