

12

healthy habits

+ Coconut Beauty p. 48 + The CL Diet p. 54 + Eat Up in Austin p. 56 + Diabetes Swaps p. 61

JANUARY-
VEGGIE
UP!

FEBRUARY-
GET
MOVING!

MARCH-
DRINK MORE
OF TEN!

APRIL-
WHOLE
GRAINS!

MAY-
EAT
BREAKFAST!

JUNE-
GET
STRONGER!

JULY-
HEALTHY
FATS!

AUGUST-
GO
MEATLESS!

SEPTEMBER-
EAT MORE
FISH!

OCTOBER-
EAT LESS
SALT!

oooooooooooo

**NOVEMBER-
BE PORTION-
SMART!**

oooooooooooo
DECEMBER



HEALTHY HABIT #11

Be Portion-Smart

Use holiday feasting season to practice some healthy new habits of mind.

BY KIMBERLY HOLLAND

This time of year, more than any other, it's far easier to be happy about the foods we eat than the *amount*

we eat. How much healthier would it be to skate from Thanksgiving to New Year's without having to make midnight resolutions on December 31 about "eating better" that mostly reflect five weeks' worth of overindulging?

Resolutions often spring from guilt about failure of willpower,

TURN
THE
PAGE
FOR MORE

“Some people think eating less means restricting foods they love. That just doesn't work.”



DR. PAINTER'S PORTION- SMART STRATEGIES

1 DON'T GRAZE AT THE PARTY.

Distracted eating quickly leads to overeating. Standing by the appetizer buffet or cheese board and picking away makes it very hard to know how much you're eating. Instead, take a healthy portion (on a small plate), sit down, and eat slowly, savoring every bite.



Visual cues—like shells or wrappers—remind us of what we've eaten.

2 GIVE YOURSELF CUT-OFF CUES.

“When we choose something like a candy bar, we eat the entire thing, and then we don't want any more,” Painter says. “That's because the food packaging tells us when we're done much more than internal cues of satiety. Almost never does someone eat a candy bar and then pick up another one.” Single-serving foods, like Individual White Lasagnas (page 47) or Five-Ingredient Chocolate Cakes (page 105), give those cues, too.

when the focus can be on developing new portion awareness and habits that will work throughout the year. The goal isn't to shun foods but to be mindful of the portions we're eating while we're eating them.

“Some people think eating less means restricting foods they love,” says Jim Painter, PhD, this month's Healthy Habits hero and a food psychology and nutrition professor at Eastern Illinois University. “That just doesn't work. As soon as you restrict a food, the cravings build until you finally give in and eat the entire thing.”

One area of Painter's research looks at the visual cues that can help people understand what they're consuming. “If you're eating chocolate candies, let the wrappers pile up on the side,” he advises. “We've found that people eat less because they can see how many chocolates they've eaten.

The same is true for pistachios: If you let the shells pile up, you'll eat fewer nuts because you can see how many you're eating. You're not restricting your consumption; you're just making yourself more aware.”

Simple techniques like reducing plate size help to shift perception about what a healthy portion is. And then there's the important matter of speed: The longer you take to eat a portion, the less likely it is that you will reach for seconds. It takes time for the body to begin signaling satiety.

“We just bypass those cues by eating so much so fast that the body doesn't have time to react,” Painter says. This can be particularly problematic when confronting the bounty of the holidays. At right, three ways to practice year-round portion control.

3 MAKE A PLATE CHANGE.

“Plate size has real power to make people feel full and at the same time eat less,” Painter says. “You can fill up a smaller plate and eat the whole thing, and you will have still eaten less than you would have had you eaten on a larger plate. People are more satisfied with smaller plates because they feel like they've eaten more.”