

Downsize, *Don't* **SUPERSIZE**

Do you think
bigger is better?

Do you want more for less?

Applying this mentality to food saves your wallet, but not your waistline. In today's world of super-sizes, Big Gulps, and Big-Grabs, it is easy to confuse a portion (the amount of food that fills your plate or that you eat at one serving) and a serving (the recommended amount of food that appears on the food label or food guide pyramid). Increasing portion sizes in restaurants and at home leads to increased calorie intake, which, when coupled with inactivity or a sedentary lifestyle, leads to overweight and obesity.

Those who feel tempted to get more food for just a little less money, a concept known as value marketing, might be surprised to learn the nutritional costs of those "bargains".

- Larger portions provide more calories
- Studies show that when people are served more food, they eat more food
- Americans consume 171 more calories/day on average today than they did a decade ago. This translates in a weight gain of more than 15 pounds per year
- 64% of Americans are overweight or obese

In the long run, the calories you save will more than make up for the extra pennies you may have to spend.

BAD Bargains

7-Eleven Gulp to Double Gulp soda

- 37 extra cents buys 450 extra calories
- (42% more money = 300% more calories)

Cinnabon Minibon to Classic Cinnabon

- 48 extra cents buys 370 extra calories
- (24% more money = 123% more calories)

Movie Theater Small to Medium Unbuttered Popcorn

- 71 extra cents buys 500 extra calories
- (23% more money = 125% more calories)



BAD Bargains...*CONTINUED*

Regular Snickers Candy Bar to "The Big One"

- 33 extra cents buys 230 extra calories
- (48% more money = 82% more calories)

Doritos, Nacho! Cheesier Flavor, "Big Grab" to 99 Cents Size

- 24 extra cents buys 230 extra calories
- (32% more money = 88% more calories)

McDonald's Small to Large Fries

- 64 extra cents buys 330 extra calories
- (62% more money = 157% more calories)

McDonald's Quarter Pounder with Cheese to medium Quarter Pounder with Cheese Extra Value Meal

- \$1.41 extra buys 660 extra calories
- (61% more money = 125% more calories)

Subway 6-inch to 12-inch Tuna Sub

- \$1.53 extra buys 420 extra calories
- (47% more money = 100% more calories)

Baskin Robbins Chocolate Chip Ice Cream, Kids Scoop to Double Scoop

- \$1.62 extra buys 390 extra calories
- (129% more money = 260% more calories)

Source: The National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA)

Growing Portions = Growing People

Food portion sizes have grown over time. The trend of increasing portion sizes began in the 1970's but became more common in the 1980s and 1990s. They have grown in parallel with both obesity and diabetes rates. Look how portion sizes have grown:

- Average hamburger in 1977 weighed 5.7 ounces
Average hamburger in 1996 weighed 7 ounces
- Hershey's Milk Chocolate bar weighed 0.6 ounces in 1908 and now bar sizes come in 1.6, 2.6, 4, 7, and 8 ounce King sizes
- In 1955, McDonald's French Fries described their regular fries as 2.4 ounces. Now, 2.4 is described as small, 5.3 as medium, 6.3 as large, and 7.1 ounces as Super-size
- In 1954, a hamburger at Burger King weighed in at 3.9 ounces. Today, their burgers range from 4.4 ounces (hamburger), 6.0 (Whopper Jr.), 6.1 (double hamburger), 9.9 (Whopper), and 12.6 (Double Whopper).
- In 1916, the original Coca Cola bottle contained 6.5 fl oz. Today, cans or bottles of Coke come in sizes of 8, 12, 20, and 34 fl oz.
- Today's cookies are as much as 7 times the standard serving size
- Servings of cooked pasta in restaurants are often 5 times standard portion sizes
- Muffins weigh in at over 3 times standard portion sizes
- A typical bagel used to weigh 2 to 3 ounces, compared to 4 to 7 ounces today

Tips to Downsize Your Portions

Larger portions mean more calories. Cutting back on the amount of food you eat will help you avoid weight gain. **Try these:**

- Say "small". Resist the urge to super-size and ask for the smallest size. This goes for beverages as well as food. It may not seem cost-effective, but it's enough food to satisfy most people.
- Say "half". Order half a sandwich, half a wrap, half an entrée or half a portion when available. If not, divide the meal in two and take the rest home.
- Say "share". Order one meal and share it.
- Order a "cup" instead of a "bowl"
- Avoid free refills of sweetened beverages. If you are still thirsty, ask for water.
- Look at the food label. Many individual packaged items like chips, energy and candy bars, and beverages contain 2.5 servings per packages, not 1 serving.
- Don't finish everything on your plate. Let it go to waste instead of to your waist.
- If ordering fast food, avoid the "combo" meals. Instead of adding a soft drink and fries, opt for a side salad or yogurt parfait with your sandwich.
- Request healthy changes to existing menu items such as ordering coffee with low fat milk, a sandwich without mayonnaise, a salad with low fat dressing.

