

## **The Real Skinny on Weight Loss – Beat the Portion Control Bogeyman**

The key to successful long-term weight loss is patience and the key to keeping the weight off is change. Einstein wasn't thinking about diets when he said the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. That's what dieting is starve yourself, lose a few pounds and hope then go back to what you did before and get more frustrated because you put back all the weight you lost and then some.

Diets fail because we cheat. We deny it, we pretend it doesn't happen but it does. When we cheat and how we cheat is an individual thing, it's personal. But why we cheat is almost universal. We cheat on our diets because we're hungry. Hunger gnaws at us, a constant reminder that we are dieting. In the developed world hunger is not about being nutritionally deprived, it's about not feeling satisfied, having a full belly is an evolutionarily desired state that says we are safe and secure.

When we force ourselves to walk away from the table less than satisfied it makes us uncomfortable. When we are uncomfortable and have a sense of insecurity at our core we are compelled to fix the problem. The cure for feeling hungry is to eat more and well eating more when you are dieting is cheating and cheating on a diet leads to failure and you get the picture, no more diet and we usually make up for the lost time by eating even more and not only gaining back what we might have lost but more.

### **What You Eat Matters More Than How Much You Eat.**

The biggest problem we all face when trying to lose weight is portion control. If you've ever considered losing weight you've probably heard some variation of if the portion is bigger than your fist it's too much. Eat slower and give your body a chance to feel full. Step away from the table as soon as you're done eating.

All good advice but the reality is they don't work. Calorie creep gets the best of us when it comes to portion size control. Our fist looks progressively bigger or we sneak an extra forkful or two of meatloaf before we put away the leftovers. Most of us are over weight because we have a habit of stuffing ourselves and old habits die hard.

Habits are why diets fail! We can sustain ourselves for the short term eating less but we usually revert to routine after a short while. If portion control is your downfall eliminate it. Consider ground beef. In a hamburger or meatball or meatloaf it's about 3 oz of cooked ground beef is about 231 calories not including what you put on it or around it, like ketchup or bread. Three ounces of cooked ground beef is not going to fill most adults, which is where calories creep.

Now think of broccoli, other vegetables are pretty comparable, which has only 30 calories for 3 oz. Since I've upset you with talk of broccoli let me upset you further with

some math. You would have to absolutely gorge yourself on a pound and a half of broccoli to get to the same number of calories as a single small meatball or a very slim burger.

I'm not suggesting that you become a vegetarian, what I am suggesting is that you use vegetables to satisfy your desire to be full and you don't have to worry about counting calories or portion control so long as you exercise a little self restraint when it comes to meat, fish, poultry and starches, like bread. You can eat until you're full and still consume less calories than you would otherwise.

Weight loss that lasts is about lifestyle changes and for a change in lifestyle to become a habit it shouldn't be uncomfortable. Reducing the size of your dinner works in the short term but fosters a resentment of yourself they results in your ending your diet and regaining any weight you lost.

Eat smarter and you'll weigh less. Make a new habit of healthier eating and pounds will take care of themselves. Experiment with a new vegetable every week until you've tried everything available in your local supermarket. Try different combinations of vegetables for different tastes. Use herbs and spices rather than sauces and ketchup to spice up your vegetables and pocket the savings in calories while enjoying the taste bud bonus.