

DIET

6 WAYS TO FOOL YOUR STOMACH

Try these 6 healthy - yet simple and painless - ways to help yourself feel fuller on fewer kilojoules/calories. You may be surprised how easy it is!



1 SIT DOWN TO EAT

Sitting down – even for a piece of fruit – makes your stomach think this is a proper meal or snack. It also connects your stomach with your brain in order to say “I’m full” or “Slow down”. It’s a great way to monitor how much you actually eat and to stop mindless eating on the move.

2 DRINK WATER BEFORE A MEAL

Water distends the stomach, reduces sensations of hunger and leaves you feeling fuller. A US study which tested the drink-water-before-your-meal idea on 24 overweight people discovered that the subjects ate 13 per cent less after drinking two glasses of water before they ate.

Pre-meal water is simple and inexpensive. Perhaps it’s the real reason those detox diets work – you drink lots of water to ‘flush out the toxins’ but really it just fills you up so you cut back on food! Make sure you drink a glass before you eat.

3 EAT SLOWLY

Consciously slowing down your rate of eating automatically decreases your food intake by 10 per cent and maximizes your meal satisfaction. It takes your stomach 15 or 20 minutes to signal your brain that it’s full. If you rush your food down, you’ll find you’ve often overeaten before you realised you were full. Slowing your eating also aids digestion and de-stresses you. Here’s how to practice it when you first start:

- Pay attention to the food in front of you.
- Take small bites and chew well.
- Eat with a fork and knife, not your fingers.
- Put the fork and knife down between each bite. Halfway through your meal, have a one-minute pause.
- Don’t eat in front of TV or read a magazine or your smart phone. This only becomes mindless eating and distracts you from listening to your stomach.
- Eat with your non-dominant hand or use chopsticks instead of a fork.

4 EAT ALONE

People who dine with others tend to overeat often by up to 60 per cent more. You tend to get caught up in the conversation and take your eating cues from others – if they eat up big, you will too. This also applies to women who eat with their male partners. The women often end up consuming similar man-sized portions and thus putting on weight.

5 EAT LOTS OF FIBRE

High-fibre foods like grainy breads, bran cereals, salads, lentils, beans and fresh fruit take time to chew and digest. They fill you up BEFORE you’ve overeaten so you feel satisfied without overdoing the kilojoules/calories. Best of all, fibre actually blocks the absorption of a percentage of the food in your digestive system so you eat well but don’t end up taking in all those kilojoules.

6 CHANGE THE SIZE OF YOUR PLATE

Serve your meals on a smaller, appetizer or bread plate - 24cm (9”) in diameter - instead of a larger dinner sized plate which can be 32cm (12”) across. The food will automatically look more which makes you think you’re eating big.

Additionally, studies show that using tall, thin glasses instead of wide, short ones can reduce the amount of liquids you pour yourself. This strategy can help you limit alcohol, fizzy drinks, cream-based smoothies and similar beverages.

Remember: small changes have a lot of power over the long run.



Produced by accredited nutritionist Catherine Saxelby to help busy people eat better and look after their health. Head to the Foodwatch website – you’ll find nutrition hacks, easy-to-read posts and quick recipes.

