

## Portion Control - the Key to Losing Weight Safely

With Thanksgiving this week, trying to maintain a healthy nutrition plan can be hard! Your clients may be striving to lose extra weight before the big weekend ahead, or agonizing about all the amazing food that will be available but which they are planning to deny themselves. However, many of them may not realize that they can still enjoy all of the foods they love and not have to double their exercise routine if they simply choose to institute portion control.

In a Supersize Me country, we've been conditioned to see a plate that isn't sagging with food as simply unacceptable. More is better, we think – and so serving sizes are out of control. People from other countries boggle at the size of “American” food portions!

While diet and exercise are often promoted as the best way to lose weight, many people have trouble with the diet part. They either go on crash diets that cause them to rebound quickly after the diet is over (returning to their original weight), or they despair at being able to have the willpower to give up all of their favorite foods.

Weight loss - barring specific glandular disorders or mitigating conditions that cause the body to not efficiently be able to lose weight – is usually simple – burn more calories than you consume. Burning of calories can be accomplished through exercise, but you can only burn so much. Adjusting intake can be key – but far too many “diets” focus on cutting many food groups out of the plan entirely, making them restrictive and joyless for the weight loser.

Substituting “diet” options often does more harm than good. Sugar free foods are often higher in fat and carbohydrates to make them tastier, and the trade-off ends up not being that beneficial. Portion control teaches the concept of simply limiting foods high in calories to a reasonable amount, and learning to enjoy the smaller portions.

This concept of “all things in moderation” allows those on a diet to eat almost anything they like – as long as portion controls are strictly observed. A kitchen scale can help determine appropriate portions, and desserts can be easily subjected to the three bite rule: treat a dessert as a three bite delight and savor each one as long as possible.

Balancing the types of food eaten also has importance. Making sure vegetables and fruits make up a large part of each meal is a good start, as is drinking a full glass of water before eating to help fill the belly. Follow that with protein, and a small amount of carbs, and finish with three bites of something special.

Portion control can be made a habit fairly quickly, and can prove invaluable at the holiday table, where food is in overabundance. Three bites each of your top ten faves, savored slowly, can let you sample everything and still keep you under the recommended number of bites per meal, [according to one study](#).

It's all about portion control, so let your clients know indulging a little -just a little! Is OK. And remember, nutrition advice is covered by your personal trainer insurance.



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