

How to Trick Yourself into Eating Less

Nobody wants to feel hungry or deprived of what they enjoy. You can learn how to trick yourself into eating less and still feeling satisfied by knowing the hidden overeating traps to avoid.

A new book *Portion Perfection - A visual weight control plan* explains how you can have the foods you love and achieve your optimum weight by re-adjusting your portion sizes and fooling yourself into thinking you are eating the same amount as before.

Studies show people can eat up to 20 percent more or less without realising it. According to author and local dietitian Amanda Clark from Great Ideas in Nutrition, you can reprogram your expectations and habits when it comes to the amount of food you serve yourself.

"By gradually trimming off 100 to 200 calories a day, you can accumulate meaningful weight loss over time without feeling any diet deprivation," said Mrs Clark.

"Anyone can learn how to estimate portion sizes and use sensory perception to help you eat less."

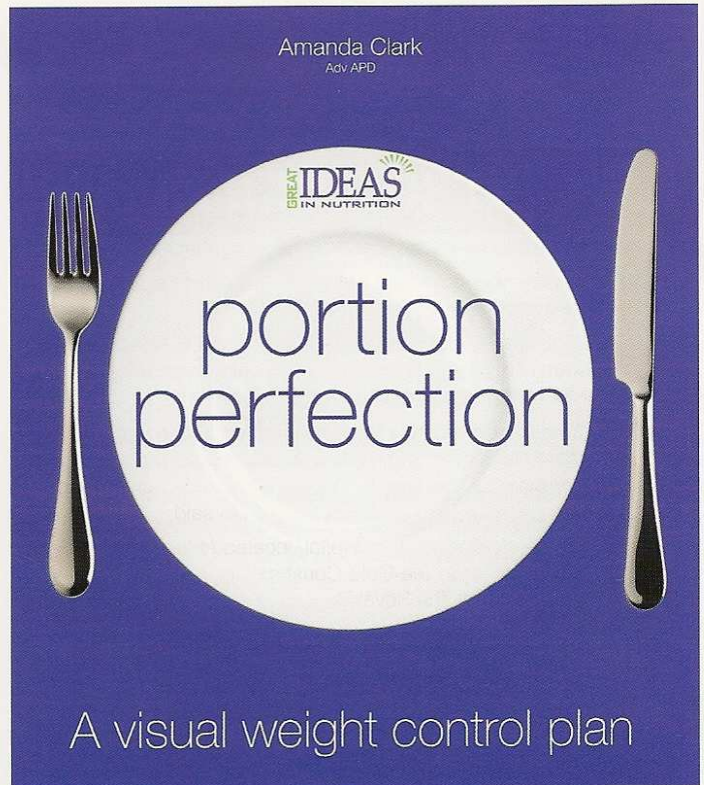
Here are Amanda's secrets to shedding kilos without even noticing a change in your diet::

1. When you sit down to a meal, think about its:
 - a. Presentation - does it look appealing and what quantity do you see? Does it match how hungry you are feeling? This will help you register when you are half-finished and when the meal has ended so you can move onto something else.
 - b. Variety - what variety of colours, textures and types of foods do you see?
 - c. Aroma - smell the food. What do you notice? Does it smell fresh? Appetising? Can you smell all the components of the meal or only some?
 - d. As you eat the food, notice the texture - is it smooth? Grainy? Tough? Tender?
 - e. Also think about the temperature - is it ideal for that food? Could it be warmer or cooler? At which point does it cease to be the ideal temperature?
 - f. Savour the flavours - what ingredients can you taste? Imagine if you didn't see what you put in your mouth. Could you identify it from its taste and texture?
 - g. Slow yourself right down and enjoy the meal.
2. Downsize your plate, bowl, glass, package, container, serving spoon, etc. As the size of your dishes increases, so does the amount you eat. You can make yourself think you are consuming more from tall, slender glasses and smaller plates and bowls.
3. Never eat straight from a multi-serve packet or container - always serve the amount you intend to eat into a separate dish or cup, or buy single portion-sized packs. The bigger the packet you serve from, the more you tend to eat.
4. Find out the right snack size for you and learn how to count calories by the hundreds, for example - 100 calories in each slice of bread, 100 calories in one banana, 100 calories in each 200ml glass of fruit juice or skim milk, etc.
5. Keep variety of higher calorie foods to a minimum and increase the different kinds of healthy foods to choose from. The more variety you see, the more you will eat.
6. Thinking about what you just ate can decrease your appetite. With every mouthful, check with your stomach to see whether you really want to be eating this right now.

"Research has proven the larger the portion size, the more difficult it is to estimate how many calories we are eating. By paying more attention to what you are eating, using smaller dishes and gradually trimming your serving sizes, you can use your eyes to tell you when you are full," said Mrs Clark.

"We stop eating when there is a visual cue to stop - that is, when our glass, plate or packet is empty. The way to cut calories unknowingly is to stop when you feel satisfied, but you could eat more.

"Conscious eating is a concept which comes from mindfulness psychology. It means eating with awareness, really looking at the food you intend to eat, smelling it, tasting it, savouring and enjoying it. This helps you reach satisfaction mentally as well as just filling you up," said Mrs Clark.



About the Book

Portion Perfection: A visual weight control plan features over 150 recognisable brands of packaged foods, so you can be more selective in what you buy and more aware of your calorie intake. The book is available at selected bookstores and www.greatideas.net.au for \$34.99

Amanda Clark is an Advanced Accredited Practising Dietitian. In 2006 she received one of the highest accolades in her profession when she won the Dietitians Association of Australia's national Innovation Award. The *Portion Perfection* book is supported by optional plates and bowls Amanda developed as useful tools for controlling portion sizes. Amanda has spent the past 15 years reviewing other nutrition authors' work for listing of the best on her online bookshop at www.greatideas.net.au



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