

25 TIPS FOR HEALTHY SLIMMING

Diet alone is not the answer to maintaining a healthy weight and BMI. Making smart choices, and changing small, but effective habits, go a long way to achieving your weight loss goals. Here are some of the easiest changes to help you make that lifestyle shift.

1. TIME YOUR MEALS

Eating too quickly blocks the body's fullness signals and causes overeating. Set a timer for 20 minutes and reinvent yourself as a slow eater. This is one of the top habits for slimming down and allowing healthy digestion. Savor each bite and make it last until the bell chimes. Slow paced meals offer greater pleasure from smaller portions.

2. MORE ZZZ'S, LESS KG'S

Sleeping an extra hour a night could help a person drop 6 kilograms in a year, according to a University of Michigan researcher. When sleep replaces idle activities and the usual mindless snacking, you can effortlessly cut calories by 6%. Results would vary for each person, but sleep may help in another way, too. There's evidence that getting too little sleep revs up your appetite, making you uncommonly hungry.

3. 1-2-3- VEG!

Serve three vegetables with dinner tonight, instead of just one, and you'll eat more without really trying. Greater variety tricks people into eating less food. The high fibre and water content fills you up with fewer calories and more nutrients. Season with lemon juice and herbs rather than drowning their goodness in high-fat sauces or dressings.

4. SOUP SUPREME

A broth-based soup added to your day will fill you up on fewer calories. Think minestrone or chicken broth with watercress. Soup is especially great to start a meal because it slows your eating and curbs your appetite. Beware of creamy soups, which can be high in fat and calories. The bounty of fresh ingredients available for a nutritious soup is limitless - so be creative!

5. GO FOR WHOLE GRAINS

The better option for a healthy and strong digestive system. Whole grains such as brown rice, barley, oats, buckwheat, and whole wheat also belong in your stealthy weight loss strategy. They help fill you up with fewer calories and may improve your cholesterol profile, too. It's as simple as reaching for "Whole Wheat" instead of "White" at the supermarket.

6. THOSE JEANS

Hang an old favourite dress, skirt, or pair of jeans where you'll see it every day. This is a reminder of what you are working towards. Choose an item that's just a little too snug, so you reach this reward in a relatively short time. Then pull out last year's cocktail dress for your next small, attainable goal.

7. SKIP THE BACON

Pass on those two strips of bacon at breakfast or in your sandwich at lunch time. This simple move saves about 100 calories, which can add up to a 4,5 weight loss over a year. Consider other fillings to replace the flavour with fewer calories. Think about tomato slices, banana, roasted red bell peppers, grainy mustard, or a light spread of herbed goat cheese.

8. PIMP YOUR PIZZA

Choose vegetable toppings for pizza instead of meat and you'll shave 100 calories from your meal. Other skinny pizza tricks: go light on the cheese or use reduced-fat cheese and choose a thin crust made with just a touch of olive oil. Soak up excess oil and calories from the top of each slice with a kitchen roller towel, simple and effective!

9. SMART SIP: CUT BACK ON SUGAR

Replace one sugary drink, like regular soda, with water or a zero-calorie drink and you'll avoid 10 teaspoons of sugar. Try adding lemon, mint or frozen strawberries for flavour. The liquid sugar in soda appears to bypass the body's normal fullness cues. One study compared an extra 450 calories per day from jelly beans vs. soda. The candy eaters unconsciously ate fewer calories overall, but not so the soda drinkers. They gained 1 kilogram in four weeks.

10. SMART SIP: USE A TALL, THIN GLASS

Use a tall, skinny glass instead of a short, wide tumbler to cut liquid calories and your weight without [dieting](#). You'll drink 25-30% less juice, soda, wine, or any other beverage. How can this work? Brian Wansink, PhD, says visual cues can trick us into consuming more or less. His tests at Cornell University found all kinds of people poured more drink into a short, wide glass, even experienced bartenders.

11. SMART SIP: LIMIT ALCOHOL

When an occasion includes alcohol, follow the first drink with a nonalcoholic, low-calorie beverage like sparkling water, instead of moving directly to another cocktail, beer, or glass of wine. Alcohol has more calories per gram (7) than carbohydrates (4) or protein (4). It can also loosen your resolve, leading you to mindlessly inhale chips, nuts, and other foods you'd normally limit.

12. SMART SIP: GO FOR GREEN TEA

Drinking green tea is also known to be a extremely beneficial for weight loss and for it's health benefits. Some studies suggest that it can rev up the body's calorie-burning engine temporarily, possibly through the action of phytochemicals called catechins. Loaded with antioxidants, it is a great way to boost your immune system. Just beware the fact that green tea also contains caffeine, so it is also best consumed in moderation and not after five pm if caffeine affects your ability to sleep.

13. SLIP INTO A YOGA STATE OF MIND

People who do yoga tend to weigh less than those who do not practice, according to a study in the Journal of the American Dietetic Association. What's the connection? Apart from the obvious benefits exercise renders, the yoga regulars reported a more "mindful" approach to eating. For example, they tend to notice the large portions in restaurants but eat only enough to feel full. Researchers believe the calm self-awareness developed through yoga may help people become more aware of their eating habits, from the type of foods they consume to eating that food at a slower pace.

14. SHRINK YOUR DISHES

Chose a 10" lunch plate instead of a 12" dinner plate to automatically eat less. Cornell's Brian Wansink, PhD, found in test after test that people serve more and eat more food with larger dishes. Shrink your plate or bowl to cut out 100-200 calories a day and 5-10 kilograms in a year. In Wansink's tests, no one felt hungry or even noticed when tricks of the eye shaved 200 calories off their daily intake.

15. CATCH THE "EATING PAUSE"

Most people have a natural "eating pause," when they drop the fork for a couple of minutes. Watch for this moment and don't take another bite. Be mindful of your body's signals. Clear your plate and enjoy the conversation. This is the quiet signal that you're full, but not stuffed. Most people miss it.

16. CHEW STRONG MINT GUM

Chew sugarless gum with a strong flavor when you're at risk for a snack attack. Making dinner after work, at a party, watching TV, or surfing the Internet are a few dangerous scenarios for mindless snacking. Gum with a big flavor punch overpowers other foods so they don't taste good, and the false hunger alarm bell will be warded off until you really do feel hungry.

17. EAT AT HOME

Eat home-cooked meals at least five days a week to keep excess weight off and maintain good health. A Consumer Reports survey found this was a top habit of "successful losers." Sound daunting? Cooking may be easier than you think. Consider what is available in the stores : pre-washed lettuce, pre-cut veggies, canned beans or grilled deli salmon, etc. go a long way to being creative in the kitchen. Simple, wholesome meals can be quick and easy to prepare, and you control the process to maintain maximum nutrient benefits. The trick is to plan ahead, prepare your [meal plans](#) for the week on a Sunday and shop accordingly.

18. GET FOOD PORTIONS RIGHT

The top habit of slim people is to stick with modest food portions at every meal, five days a week or more. "Always slim" people do it and successful losers do it, too, according to a Consumer Reports survey. After measuring portions a few times, it can become automatic. Make it easier with smaller "snack" packs and by keeping serving dishes off the table at meal times. Cooking too many portions also runs the risk of over eating. Make only enough food to adequately serve the numbers present.

19. TRY THE 80-20 RULE

Westerners are conditioned to keep eating until they're stuffed, but residents of Okinawa, Japan, eat until they're 80% full. They even have a name for this naturally slimming habit: hara hachi bu. You can adopt this healthy habit by dishing out 20% less food, eating your meal slowly and consciously, and not even miss that extra 20%!

20. EAT OUT YOUR WAY

Restaurant serve notoriously large portions, so consider these special orders to maintain control:

- Split a starter with a friend.
- Order an appetizer as a meal. Choose the kiddie's meal.
- When you have reached your 80% limit, ask for the rest to be immediately doggie-bagged.
- There is never a shortage of homeless people on the way home from a restaurant, be generous with your left overs instead of possibly eating them when a snack attack occurs later in the evening.
- Complement a smaller starter with a side salad for the right balance: half the plate filled with veggies.
- Look for words like "grilled" and "steamed" on the menu as opposed to "fried" or "rich" or "sauce" to make smarter choices.

21. REACH FOR THE RED SAUCE

Choose Napoletana sauce for pasta instead of Alfredo sauce. The tomato-based sauces tend to have fewer calories and much less fat than cream-based sauces. But remember, portion size still counts. A serving of pasta is one cup or roughly the size of a tennis ball. Rather opt for a half portion if available, and have a side order of salad or veggies after the pasta.

22. GO MEATLESS MORE OFTEN

Eating vegetarian meals more often is a slimming habit, according to WebMD's "recipe doctor," Elaine Magee, MPH, RD. Vegetarians weigh up to 20% less than meat eaters. While there are several reasons for this, legumes

play an important role. Bean burgers, lentil soup, and other tasty legume-based foods are simply packed with fibre. Most people get only half of this important nutrient, which fills you up with fewer calories.

23. BURN 100 CALORIES MORE

Lose 15 kilograms in a year without dieting by burning an extra 100 calories every day. The trick is to try get one activity done everyday, or at least three times a week. Try one of these easy activities:

- Walk 1,5 kilometers, about 20 minutes.
- Garden for an hour or mow the lawn for 20 minutes.
- Clean house for 30 minutes.
- Take the stairs instead of the lift or escalator whenever possible.
- Have 15 minutes of gentle stretching every morning upon waking or every evening before bed.

24. CELEBRATE

When you've kicked the soda habit or simply made it through the day without overeating, pat yourself on the back. You've moved closer to a healthier lifestyle that helps people **lose weight** without crazy or complicated diet plans. Get a pedicure, buy new clothes ... or on occasion, indulge in a small piece of antioxidant-rich dark chocolate. Observing milestones is one of the most important aspects of staying motivated. Step by step, good habits transform into better health.

25. SMILE!

Never underestimate the feel-good factor lifting the cheeks and lips can induce. A spring in your step and a smile on your dial make you feel lighter and happier, which in turn makes you want to be the healthiest you, you can be. And collective consciousness considered - it's contagious!

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