

Managing Portion Sizes When You Have Diabetes

Making sure your portion sizes are right for you can be very helpful in controlling the calories, carbohydrates and fat you take in, making diabetes management easier.

"I have to measure out and it truly has helped. I got a little weight scale so I can measure meats and things. Got me a set of measuring cups."

Today everywhere you look you are faced with bigger and bigger portions; from the biggie size drink at the corner store to the plate of pasta at your favorite restaurant. But just how much is too much?

Take a look at these 2 meals. They are the same foods except the one on the right is the recommended serving size and the one on the left is a typical meal served at a restaurant.

Now note the total carbohydrate, fat and calories in each meal. Do you see the difference?

By choosing the larger portion size you have increased your calorie intake (not to mention the increase in carbohydrate and fats) by over 800 in just 1 meal.

So what does that mean to you in the long run? If you eat just 100 extra calories a day, you may gain 10 pounds in one year. And what could that do to your blood glucose?

Let's take our 2 meals one step further. How can we make our recommended serving size meal even healthier?

Let's substitute whole grain bread for the white bread to get healthy carbs and fiber into our meal.

How about a glass of water or unsweetened tea? They are healthier choices.

And why not change the fries to a side salad? With low-fat dressing on the side.

When you look at the totals now, you have saved close to 400 calories. That's good for your blood glucose, your heart health and your waistline! Which meal would you choose?

Here are some tips to help you choose smaller portions.

One simple method that can be used to manage portions is the plate method. It's helpful if you have about half your food (or plate) as vegetables, 1/4 as the protein food and 1/4 as the starchy type food.

"The plate method is a method that works both for at home or when traveling or/and eating in restaurants..."

When dining out, order a healthy appetizer or a smaller entrée and add soup or salad to round out the meal.

This can help you feel fuller faster and not be as tempted to eat more than you should.

And ask your server to not bring any bread to the table. This can stop you from mindlessly snacking on the bread while you wait for your main meal.

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You can try splitting an entrée with your dining companion. And if you choose to have dessert, consider sharing a dessert with one of your fellow diners or try a lower-fat, lower-calorie selection.

If you find you've ordered too much food, eat the correct portion size for you and take the rest home. Most times you can get another entire meal out of it. How's that for stretching your food dollar!

You can also ask for them to wrap up half of the portion before it even comes to the table, so you won't get tempted to eat more than you should.

Making sure to eat the correct portions for you can make a big difference in your weight and blood glucose level.