



# 8 top tips for portion control

You'll be amazed by the difference you can make to your portion control, meal planning and food budget by gaining a better understanding of a balanced diet, as well as how much you need to feel fuller for longer. This blog aims to equip you with information and guidance to support your healthy eating journey.

## Use a smaller plate

A standard-sized portion will look small on a larger plate, making you feel dissatisfied. Use a smaller plate to prevent overloading.

## Don't double your carbs

If you already have some starchy carbohydrate with your meal, do you need bread, naan or chapatis as well? You could be doubling your portion, so if you like to have some bread on the side, you'll need to cut down the amount of starchy carbohydrate on your plate accordingly.

## Give measuring cups a go

Finding it difficult to gauge the right amount to eat? Try using measuring cups. You don't need to have special cups, though; you could use any teacups, mugs or containers that work for you. It's a simple way of measuring the amount for you every time.

## Be selective with your seconds

Finish your meal with fruit rather than chocolate cake. An apple will help to fill you up more than a couple of squares of chocolate, but both contain a similar amount of calories.

## Don't pick at leftovers

Wasting food certainly isn't ideal, but it doesn't mean you need to finish off everyone else's portions. Avoid the temptation to polish off children's or grandchildren's meals or to nibble leftovers when there's not quite enough for a whole portion. If you find it happens regularly, then get into the habit of cooking less or have a plan to use up leftovers in another meal.

## 20-minute rule

Think you haven't had enough? Wait for about 20 minutes before reaching for a second helping. It can take a little while for you to feel full after you have eaten. So, avoid the temptation to keep eating and see if you get that feeling.

## Check food labels

Make sure you know what portion the nutrition information on the front of the pack relates to. It might be different to the amount you would normally serve yourself.

## Ask for less

When you're eating out, watch out for super-sized portions. It's easier to avoid temptation if the food isn't on your plate to begin with, so say no to the bread basket and think about whether you need to have chips with your burger.

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**For more information about tailored programmes to support a healthier lifestyle, see [www.northumberlandhealthtrainers.co.uk](http://www.northumberlandhealthtrainers.co.uk)**