Transcript

When dining out, the amount of food that you eat can be just as important as the food that you choose.

Controlling your portion sizes may be difficult since many restaurants pride themselves on large servings. Be cautious; these large portions add extra calories, fat, and sodium. Regardless of how much food is placed in front of you, here are a few strategies you can use to manage how much you eat.

First, don't fill up on bread or rolls before your meal. You may be hungry. The bread might smell delicious. But remember, when you eat the bread, you're adding empty calories. If you do choose to eat it, enjoy a small piece, and add just a touch of butter, spreads or oil.

> *"Do you girls want the bread? No? Ok you can take it."*

> *"I'll get that out of your way then."*

Or you can ask for them to not bring the bread to you table, so you can avoid the temptation altogether.

Beginning your meal with a salad is a great idea. You'll benefit from the healthy leafy greens and other vegetables. Be careful not to drown salad's healthy benefits with fatty salad dressings. Ask for low or no-fat dressings on the side. Try vinaigrettes. Dip your fork in the dressing, and then into the salad, that way you can control how much you use.

Minimize your main meal's portion size. To get a smaller size you can order an appetizer instead of an entrée, and add soup to round out the meal.

> *"Can I have my salad prepackaged so that I can take half and just have here half?"*

Ask your server if a half sized portion is available, or ask them to prepackage half of the order for you to take home. You can also try splitting an entrée with your dining companion.

And if you choose to have dessert, consider sharing it with one of your fellow diners, or try a lower-fat, lower-calorie selection like fresh fruit or sorbet.

If you've ordered too much food, just eat the correct portion size for you. Or, if you did not make a healthy choice or if the food was not what you were expecting, it might be better to leave the rest of the dish at the restaurant.

Take your time eating your meal. Eating slowly will help you enjoy your meal more and recognize when you have had enough to eat.

> *"If I can get a box, I'm going to get this wrapped up to go."*

> *"Sure, no problem."*

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Once you have eaten enough, stop. If you are with friends or family, it might be best to get the food cleared and packaged before you are tempted to eat more.

Don't forget about what you drink with your meal as well. Most beverages add calories to your meal. Try to drink water instead of soda, and be careful with how much extras you add to your coffee or tea.

And lastly, limit alcohol. A good dining out strategy you can apply to this situation is moderation. Drinking in moderation means no more than one drink for women and two drinks for men. Alcohol also adds extra calories and can make you more likely to overeat.

Managing your portion sizes and controlling how much you eat is in your hands. If you get a large portion it doesn't mean you have to eat all that's on your plate.

Use these dining out portion control skills to enjoy a healthy and satisfying meal.

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