

Lines drawn in the war on weight

Controlling portion sizes is dietitian's first defence

By DEIRDRE SMITH

TAKE-away cookies are the bane of dietitian Amanda Clark's life.

If only people knew and appreciated exactly what was in them.

Mrs Clark can see first hand from her practice at Showcase in Coolangatta the holiday crowds chowing down on their choc-chip muffins and super-sized frappachinos.

She knows that just one large-sized cookie can have 1000 calories, equivalent to a whole day's food for a small woman.

Most of Mrs Clark's work is with people who are overweight.

She used to have trouble finding strategies to easily explain how much and what type of food people should eat.

Then, several years ago, Mrs Clark came up with a diet plate idea, with lines drawn on a plate to show portion sizes for protein, carbohydrate and salad in each meal.

Now the plate and a matching bowl have been joined by her book, *Portion Perfection*, which uses pictures of everyday food, from a piece of apple pie to a carton of yoghurt, to show how they fit in a weight maintenance or weight loss program.

"I have been a dietitian for 20 years and I was always looking for resources to explain portions," Mrs Clark said.

"People would keep food diaries but it didn't say how much they had eaten.

"So I designed the plate and it does exactly what I want it to do."

She says many intending dieters have a problem with knowing how much to eat, especially as the size of snack food por-

tions has mushroomed in the past few years.

A normal-sized Mars Bar has grown from 135 calories to 370, while a take-away coffee used to be 85 calories but can now contain up to 480 calories, equivalent to a full-size meal.

"The larger the serving size, the more we eat," Mrs Clark said.

"Nobody gets halfway through and then stops."

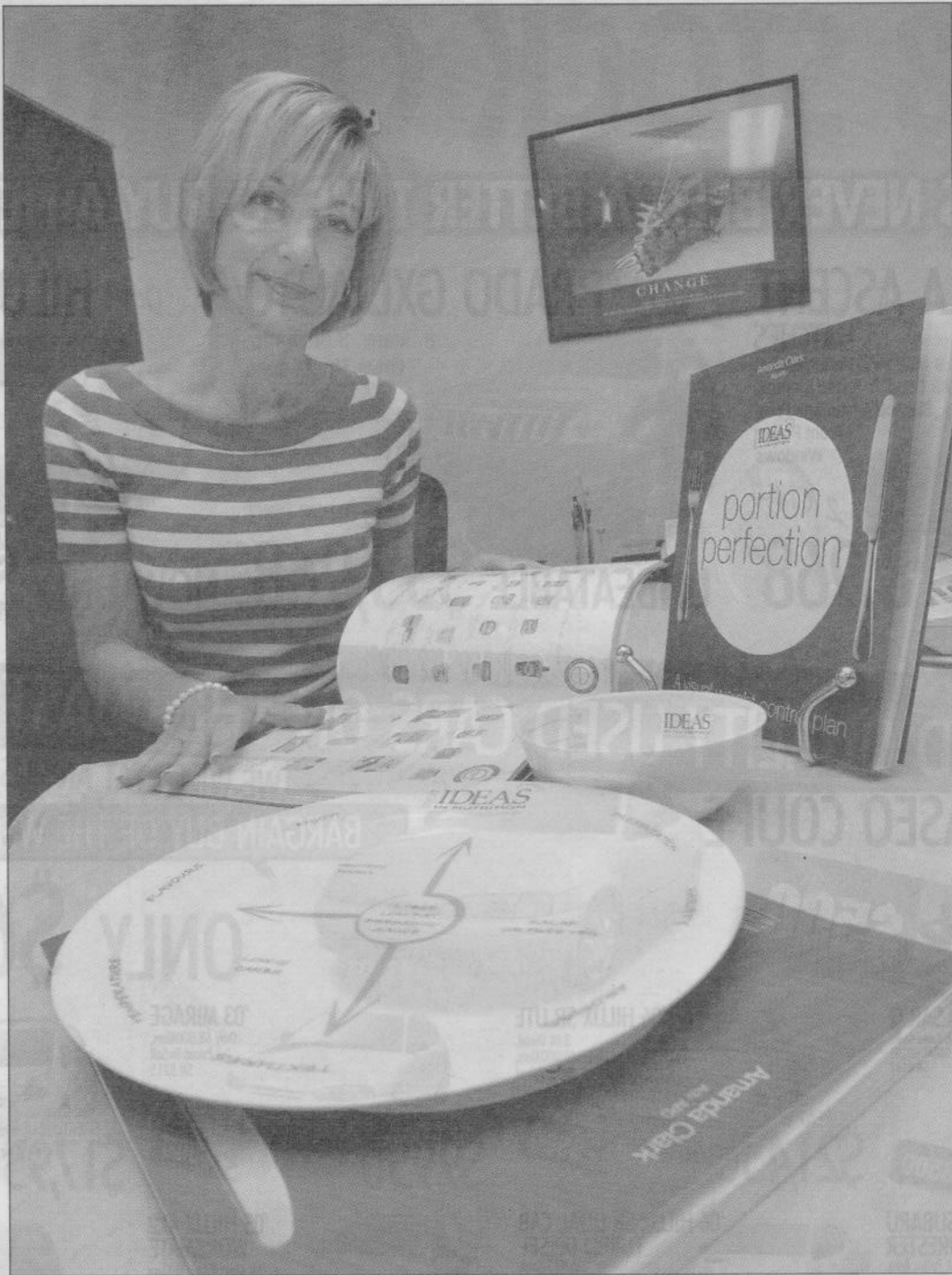
It's as if too many people

will eat whatever is put in front of them.

As part of Healthy Weight Week, from January 25 to 31, free body composition tests will be available at Tweed Centro shopping centre from 10am to 2pm.

Mrs Clark said the simple, free tests gave people an estimate of how many calories they should consume in a day.

To arrange a booking, phone 07 5536 6400.



MISSION C
Amanda C
her 'Portio
Perfection
kit. P

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