

CONCERN[®] Services

We're More Than An EAP...

Our goal is to Help People Live Better & Help People Work Better. The following information from the **CONCERN WorkLife Services** program is intended to help you accomplish that goal and remind you that, as your Employee Assistance Program, we are here for you and your family. Visit us on-line at www.trihealth.concernservices.com or call (513) 891-1691 / (800) 642-9794 for no-charge, confidential assistance.

How to Avoid Portion Size Pitfalls

When eating at many restaurants, it's hard to miss that portion sizes have gotten larger in the last few years. The trend has also spilled over into the grocery store and vending machines, where a bagel has become a BAGEL and an "individual" bag of chips can easily feed more than one. Research shows that people unintentionally consume more calories when faced with larger portions. This can mean significant excess calorie intake, especially when eating high-calorie foods. Here are some tips to help you avoid some common portion-size pitfalls.

Portion Control When Eating Out

Many restaurants serve more food than one person needs at one meal. Take control of the amount of food that ends up on your plate by splitting an entrée with a friend. Or, ask the wait person for a "to-go" box and wrap up half your meal as soon as it's brought to the table.

Portion Control When Eating In

To minimize the temptation of second and third helpings when eating at home, serve the food on individual plates, instead of putting the serving dishes on the table. Keeping the excess food out of reach may discourage overeating.

Portion Control in Front of the TV

When eating or snacking in front of the TV, put the amount that you plan to eat into a bowl or container instead of eating straight from the package. It's easy to overeat when your attention is focused on something else.

Go ahead, spoil your dinner.

We learned as children not to snack before a meal for fear of "spoiling our dinner." Well, it's time to forget that old rule. If you feel hungry between meals, eat a healthy snack, like a piece of fruit or small salad, to avoid overeating during your next meal.

Be aware of large packages.

For some reason, the larger the package, the more people consume from it without realizing it. To minimize this effect:

- Divide up the contents of one large package into several smaller containers to help avoid over-consumption.
- Don't eat straight from the package. Instead, serve the food in a small bowl or container.

Out of Sight, Out of Mind

People tend to consume more when they have easy access to food. Make your home a "portion friendly zone."

- Replace the candy dish with a fruit bowl.
- Store especially tempting foods, like cookies, chips, or ice cream, out of immediate eyesight, like on a high shelf or at the back of the freezer. Move the healthier food to the front at eye level.
- When buying in bulk, store the excess in a place that's not convenient to get to, such as a high cabinet or at the back of the pantry.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (Updated 2011, January 4). *Nutrition for everyone: Healthy weight: How to avoid portion size pitfalls to help manage your weight*. Retrieved January 26, 2011 from <http://www.cdc.gov>