

Learn to master portion control without starving

Life coach

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"The foods we buy today are often two or three times, even five times, larger than when they were first introduced into the marketplace," says Lisa Young in her book "Portion Teller: Smartsize Your Way to Permanent Weight Loss."

And meals and packaged foods aren't the only things that had ballooned. American waistlines have expanded. So she's devised ways to help people get - and stay - slim without deprivation.

fill up with less

» Mind your mouthfuls. Instead of worrying about the amount of carbohydrates or fat, focus on the amount you consume. Just because it's brought to you doesn't mean you have to finish every last bite. A simple way to do this is to make visual comparisons, says Young. "Think of a deck of cards as a three-ounce serving," she says. "And, a cup of rice or pasta should be about the size of a baseball."

» Add first, then subtract. First step, fill your plate with as many portions of fresh, leafy greens and fruits as you want. Do the research and dig up some healthy recipes made with apples, apricots, plums, tomatoes, carrots, peppers, you name it.

» Negotiate your cutbacks. "Decrease your portions of junk food," Young says, "so you're eating fewer high-calorie foods." You don't have to eliminate your favorite foods. "If you like ice cream," says Young, "you can eat it. But, you're going to have to learn portion control."

» Pack in protein. Protein is not only good for you, it makes you feel full. "In my research, I found that a lot of people were eating breakfast and all their meals, but weren't including protein," says Young. "And, a meal without protein not going to do it. You're never going to feel full with just bread or a bagel."

» Forget white flour. When you eat white flour products, your body gets nothing but empty calories because the fiber, vitamins and minerals have been stripped away. "A lot of people were under the misconception that it was carbs that were making them full and fat, when really, it was the starches," says Young. Read the label to ensure that your bread is made with 100 percent whole wheat or whole grain.