

Week Two on The PATH

The Habits of Healthy Eating

Week Two on The PATH gives you the tools you need change your habits at the plate, at the fork and at the bite. Whether you're eating with your fingers or fork, you can change the unconscious way you approach your food to eat small—so you don't overeat eat at all!

WHAT TO DO THIS WEEK

- Habits at the plate, fork, and bite
- Planning on seconds
- Learn which dishes to use
- About the bite
- Learn what to do about restaurants

WHAT TO KNOW THIS WEEK

- The role of portion presentation on the tendency to overeat
- Causes of passive over-consumption

RESOURCES

- Cutouts of plate sizes
- Appropriate portion sizes
- Using the “Rule of Thumb”

HOMEWORK

- Habits of eating
- Habits of drinking

JOURNALING

- Volume and value
- Quality and quantity

“Habits of Healthy Eating” Cheat Sheet

First Rule:

- Plan on Seconds

Second Rule:

- Plan on Dessert

Third Rule:

- Put away your large dinner plates—never to return!

Bites:

- Your bite size should equal the end joint of your thumb
- Become a nibbler

Fork:

- Just as you eat on a medium plate, use the dessert fork.
- Habits:
 - Take a bite
 - Put your fork down
 - Finish what you have in your mouth
 - Pick up your fork
 - Have another bite

Mouth:

- Never fill your mouth with food
- If you have something in your mouth, don't put something else in there

Hands:

- Get the food out of your hands!
- Only hold one fry or food piece at a time
- For hand held foods that are too large, cut them into bites

Drinks:

- Never wash your food down with your drink
- Buy small or you'll drink it all
- Become a sipper

Restaurants:

- Never go to the buffet—if you get your money's worth, you've overeaten
- Split a plate
- Put half in a to-go box before you even start
- Don't let them rush you out the door
- Order the salad and then the main
- Never biggie size—order the appetizer if need be

Cheat Sheet

Portion Distortion

How did it happen? How did the sense that “volume equals value” become so much a part of us that it has made us the world leaders in overweight, diabetes, and all the other health problems that ride on its coattails? Can we not have the presence of mind to clear our heads and avoid the perversion of eating an entire pizza at a sitting, an entire sleeve of cookies, or an entire pie?

Maybe the reason why is as simple as our listening to clever marketers. They say 39 cents justifies twice the volume, and the actor on the screen is thin and beautiful. The actor who ironically starved herself to get the part shows us that eating huge doesn’t really affect her weight at all.

Maybe the reason why is as simple as performing the right dietary calculations. If we just find the ratios of this to that to the other thing, we’ll be okay again. Then we’ll be able to eat as much as we want without getting fat.

Maybe the reason why is as simple as a nation that has disregarded the family table in search of more stuff, faster than ever. The search for more has left us empty with less. The loss of the family table has left us disconnected with the basic purpose of a meal in the first place.

Maybe the reason why is as simple as the fact that we’re filling the yawning need of our soul with food. The national drain we circle first creates overeating, then punishes us for the results of overeating, which leads to more emotional overeating. Food goes into an emotional pit without end; in and in, and on and on. Maybe if we fix the emotional need there will be no hole to fill with food. Maybe, maybe, maybe.

In the end, WHY matters less than action. We need a solution. We need to DO something; to behave in a way that produces health; to act in a way that WILL improve the body machinery. Because how you act matters.

- If you practice stressful habits, your body responds with a stress response.
- If you practice calming habits, your body responds with calm.

If you practice the Habits of Healthy Eating, your body responds with a lower tolerance for chronic consumption, over-sugared foods, and portion distortion. This philosophy says you really can find success, and then do that in your own life. This puts you in complete control. We can create habits, and we can choose to make them healthy ones.

There are millions of reasons why we are in this mess—all of them important! But now is the time to act. Now is the time to start a new life of living well based on what we know works. Now is the time to change who we are at the fork and plate so we circle the drain no more.

Example Meal Plans on The PATH

Day One

Breakfast (Target time, 15–20 minutes):

2-egg cheese frittata with onion and garlic

Whole wheat toast with butter

Small glass of juice—if sugar sensitive, exchange for an orange or vegetable juice

Lifestyle Tip of the Meal: Wake up 30 minutes early. Sit in the peace of your kitchen to begin your day with your partner, paper, or favorite cup of coffee.

Lunch

MAIN (Target time, 15 minutes):

Open-faced tuna salad sandwich on whole wheat toast, topped with a thin slice of sharp cheddar cheese; small spinach salad with tomatoes and a balsamic vinaigrette.

Half pint of chilled whole milk

ENDER (Target time, 10 minutes):

One square of rich dark chocolate about “two thumbs” in size

Lifestyle Tip of the Meal: Estimate the size of half of your sandwich before you begin, and resolve to finish with that half only after 7 minutes or so.

Snack (Target time, 15 minutes):

Handful of unsalted nuts (brazil, almonds, cashews) approximately 10

Dinner

MAIN (Target time, 20 minutes):

Tilapia baked in olive oil and crisp white wine, with capers and onions

Garlic green beans (5–10)

Rosemary red potatoes (3–4 quarters)

1 Glass pinot grigio or similar, 1 glass water

DESSERT (Target time, 10 minutes):

Crème brûlée in a ramekin

ENDER (Target time, 10 minutes):

End with a cup of hot herbal tea or hot cocoa

Lifestyle Tip of the Meal: Set the table tonight. Chill the wine. Set out the candles.

Day Two

Breakfast (Target time, 15 minutes):

Brown sugar cinnamon oatmeal with 1 tablespoon cream,
half cup sliced seasonal fruit, and a small glass of orange juice

*Lifestyle Tip of the Meal: Enjoyment of the meal is more about the time
spent than the amount eaten.*

Lunch

MAIN (Target time, 15 minutes):

Black bean chili with sausage, 1 sprinkle cheddar cheese, 1 dollop sour cream
Small glass iced tea with lemon

SALAD (Target time, 10 minutes):

Tossed greens with balsamic vinaigrette dressing

DESSERT (Target time, 10 minutes):

Brownie

ENDER (Target time, 15 minutes):

Small cup coffee or tea

*Lifestyle Tip of the Meal: Salad dressing complements the flavors of the salad—
but many people load too much of it on there, resulting in huge needless calories.
Put just enough dressing on to enhance the flavor, no more.*

Snack (Target time, 15 minutes):

Hummus and baby carrots (approximately 10 carrots)

Dinner

STARTER (Target time, 10 minutes):

Sliced tomato with basil leaves, olive oil, avocado, and feta cheese

SOUP (Target time, 15 minutes):

French onion soup with melted Swiss cheese and some warm,
crispy French bread for dunking
1 glass water or milk

DESSERT (Target time, 10 minutes):

1 cup of ice cream

*Lifestyle Tip of the Meal: Turn off all the technology except the answering machine
during the meal.*

Day Three

Breakfast (Target time, 15 minutes):

Whole milk yogurt with granola, 1 cut banana, and a sprinkle of dried cranberries
Small glass of juice or milk

Lifestyle Tip of the Meal: Don't let the size of your food determine the size of your bite. Cut your food into very small pieces on purpose.

Lunch

MAIN (Target time, 15 minutes):

Smoked turkey sandwich with provolone cheese and baby spinach on French or other fresh-baked bread
Avocado and tomato salad
Fresh cut fruit
Iced tea or water with lemon

ENDER (Target time, 10 minutes):

Small square of dark chocolate, or teaspoon-sized wedge of creamy cheese

Lifestyle Tip of the Meal: Never eat on your feet. Always sit down and give your meal the attention it deserves.

Snack (Target time, 15 minutes):

Almond biscotti with tea or coffee

Dinner

MAIN (Target time, 20 minutes):

Grilled pork chop with garlic and rosemary
Mashed sour cream potatoes (half cup)
3–4 slices fresh-cut raw veggies: red bell peppers, cucumber, cherry tomatoes
1 glass light red wine, 1 small glass water

ENDER (Target time, 10 minutes):

Vanilla pudding

Lifestyle Tip of the Meal: Practice leaving a little bit of food on your plate at the end of the meal.

Day Four

Breakfast (Target time, 15 minutes):

Slice banana nut bread with butter

Small glass of milk

Lifestyle Tip of the Meal: Practice waiting a minute or two after all food is out of your mouth, and out of the corners of your mouth, before having another one.

Lunch

MAIN (Target time, 20 minutes):

2 slices sourdough bread with olive oil, balsamic vinegar, parmesan cheese, and spices for dunking.

A small handful of walnuts, sliced pear, and some blue cheese.

Ice water with lemon

DESSERT (Target time, 10 minutes):

Cherries or strawberries

ENDER (Target time, 10 minutes):

1 square of rich dark chocolate

Lifestyle Tip of the Meal: Take a breather between bites. Take 5 minutes from time to time to chat or read or something else. You will enjoy your food more when you come back to it.

Snack (Target time, 15 minutes):

Half sliced apple with Swiss cheese

Dinner

MAIN (Target time, 20 minutes):

Baked chicken (single breast or leg and thigh)

Rice pilaf (half cup)

Broccoli citron (3–4 florets)

1 glass white wine, one small glass water

DESSERT (Target time, 10 minutes):

Slice of pumpkin pie with vanilla whipped cream

Lifestyle Tip of the Meal: To prevent rushing through a meal, focus on calming activities just before it starts. Some people meditate or focus inwardly for 5 minutes. Others pray.

Day Five

Breakfast (Target time, 15 minutes)

1 soft boiled egg with salt & pepper over whole wheat toast
Sliced banana
A small glass of milk or juice

*Lifestyle Tip of the Meal: Listening to your body is an art.
Listen for your hunger. If you're not hungry, don't eat.*

Lunch

MAIN (Target time, 20 minutes):

Cup of clam chowder
Mixed greens with blue cheese dressing, and a slice of buttered bread
Vanilla (or other) pudding
Iced tea or water with lemon

ENDER (Target time, 10 minutes):

Small cup of coffee or tea

*Lifestyle Tip of the Meal: If you're by yourself, bring a good book
so you won't be alone.*

Snack (Target time, 15 minutes):

2 Deviled egg halves

Dinner

MAIN (Target time, 20 minutes):

2 slices of bagel with cream cheese, smoked salmon, sliced tomato,
sliced sweet onion, capers, lemon, salt, and pepper.
Spinach salad with cranberries in balsamic vinaigrette
Glass of milk

DESSERT (Target time, 10 minutes):

Fresh cut fruit with cream

ENDER (Target time, 10 minutes):

1 square of rich dark chocolate

Lifestyle Tip of the Meal: Just as you nibble your food, always sip your drink.

Homework

- Eat pizza, to practice the new habits you have learned
- Notice other people eating, and compare your eating habits with those around you
- At a time when you're VERY hungry, use this as the perfect opportunity to train in your new habits
- Put away your big plates
- Order small—drinks and foods
- Eat finger foods at least once this week, using the habits you learned

Journal

Your goal this week is to begin the lifelong habits of eating well.

Beginning of the week

In your own thoughtful words (at least 1 page), write about one of the following:

- Why the American volume control has failed
- Your thoughts on gluttony
- How small changes sneak up on us to become huge
- The role of the unconscious in eating—and unconscious eating
- The difficulty of changing these habits in America

List the habits you have to change in the order of importance to you:

- Food choices when eating out
- Drink choices when eating out
- Eating with a fork
- Eating with your hands
- Drinking
- Serving food at home (planning on seconds)

Project, for yourself, the number of days (or weeks) you think it will take you to burn in the new habits—so that you begin acting on your new habits unconsciously.

End of the week

- Which habits were the hardest to practice?
- Which habits were the easiest to practice?
- What effect did it have on your hunger to employ these habits?

Further Reading

Asia Pac J Clin Nutr. 2003;12 Suppl:S25.

Portion size of campus takeaway foods and serving size estimates of common foods.

VOLKER DH, LEARY C, GILL TP

Human Nutrition Unit, University of Sydney, NSW 2006.

BACKGROUND—Advertised meal deals are increasing in size, the average Australian is increasing in size and consumers appear to have lost the ability to judge appropriate food portion size.

OBJECTIVE—To investigate portion size of foods from on campus food outlets, takeaway outlets and supermarkets compared with the unspecified serve values of the National Nutrition Survey (1995) and the ability of consumers to judge appropriate food portion size from bulk food.

DESIGN—In the serving size study 58 foods were purchased from supermarkets, takeaway and university food outlets. The weight in grams of these purchased foods was compared with the ‘unspecified serve’ size of the most appropriate food. The estimation of portions size study recruited 100 subjects; 50 dietitians and 50 non-dietitians who estimated standard portions from a variety of bulk food supplies.

OUTCOMES—In total, 86% of the purchased foods weighed greater than the unspecified serve, with a total of 39% being more than double the weight. Twelve percent of the total products purchased weighed less than the equivalent unspecified serve. There were significant differences between the mean estimations made by both dietitians and non-dietitians and unspecified serves, for most bulk items.

CONCLUSIONS—This research confirms that people lack the ability to estimate appropriate portion sizes from bulk food items. The larger portion sizes produced by the food industry may have an impact on the community’s knowledge of appropriate quantities of food to eat. These factors could well be contributing to the increases in the rates of overweight and obesity in society.

Science to English Translation If it’s in front of you, you’ll eat it. Our ability to estimate portion size is distorted by the increasing norm of larger and larger sizes. In essence, we’re becoming poor at judging portions.

J Am Diet Assoc. 2004 Mar;104(3):367-72.

Increasing the portion size of a sandwich increases energy intake.

ROLLS BJ, ROE LS, MEENGES JS, WALL DE

OBJECTIVE—This study investigated the effect on energy intake of increasing the portion size of a food served as a discrete unit.

DESIGN—A within-subject design with repeated measures was used. Subjects/setting The sample comprised 75 young adults (37 females and 38 males) from a university community.

INTERVENTION—Individuals ate lunch in the lab once a week for 4 weeks. Each week, they were served one of four sizes of a deli-style sandwich (6, 8, 10, or 12 inches), of which they could eat as much as they wanted. Main outcome measures Energy intakes were determined for each meal, as were ratings of hunger and satiety before and after each meal. Statistical analyses performed a linear mixed model with repeated measures was used. The influence of subject characteristics was examined using analysis of covariance.

RESULTS—The portion size of the sandwich significantly influenced lunch intake for both males and females ($P<.0001$). The majority of individuals consumed the entire 6-inch sandwich. When served the 12-inch sandwich, compared with the 8-inch sandwich, females consumed 12% more energy (74 kcal) and males consumed 23% more energy (186 kcal). Despite these differences, ratings of hunger and fullness were not significantly different after eating the 12-inch and 8-inch sandwiches.

CONCLUSIONS—These results suggest that increasing the portion size of a food served as a discrete unit leads to increased energy intake at a single meal without differentially influencing ratings of hunger and satiety. Dietitians should educate their clients about strategies to moderate the effect on intake of increased portions of high-calorie foods.

Science to English Translation Accepting larger sized foods leads to larger eating. This has no effect on how hungry you are or how full it makes you or how much you will eat at the next meal.

Larger sized foods only add calories.

Public Health Nutr. 2003 Sep;6(6):589-97.

The relationship between low income and household food expenditure patterns in Canada.

KIRKPATRICK S, TARASUK V

OBJECTIVES—To compare food expenditure patterns between low-income households and higher-income households in the Canadian population, and to examine the relationship between food expenditure patterns and the presence or absence of housing payments among low-income households.

DESIGN & SETTING—Secondary data analysis of the 1996 Family Food Expenditure Survey conducted by Statistics Canada. Sociodemographic data and 1-week food expenditure data for 9793 households were analysed.

SUBJECTS—Data were collected from a nationally representative sample drawn through stratified multistage sampling. Low-income households were identified using Statistics Canada's Low Income Measures.

RESULTS—Total food expenditures, expenditures at stores and expenditures in restaurants were lower among low-income households compared with other households. Despite allocating a slightly greater proportion of their food dollars to milk products, low-income households purchased significantly fewer servings of these foods. They also purchased fewer servings of fruits and vegetables than did higher-income households. The effect of low income on milk product purchases persisted when the sample was stratified by education and expenditure patterns were examined in relation to income within strata. Among low-income households, the purchase of milk products and meat and alternatives was significantly lower for households that had to pay rents or mortgages than for those without housing payments.

CONCLUSIONS—Our findings indicate that, among Canadian households, access to milk products and fruits and vegetables may be constrained in the context of low incomes. This study highlights the need for greater affordability of nutritious foods for low-income groups.

Science to English Translation We know that lower income groups have higher levels of overweight and obesity but, for some reason not speculated on in this paper, lower income groups eat less healthy foods than higher income groups.