

# Lose Weight Without Dieting



## Use a Timer for Meals

Slowing down your eating time is a great habit for those concerned about overeating. Many people find that it is helpful to set a timer and stretch the meal out to accommodate a given amount of time, such as 20 minutes per meal. Doing this helps trigger the release of hormones that tell your body that you are full. You can also learn to savor and enjoy the taste of the food, which can be more rewarding than consuming oversized portions.



## More Sleep Helps Weight Loss

Research has shown that sleeping can be beneficial for weight loss. A study from the University of Michigan showed that just one hour more per night of sleep could translate to a 14 pound weight loss over the course of a year in a person who eats 2,500 calories per day. This amounts to a 6% decrease in calories from mindless eating when sleep replaces leisure activities. Other studies show that sleep deprivation can increase appetite and make you more likely to overeat.



## Serve and Eat More Vegetables

Try serving a variety of vegetables rather than just one vegetable with a meal. Having a variety of choices means that you're more likely to eat more, and eating more vegetables is one step toward effective weight loss. Vegetables contain water and fiber that fill you up with fewer calories. Just be sure you prepare and serve the veggies without added sources of fat like buttery sauces or high-fat dressings.



## Fill Up on Fewer Calories With Soup

Soup is a great choice both as an appetizer and a main meal. At the beginning of a meal, a broth-based soup (avoid cream soups!) can slow down your eating and fill you up earlier. Examples of healthy broth-based soups are minestrone, won-ton, or tortilla soup. You can make an easy soup by starting with a low-sodium broth, adding vegetables and a protein of your choice, and simmering until the vegetables are tender.



### **Choose Whole Grains**

Eating whole grains whenever possible is another weight-loss strategy. Whole grains include brown rice, oats, barley, buckwheat, and whole wheat. Substituting whole grains whenever possible can help you fill up faster. These healthy carbohydrates can be found in many prepared products like pizza crust, waffles, English muffins, and pasta.



### **Eye Your Skinny Outfits**

Hanging a "skinny" outfit where you can see it helps you remain focused on your weight-loss goals. Don't be unrealistic and choose an outfit that's four sizes too small. Pick something that you can fit into after just a short time of healthy eating. After you reach this goal, choose your next "goal" outfit.



### **Pass on the Bacon**

Just say no to bacon. This breakfast treat is also found in sandwiches and salads, and it's easy to overlook. Skipping two strips of bacon at breakfast or in a sandwich saves about 100 calories. Doing this every day can mean a 10-pound weight loss over a year. There are lots of healthy sandwich and salad ingredients that can replace the flavor without the fat and calories. Roasted peppers, tomatoes, flavorful mustard, and banana peppers are just some examples.



### **Make a Healthier Pizza**

Pizza doesn't need to be a dietary disaster. Replacing meat toppings with vegetables can save you 100 calories per meal. You can also order a lighter portion of cheese or reduced-fat cheese. Thin crust and whole-wheat crust are other healthy pizza choices.



### **Reduce Sugary Drinks**

Enforce a ban on sodas. You will save about 10 (!) teaspoons of sugar if you swap out the regular soda for a water or zero-calorie seltzer. You can add citrus fruits or mint to seltzer or plain water for a taste treat.

Researchers have shown that the liquid sugar in sodas does not signal the body to stop eating as well as other sources of sugar. In one study, participants ate an extra 450 calories' worth of jellybeans per day or drank 450 calories' worth of soda. The candy eaters unconsciously reduced their overall calorie intake to compensate, but the soda drinkers did not. The soda drinkers gained an average of 2.5 pounds over the four-week study.



### **Drink Smart With a Thin, Tall Glass**

Choose a tall, skinny glass rather than a short, wide one. This visual cue can trick you into consuming 25%-30% less of whatever beverage you are drinking. Research has shown that people unconsciously pour a greater quantity into a short, wide glass than into a tall one.



### **Limit Alcoholic Beverages**

Reduce your consumption of alcohol. Follow an alcoholic drink with a low-calorie alternative like sparkling water rather than accepting a refill on the alcoholic drink. Alcohol has 7 calories per gram, which is more than carbohydrates (4 calories/g) or protein (4 calories/g). Alcohol can also weaken your resolve and lead to mindless eating.



### **Drink Green Tea**

Drink green tea. Some studies have found that green tea can boost metabolism, possibly through the action of phytochemicals called catechins. In any case, green tea (unsweetened) is a healthy and refreshing drink that is low in calories.



### **Practice Yoga for Mindful Eating**

A study in the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* showed that women who do yoga tend to weigh less. Researchers believe this is due to the level of self-awareness and mindfulness that develops in practitioners of yoga. Those who do yoga may pay more attention to their body's signals, such as eating only enough to feel full.



### **Eat Home-Cooked Meals**

People who are successful at weight loss report that they eat in often. Try to have home-cooked or home-prepared meals at least five times per week. Grilled salmon or deli chicken, pre-cut veggies, pre-washed salads, and canned beans are good shortcut foods that can help make meal preparation less time-consuming.



### **Notice Your "Eating Pause"**

Learn to recognize your natural "eating pause." This happens when you put down the fork for a couple of minutes. When this occurs, stop and clear your plate. Most people aren't aware of this signal, but it tells you that you are full.



### **Chew Strong, Mint-Flavored Gum**

Cooking dinner after work, attending a party, watching TV, or surfing the Internet are dangerous risk times for mindless snacking. Chewing sugarless gum with a strong flavor can help overpower the taste of other foods and render them tasteless. This can be a helpful strategy to avoid mindless eating.



### Use Smaller Dishes

Pick a smaller plate. Studies show that people consume more food when they use larger dishes. Try eating from a salad plate to save up to 100-200 calories a day. This translates into a weight loss of 10-20 pounds per year!



### Know Your Food Portions

Slim people have become very good at portion control. Always aim to consume modest portions of whatever food you are eating. If you start out measuring portion size, you will quickly develop a feeling for the right size to dish out. Keeping serving dishes off of the table at mealtime can help the automatic reach for "seconds."



### Use the 80-20 Rule

Residents of Okinawa have an interesting rule called *hara hachi bu*. This means they eat until they are 80% full, then stop. In contrast, Americans tend to eat until they feel stuffed. You can practice this rule by dishing out 20% less food. Researchers have shown that people don't even miss this amount.



### Tips for Eating Out

Practice these tips at restaurants to keep portion sizes and calorie counts under control:

- Split a large dish with a friend and order a salad to fill up on healthy veggies.
- Order an appetizer or child's plate as a meal.
- Ask for half the meal to be packed in a take-home bag before you begin eating.



### Opt for Tomato-Based Sauce

Watch your choice of pasta sauce. Choosing marinara sauce instead of Alfredo sauce is a wise choice. In general, tomato sauces have fewer calories and fat than cream sauces.



### Eat More Vegetarian Meals

Opt for the vegetarian meal. Vegetarians usually weigh less than those who consume meat products. This may have to do with fiber consumption from legume-based foods like bean burgers and lentil soup. Fiber fills you up with relatively few calories.



### Burn an Extra 100 Calories Per Day

Even if your eating habits don't change, burning an extra 100 calories a day can amount to a 10-pound weight loss over a year. While the number of calories burned depends upon your weight, some good activities that burn around 100 calories are:

- 20 minutes of walking or lawn work
- 30 minutes of housecleaning
- 10 minutes of light jogging



### Celebrate!

Celebrate your successful changes. Whenever you have implemented a new step in your weight-control plan, give yourself a small (non-food!) reward like time with a friend, a pedicure, or a new accessory. Reward yourself for making a change toward a slimming lifestyle without a complicated or restrictive diet plan.

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Reviewed by John A. Daller, MD on Tuesday, May 03, 2016

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