

## 7 Easy Steps To Weight Loss

It has become ridiculous: every time I crash in front of my TV late at night after a long, hard day's work, I'm bombarded by countless infomercials revealing the newest line of fat-burning, abdominal crunching, body-sculpting, miracle-working machines. Even those Suzanne Somers or Richard Simmons diet plans make me want to shoot myself in the foot for feeling so guilty for snacking on some popcorn. Well, I have news for all of you out there: don't diet, and don't rush off to buy the next gimmick. Here's the real secret to losing weight: eat less! it's all about sensibility That's right, that's the new word of the decade: sensibility. After all, doing everything sensibly in your life is the key to living well. You don't need to feel trapped behind the prison of your own body anymore. All you need to do is eat less, and eat sensibly. Easier said than done? Well, like all things in life, eating less is a learned experience and takes some practice and patience. Our problem nowadays is that we're too lazy to turn this practice into a perfectly balanced meal plan. it's all in your head

"The problem for most people is that they maintain certain habits that make eating less quite difficult," says Pat Booth, assistant director of the Nutrition Services Department at the University of California San Francisco Medical Center. Old habits are hard to break, however, tomorrow you'll be looking back at the "old" you and feeling good about the "new" you that's yet to come. Get my point? It also has a lot to do with your self-image perceptions. You must first change mentally in order to then change physically. getting started

Anyone who has ever tried dieting knows the immediate feeling of deprivation that accompanies most weight-loss plans. The result for most of us is that we can't stick to it. Instead of drastically cutting your diet, try to gradually accustom yourself to eating less. Take smaller portions. Leave a little on the plate. In time, you'll find you need less food to feel satiated. As you practice putting less on your plate, consider these 7 steps to eating less (the following list is taken from Mr. Paul Wolf, Health Correspondent, and I highly recommend it):

### 1. Mini-meal is the operative word

Ideally, every time you eat, your plate should have some protein, a little fat and a little fibrous bulk to ensure that you feel full and satisfied. This takes some planning. It ultimately means losing the mindless munching on pretzels habit. "Even if you eat fruit as a snack, healthy as it is, you won't feel completely satisfied because it doesn't have any protein and fat," Booth says. An apple followed by, say, some plain yogurt, will do more for satiety than two apples. A baked potato, which has 100 calories, contributes more to satisfaction than 20 potato chips, which, at 114 calories, adds up quickly. Top that spud with a quarter-cup of low-fat cottage cheese (100 calories), and you have a filling snack for 200 calories.

### 2. Don't go overboard

You don't want to feel deprived at best, hungry at worst. Drastically cutting calories will only slow down your metabolism by driving your system into famine mode, according to Booth. Don't count calories; just eyeball your portions. Let's say you hope to reduce your daily caloric intake from about 2,500 to 2,000. Focus on reducing your portion sizes by

about 20 percent. Within a matter of a couple of weeks, you will be adjusted to the new serving sizes and they will seem normal.

### 3. Eat delicious and well

Every diet regimen should permit the occasional treat and nice meal out. Eat delicious food, but eat them in smaller portions. Obviously, cream sauces and fudge brownies at every meal will thwart your weight-loss goals. Learn to enjoy ordinary food as well as extraordinary delicacies. 4. Eat your calories, don't drink them A can of Dr. Pepper soda contains 150 calories. Three of these a day is an extra 450 calories. Add juice and sugary lattes to your diet and you practically need a calculator to tally the calories that don't do a thing when it comes to fulfilling your appetite. Stick to water and tea and get your calories from more filling and satisfying food.

### 5. Exercise is the perfect partner

Your diet will be all the more successful if you combine it with regular exercise. Approach your exercise and diet plan with a focus on how you look and feel, not how much you weigh. In other words, think in inches lost, not pounds. Remember; muscle weighs more than fat.

### 6. Make meals last

Yes, two Balance bars have only 360 calories, and also contain vitamins, minerals, fiber, protein, fat, and carbohydrates. But you can down these suckers in a matter of seconds. Where's the chewing satisfaction? Are a couple of nutrition bars a meal, or even a mini-meal for that matter? The satiety centers of the brain may not get the message right away that you've had enough. Eat slowly, chew carefully and don't put more food in your mouth when you haven't dealt completely with the last bite, advises Booth.

### 7. Discover your food triggers

What makes you succumb to temptation? Do you turn to the pantry the instant you turn on the TV? For some, if it's in the house, that's all the temptation they need. For others, stress is a trigger. The stress hormone cortisol fuels cravings, according to Pamela Peeke, M.D., author of *Fight Fat After Forty*. Everyone knows that bigger portions won't fill the empty spaces of our lives or give us lasting relief from unpleasant moments. Discovering your triggers is a step towards self-control, which is the basis for eating less. So next time you see one of those annoying infomercials, follow this 3-step exercise: pick up the remote, change the channel, then put the remote back down. You actually burned 2 calories more by doing that than if you were staring aimlessly at Mr. Simmons "strutting his stuff." Good luck.